Common Ground Journal

Perspectives on the Church in the 21st Century

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Common Ground Journal (CGJ) is published twice annually as a resource for Christian congregations seeking to understand and faithfully live out their calling as the people of God in the world. The primary audience for CGJ is thoughtful Christians in congregations who are catalysts for growth within their own churches.

CGJ is devoted to the development of strong, faithful churches whose life and ministry grow out of the church's nature as the people of God. They are organized and led in a manner consistent with their nature and mission. They continually ask, "What does it mean to be a sign of the Kingdom of God in the world today?"

CGJ is a resource for congregational development. We invite scholars and thoughtful Christians in congregations around the world to stimulate inquiry, reflection and action around issues central to the life and ministry of the gathered community of faith. We invite those who serve as leaders in congregations, mission agencies, parachurch organizations, relief and development work, higher education, and non-traditional leadership development to apply their scholarship and expertise in these fields to the context of the local church. We encourage members of congregations to address the broader church with insights grounded in a thoughtful examination of Scripture, and in their own experiences as part of communities of faith in the world.

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- Essays on truths gleaned from the interplay of theory and practice, theology and experience in the active life of faith
- Articles that present insights from congregations attempting to live out their identity as the people of God in world
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COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

From the Editor

Linda M. Cannell

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The Transformation of Educational Styles: Shifting the Locus of Learning

Taken together the essays in this issue reflect four complementary pairs of issues that have long occupied Ted Ward's career: the darker side of schooling alongside a conviction about the sort of values that should drive the purpose and practices of formal schooling, the necessity of nonformal education alongside awareness of the difficulties inherent in its definition, the nature of human learning alongside championing holistic models of development, and the necessity of leadership education alongside the question of whether such education serves the church or is served by the church (as the body of Christ—not to be confused with its organizational expression).

These issues are compatible with several key principles that have shaped his career. In his semi-autobiographical chapter in *With an Eye on the Future,*[1] Ward describes the impact of three mentors who shaped his "lifelong spiritual quest as an educator" and whose influence helped define the principles that, for him, "provided a functional context for the doing of education as a Christian:"

1. Motivation to learn comes from inside. The teacher cannot give it to the student. Whatever the reason or combination of reasons for wanting to learn, they do not come from the teacher. Nonetheless, the teacher has a transcendent responsibility for helping the learner discover and identify from within those interests, needs, and concerns that may be constructively related to the learning experience.

2. All substantial learning comes about as the experiences of one's past and the perceptions which they have created come into interaction with new experiences in such ways as to encourage evaluation leading to the realigning or maturing of one's understanding.

3. Teaching and learning are most effectively experienced when the two are intertwined. A teacher should always be a learner; the learning process is enhanced by teaching. These two are most symbiotic when in a continuously rolling interaction rather than being sequential.

4. Learning to know oneself and learning about one's learners and their social contexts are never-ending tasks for the responsible educator.

5. Intercultural work experience is a major source of deliverance from narrowness and bias in the understanding of oneself, others, and the diverse meanings of human behavior.[2]

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[1] Ted W. Ward. With and Eye on the Future. In Duane Elmer and Lois McKinney (eds). *With an Eye on the Future: Development and Century, Essays in Mission in the 21st Honor of Ted Ward*. (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1996.

[2] Ibid., p. 11

These principles would be meaningless without the evidence in practice and tangible commitments. Graduates of PhD programs at Michigan State University and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School testify to the formative influences of a learning community shaped through the values hammered home in countless seminars and in regular gatherings in the Ward's home. Many have felt the sting of his critique and warmth of his encouragement in contexts as diverse as schools, missions, nonformal leader development efforts, international community development agencies, and in various congregational venues. Through it all one can trace the leitmotif of themes, the expression and practice of which give evidence of an educator, who is Christian, determined to make a difference.

Some of the themes that recur across Ward's career and that appear in various ways in the essays in this issue include the following:[3]

1. The issues that plagued the 20th century persist into the 21st century and humanity seems to be no better prepared. Ward continues the call for responsible and effective education in public and religious spheres.

2. The natural tendency for human beings to gather with people like themselves persists even in the Christian community. The model for the church is one where racial, gender and status boundaries are crossed (Gal. 3: 26-28). Ward encourages Christians in the 21st century to show society how to deal with racial and intercultural tensions.

3. What good would result muses Ward, if Christians would see themselves as agents of reconciliation. In particular, he challenges higher education institutions to take on this task—educating competent men and women to serve as peacemakers and negotiators in troubled contexts.

4. Across the centuries, the church assigned two vital functions to institutions: education and mission—without maintaining clear-eyed understanding of how the church and what should be its serving institutions interrelate. In the 21st century, Ward is cautiously optimistic that Christian education can break from narrow traditionalism and participate in God's redemptive work in creating new models even as it evaluates the old.

5. Learning is not an end in itself argues Ward. The attempt to capture all learning and information in a 3-4 year period of formal education is futile. A related problem is the tendency of faculty to narrowly concentrate on their disciplines to such a degree that professional understanding of the nature of human learning and the processes that foster it suffers. Ward points to follow up studies of alumni that indicate that those who continue to learn are more likely to demonstrate an integrative style of learning. They are more likely to ask questions such as, "So what? What difference would it make if…? How does that relate to…? and so on.

6. Ward calls for institutions to recognize and affirm faculty who are concerned about the development of skills of learning as much as they are concerned about their subject matter.

7. One of the sad consequences of graduate education is that one can graduate from a four-year program in theology without having developed the skills of thinking theologically. Ward

[3] See Ward, *With and Eye on the Future,* in Elmer and McKinney, pp. 19-26 for elaboration of these themes.

cautions that right answers to predictable questions is far less important than helping students develop sustainable habits of reasoning and responsible action.

8. Among others, Ward wonders why one's kinship with Christ seems to count for so little in the lives of many Christians. If Christianity is to affect society the intent to stand for the things that God advocates is as important as standing against the evils of the age. There is a world of difference for some Christians between whether one should stay away from things or get involved. Social action remains divisive—more so among sectors in Western evangelicalism. More the pity, laments Ward. The ways in which we view education in the 21st century has much to do with the ways in which we view Christian maturity and responsibility.

9. The concept of lifelong learning is being revitalized in the 21st century. The church must become part of the effort to develop a holistic understanding and practice of teaching and learning. Ward supports this assertion by observing that there is more emphasis in Scripture on lifelong development than on the conversion event. The Old and New Testaments affirm that progress toward wisdom is a function of spiritual maturity. In the Lord's final instructions to his followers is found the admonition to teach all that he taught to them. How long does it take to learn all that the Lord taught his followers—a lifetime, of course.

10. Education should presume a willingness to interact productively with people who hold differing views. Developing the capacity to express ideas clearly and gain insight from other points of view is a key educational outcome—especially in Christian education where dialogue concerning culture and worldview undergirds effective evangelism.

11. Ward acknowledges the benefit of Greek and Hebrew language learning in theological institutions for those who do and will assist the church in assessing matters of doctrinal consistency and biblical interpretation. It is unnecessary and unrealistic, he adds, to presume competency in these languages for all in congregational leadership. In fact, the effort to require competency for all actually dilutes efforts to foster acceptable understanding and application of the biblical languages. Ward argues that while attention to biblical languages in certain formats may be needed, becoming bi-lingual in a world language is of equal necessity. Ministry in the 21st century requires those who are able to bridge linguistic gaps.

"Coming Events Cast their Shadows Before"

Among the several identifiable trend lines related to higher education, Ted mused recently on two that he felt were especially important—changing patterns of faculty tenure and the tenuous position of even major academic institutions.[4] Because of the undeniable crisis in "mainstream" higher education, and because of the increased use of technology in learning, Ted reflected that online learning is poised to become the new mainstream. Clearly, its long-term effectiveness depends on an increase in understanding of the nature of learning—especially as a global phenomenon. While efforts are underway in the nation's

[4] Among the now familiar citing of survival concerns in theological institutions, see the following: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/23/tenure-decline_n_2537418.html and http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-06-13/news/ct-met-national-louis-university-adjuncts-20130613_1_censure-faculty-aaup Accessed June 19, 2013

major universities to improve learning effectiveness,[5] many programs that use technology are based on a limiting view of education. For example, the tendency to "stack information" has been a persisting problem in much of mainstream education. The evident tendency to use technology to transmit information in online programs will similarly limit the effectiveness of online learning. The best examples of online learning take the view that technology supports learning rather than drives it.

This Issue

"Evaluating Metaphors of Education" examines three metaphors of education in relation to concerns for spiritual maturity. This article lays out key values that Ward believes are foundational to education. The following articles then address issues related to two modes of education: formal and nonformal. "Education for Developing Nations"—an address to the pre-congress meetings of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies—discusses the importance of both modes of education in stimulating national growth. A forceful critique of the schooling model in "Schooling as a Defective Approach to Education" sets the stage for articles that define nonformal education, describe its key practices, and suggest how formal and nonformal education could complement each other: "Effective Learning in Nonformal Modes," "Quibbling about Words—A Necessary Task," and "Two Modes of Nonformal Education." "The Rail Fence Metaphor" in its original form was written while Ted was at Michigan State University and provided an easily understood conceptual model for professional education. It has since been applied to theological schooling and various nonformal initiatives for Christian leadership development. Limitations that can result when nonformal education, in particular, loses focus are described in "Whatever Happened to Theological Education by Extension (TEE)." Then, partly as a response to the gaps he described in this article, Ward wrote for this issue "Comparing Methodologies," an article that compares formal and nonformal education but focuses specifically on teaching processes and the facilitator's role in nonformal education. The next three articles return to the area of formal education. "Innovations in Education: What's Next?" "Leaders Among the People of God," and "The Anomaly of Theological Education," present challenges and opportunities for Christian higher education and what Ward considers the confusing question of the relationship of theological schools and the church. "Unholy Dissonance—A Threat to Evangelicalism" and "A Final Exam for Christian Higher Education" reflect themes found in the opening article of the issue but add concerns about consequences that can result if values that ought to undergird education are eroded.

About the Editor

Linda Cannell retired as the Academic Dean at North Park Theological Seminary in December 2011. Formerly, she was Lois W. Bennett Distinguished Professor of Educational Ministries at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and professor of Educational Ministries and director of the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies program at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Illinois. She directs the Ward Consultation, a dialogical forum for leaders internationally to exchange ideas related to issues of local concern; and serves as the managing editor of the *Common Ground Journal* (www.commongroundjournal.org).

[5] See for example http://chronicle.com/article/Universities-in-Consortium/139919/?cid=wc&utm_source=wc&utm_medium=en

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

Evaluating Metaphors of Education

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
This third article in a series based on the author's W. H. Griffith Thomas Memorial Lectures at Dallas Theological Seminary, February 9-12, 1982, presents three metaphors that have come to typify formal schooling particularly in the West. Ward examines each in relation to the Christian concern for spiritual development. Adapted from Bibliotheca Sacra. Vol. 139 (556) Oct-Dec 1982: 291-301.

What education is and how it can be used properly are matters too important to be left vague. Education suffers from over-popularity. Everyone has experienced it in one or many of its forms. Indeed, everyone "knows" what it is; education is commonplace. Self-appointed experts on education are everywhere. Small wonder then that so many ill-advised assaults on the human spirit are passed off as worthy educational ventures.

Three essentially different metaphors of education account for most of the thinking, planning, and operation of formal education. Each of these ways of conceptualizing education should be evaluated in terms of the Christian concern for spiritual development.

Is True Education Merely Intellectual?

Christianity is in large measure a rational religion. Spiritual development does not exclude any of the aspects of human personhood. Even the physical is an object of God's redemption (Rom. 8:11, 23; Phil 3:21). And surely the intellectual is not rejected, for the Word of God in two ways testifies to God's valuing of human understanding: (a) it is a readable documentation, and (b) it explicitly says, "I would not have you to be ignorant." To know God is a matter of experiential fellowship and communion through the special revelation of the written Word enabled by the finished work of Christ on the cross. Even the Lord's self-identification as "the Word made flesh" (John 1:14) is made known to people by the explicit information of the written Word. These matters are made "knowable" through the mystery of God, Jesus Christ the Redeemer, whose work on the behalf of human beings can be grasped intellectually as textual information, confirmed by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and acted out in functional life, as believers identify themselves with Christ in walk and conversation (Col. 2:3). Thus it should be seen that education which is concerned only with intellectual development or in which the acquisition of information as a compulsive priority is less than Christian.

Contemporary secular society, especially in the Western world, is profoundly influenced by rationalism and its roots in Hellenistic philosophy. The highest view of knowledge is that of clarified information. In contrast, the Hebrew cultural and religious roots of Christianity point toward true knowledge as that which a person acts upon. The Christian outcome of education, therefore, should not be the Greek-like satisfaction with clarified concepts. Instead the biblical concern for obedience—acting on truth—should be the central purpose of education and life. It is not enough to argue that obedience requires knowing. The issue is that knowing, in Christianity, cannot be defined apart from doing. Both John and Paul are sensitive to the tendency to divide creed from deed, quite likely entering the early church from Greek philosophy and educational traditions (Rom. 6; 4; 1 Cor. 3; Gal. 5:10-13; Eph. 2:10; 5; 2; Phil.

3:12-16; Col. 2:6; 1 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 John 1:6-7; 2 John 6; 3 John 4). Their warnings are needed today as surely as in the first-century church.

What is the Place of Educational Institutions?

It is entirely possible that Christianity in North America and Western Europe may have overemphasized formal education. Surely if access to Christian higher education were highly correlated with the development of the church of Jesus Christ, the United States would now be the most Christianized nation in history.

Evangelical Christianity has available today an unprecedented network of institutions of theological education, pastoral development, intellectual stimulation through literature, vocational training, Bible study, and liberal arts foundational learning. So what happens? There must be some slippage somewhere. Could it be that Christian colleges and seminaries are giving academic credit for the wrong things? In the quest for excellence, Christian higher education may have become intoxicated with the intellectual snobberies that can be so glorified in worldly academia. Much of today's institutional Christian education is off on a head-trip. The service motive is subordinated to intellectual goals; and service, when subordinated to anything, withers and dies. So long as "practical experience" is stultified by treating it as a poor cousin of intellectual learning, so long as "Christian service assignments" are weekend outings divorced from distinct and relevant dialogue with one's academic pursuits, and so long as theological education is seen as preparatory to (rather than simultaneous with) ministry, a weak linkage will continue between education and the development of the church.

In the past decade evangelicals have been urged to think of Christianity and its institutions, especially those that are more politically conservative, as riding a crest of popularity and growth. If this view were altogether accurate one could expect unprecedented strength and vitality in churches and dramatic influence on society at large. Increased enrollment in theological education is one evidence of the much-touted growth. A close look reveals certain changes of procedure but not significant differences in the net effects. For example, continuing education is becoming popular. Though the "preparatory" posture still holds at the core of things, the idea of advanced formal education for in-service development is becoming almost too popular.

The time has come to raise the question of how much formal education is too much. Many metaphors of "the good life" carry the notion that "more is better." Surely this is true of education, especially formal education. So goes American thought.

Could the American obsession with getting, gaining, collecting, and accumulating be the reason evangelicals do not evaluate ways and means more carefully? Whether the question is how many degrees one needs in order to be considered educated or how large a church enrollment should be it does not follow that more is better.

The American church is on the ragged edge of having too many pastors with doctoral degrees. The current trend toward more and more theology degrees is good news and bad news. It is good news, of course, whenever people are motivated to develop the talents and resources with which God has endowed them. But it is bad news when some pastors in the competitive quest for degrees so easily get caught up in prestige-seeking and lofty intellectualism that will isolate them from the people they claim to serve. When Jesus' teaching about leadership and education in Matthew 23:1-12 is ignored, the result is again the pomp of the Pharisees and scribes.

The trouble lies in two sources: (a) the difficulty of keeping the Lord's model of humility and servanthood at the forefront and (b) the wrong choice of metaphor of education. The resulting experiences often tend toward alienation rather than the building of Christian communities.

The practice of Christian education, with a few exceptions, is ambivalent, inconsistent, even erratic about what education is. Is it competitive or cooperative? Is it for all God's people or for an elite? Is it to prepare for future ministry or to facilitate an ongoing ministry? Education can mean several different things, some of which are contradictory. The root of the problem lies more in unexamined and unevaluated metaphors of education.

Consider two of the most common metaphors: education as *filling a container* and education as a *manufacturing* process. These two are closely related, though they use different symbolism. They are both faulty.

One of the key problems in both of these concepts of education is their rooting in a *tabula rasa* view of childhood. Worse yet, this view of any learner as an empty slate to be written upon by *those who know* is even applied to the teaching of adults. The result is high-cost kiddie-schools with larger chairs and less interesting teachers.

The Metaphor of *Filling*

In the *filling* metaphor the learner is more acted upon than active; a blank page to be written on by those doing the educating. This orientation demeans the image of God shared in each person and it encourages a passive receptivity, ultimately lacking in creativity and skills of evaluation.

Teachers who think of education in terms of filling a container are rarely concerned with individual differences of background, interest, or aspiration. The *content* is their thing. Most learning can be reduced to questions and answers. Recall of information is the evidence of becoming educated. Tests are good indicators of success or failure; grading can be objective. The more the teacher knows, the better the teacher is. Learning is essentially painful, but it is such good discipline! Such thinking leads to teaching that is little more than *cognitive dumping*.

Underlining the severity of dumping information and expectations on the learner, a process that also exemplifies the metaphor *molding*, Scheffler points out that "the one choosing the mold is wholly responsible for the result."[1]

Unfortunately those who *dump* and *mold* rarely see it that way. Dumpers tend to blame the student when the dump-out misses the bucket.

The Metaphor of the *Factory*

In the "factory" metaphor the learner is assumed to have characteristics which the machinery must grind down. Irregularities and peculiarities in the learner, the "raw material," are usually regarded as a nuisance. The system could be so much more efficient if the student were only a gadget or merely an imperfect object, something needing to be shaped, molded, and smoothed down.

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[1] Israel Scheffler, *The Language of Education* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1960), p. 51.

Teachers who see education in terms of the *factory* metaphor are usually aware that they have to accept responsibility for whether or not any learning is taking place. These teachers, or pastors, or parents, see themselves as creating the machinery that will turn out the product. Many people with degrees in education operate within this model. Their key mistake is in taking to themselves too much responsibility for direction and control. Their strategies and educational devices are often overpowering. Rather than inviting learners into a shared relationship, they expect them to submit themselves to being "processed." The learners often interact and become more active in the whole experience than is possible in the "filling metaphor, but the purposes are usually firmly fixed. The goals or objectives are in the system, not in the learner's experiences or interaction with the learning system.

A dozen or so years ago, TEE (theological education by extension) began to emerge. Two problems emerged. In the hands of compulsive people, programmed instruction and allied instructional technologies were used simply as more powerful ways to fulfill the old motives of cognitive dumping. Adding integrative seminars had been recommended as the connecting link between the cognitive input experiences and the practical service tasks, but the technology of teaching became an end in itself for many of these newcomers.[2] Second, the historical moment in which TEE emerged was marked by rapid nationalization of the church's educational institutions in the developing world. TEE promised to be an ideal vehicle to further the transition. TEE programs could put pastoral development closer to the real fields of service, get theological education out of its preparatory preoccupation, and more readily employ local pastor-teachers as the delivery agents to help other pastors.[3] Before 1975 it became clear that these desirable outcomes were being systematically frustrated. North American mission boards were recruiting as "TEE missionaries" more and more green seminary graduates, using this persuasive claim: "You really don't need much experience to be able to teach in TEE programs. After all, the PI materials will do it for you." The result was the largest influx of new missionaries since the post-World War II missionary boom. Thus faded the hopes of moving institutional education into more appropriate forms for the development of the third world church.[4]

The Metaphor of a ***Life-Walk***

A preferred metaphor is to see education as a life-walk to be shared. Some analysts have called it the *travel* metaphor. Kliebard states it well:

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[2] Ted Ward and Samuel F. Rowen, The Significance of the Extension Seminary. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 9 (Fall 1972): 17-27.

[3] Ted Ward, Theological Education by Extension: Much More Than a Fad. *Theological Education* 10 (Summer 1974): 246-58.

[4] Ted Ward, Types of TEE. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 13 (April 1977): 79-85. This writer still believes in theological education by extension, and thanks God that in many places it is fulfilling some of the earlier hopes.

> The curriculum is a route over which students will travel under the leadership of an experienced guide and companion. Each traveller will be affected differently by the journey since its effect is at least as much a function of the predilections, intelligence, interests, and intent of the traveller as it is of the contours of the route. This variability is not only inevitable, but wondrous and desirable. Therefore, no effort is made to anticipate the exact nature of the effect on the traveller; but as a great effort is made to plot the route so that the journey will be as rich, as fascinating and as memorable as possible.[5]

Kliebard's metaphor of education as travel is drawn from images of an earlier and more simple time. (It is not useful to visualize trains, buses, airplanes, and automobiles or even sailboats or canoes.) What is in mind is the walk, purposeful yet subject to the thousand-and-one revelations that emerge as the trail unfolds to meet the pilgrim's step.

Such a vision of education does not suggest wandering, though it allows for exploring. It does not imply lack of purpose, though it recognizes that *being* is even more important than *going*. This view of teaching and learning suggests a destination, though it implies that the *experiences* of going there are as important as the arrival.

Thus Christians have much to embrace in this metaphor of education. Jesus used it extensively. It fulfills the biblical teachings about human relationship, authority, and the inalienable sovereignty of God. All through the Scriptures God's people are seen as strangers and sojourners, walking together with God in the lead. We are pilgrims in a life-walk. Ours is not to "finish our education" and "settle down." (These are awful metaphors of human fulfillment.)

Christians are to learn, to develop, to experience the continuing of God's work begun in them (Phil. 1:6). "Marching to Zion," yes; their mission, however, is along that very line of march. They are not to avoid the needs of fallen humanity to the left and right of the path. Nor should they travel in lockstep. They learn through encountering life's realities as they discover God providing according to their needs, including the need for knowledge and wisdom.

As companions in the way, Christians have each other. Some are gifted to teach and to help. They all interrelate; they are an interdependent community. Having one Teacher, one God, one Leader, they are all brothers and sisters (Matt. 23:8-10).

Strangely, people think they understand something simply because they have seen it done so often. Teaching is like that. The study of education is often misunderstood. Many people view professional education as a sort of pretense. After all, it is argued that anyone can teach. And some who have been trained to teach do not seem to do it very well. Thus those who study education are merely indulging in an exaggerated form of common sense.

The reduction of teaching and learning to a set of commonplaces creates a further misunderstanding. Among those who apply to the Graduate School of Education at Michigan State University are some educators whose focus is on techniques and technology. A concern for techniques and technology is not wrong, but the overemphasis on machinery and tactics can and does eclipse the issues of

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[5] Herbert M. Kliebard, Metaphorical Roots of Curriculum Design. *Teachers College Record* 74 (February 1972): 404.

reason and faith which are much more important to the professional study of education. The field of Christian education, especially so-called “church education,” can also be criticized for these two problems: reductionism and overemphasis on technology.

Within education in the service of the church, from Sunday schools to seminaries, it is common, even popular, to “know nothing” about education, nothing beyond the immediate doing of one’s own thing. But being an educator is a matter of stewardship. Whether it is listening to others or lecturing about one’s subject of expertise or dealing with the complexities of a four-year-old’s world-and-life view, educational issues and concerns as well as specific knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning are part of responsible ministry.

Theological Education

Important questions about theological education need careful consideration:

1. Is theological education still being modeled on nineteenth-century medical education? By 1900 medical education had become a long and costly preparatory experience, full of lectures and demonstrations, but almost totally devoid of hands-on experience. A substantial transition toward the clinical context and toward patient-centered learning was triggered by the 1906 Report of Abraham Flexner’s study of medical education, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation. Some old-guard medical educators had argued then that if medical education were to become patient-centered it would lose its emphasis on foundational science. By no means has this happened. Nor would any theological education need to sacrifice its Bible-centeredness if it focused more on the people of God. The church and Jesus Christ’s building of His church is what ministry is all about. No inherent conflict exists between the centrality of the Scriptures and the need to deal with real people. Education can enhance the one through involvement with the other.

2. Is the church of Jesus Christ well served by pastors who are concerned only with the right handling of the Word of God but who lack substantial knowledge of the social realities of their time? Sensitive awareness of the needs and conditions of people is an essential part of the ministry as exemplified by the Lord Jesus.

3. Are the intellectual roots of present-day theological education more Hellenistic or Hebrew? Are the metaphors of education it represents more a matter of cognitive filling, machining a product, or engaging in a life-walk? Is its view of development more mechanistic or more organic? Does its use of competition outweigh its advocacy of cooperation? Is its purpose communicated as winning and getting rewards, or as fulfilling the metaphors of salt and light? As one pastor has suggested, some seminaries are “turning out intellectual wizards who are relational dwarfs.”

4. To what extent are seminaries concerned about the persistent evidence that what is learned in an academic context, particularly the Greek and Hebrew language skills, are often abandoned when the real context of ministry is encountered?

Nothing is more basic to pastoral responsibility than the spiritual development of God’s people, the church. Pastors might delegate music-leading tasks or even some of the hand-shaking and the floor-sweeping, but they cannot give away their majority share of responsibility for the development of God’s people. One of the grave ills in theological education is the isolation of the discipline of Christian education, compartmentalizing it into a distinct field, conceptually isolated from ministerial service. In many Bible colleges and seminaries Christian education courses are typically avoided by pre-pastoral students.

The field of Christian education has been preoccupied with children at the expense of adult nurture and especially of parent development. No wonder churches have so many hurting parents, whose unpreparedness, anguish, and sense of inadequacy causes them to dump more and more responsibility on the church for the spiritual development of their children. The common pattern of Christian education in many churches falls far short of what God specifies in the Scriptures.

The center of biblical Christian education should be in the home, anyway (Deut. 6:4-9). In God's plan, parenting is a job for beginners. But God provides helps so that such a beginner, each new parent, whose tasks and responsibilities are enormously complex and demanding, is able to be prepared and competent. Parenting is no job for the unprepared, the self-taught, or casually knowledgeable dabblers. To be a prepared and developing parent requires a continuously open learning relationship with one's children and with a community of sincerely committed colleagues. How ironic, by contrast, is the professor, teacher, Sunday school teacher, and yes, even the pastor, whose role as a teacher of others is approached as a casual indulgence in sessions of talking and telling.

Arguments for knowledgeable responsibility in Christian education are heard more frequently today. For the most part they are widely accepted, especially within the Christian education field itself. But what follows from the repentance for past inattention and neglect into a conversion and new life as a "real" educator is often equally disturbing. The transformation is too commonly marked by a sudden obsession about methods and materials. Few fields of education have seen such an emphasis on filmstrips, cassettes, programmed instruction, and various forms of video as can be noted in Christian education. The *with it* Christian educator or pastor often appears to be a gullible promoter of all sorts of gimmicky methods, jazzy materials, and don't forget the dozens of workshops and conferences.

A teacher's purpose is to help people learn. A true educator is concerned about what and how people learn. In one way or another, every human being is a teacher; all teach each other, directly and indirectly. But to become an educator one learns, through practice and through various deliberate inquiries, a disciplined approach to making and sharing decisions about what should be learned. An educator is deeply concerned and professionally skilled in what makes for effective learning. An educator distinguishes between telling and teaching, between hearing and learning. A Christian educator should also distinguish between education that is satisfied with "measurable cognitive gains" and true education in which the incorporation of principles of God's truth facilitates spiritual development.

Such education at its most practical level is a life-walk to be shared by members of God's family in small groups and in larger communities.

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

Education for Developing Nations: Equality of Educational Opportunities

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
This article is the substance of an address to the Pre-Congress Conference of the IVth Congress of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), Seoul, Korea. July 3-5, 1980. Ward outlines various ways to understand the term "equality of educational opportunities"—especially as it applies to majority world development.

"Equality of educational opportunities" has become a worldwide political theme. In nations that remember clearly their colonial past, the theme speaks of deliverance and fulfillment. Where recent history has been blighted by elitism and unwarranted privilege, "equality of educational opportunities" has become a motive of those who would correct imbalances and injustices.

Equality of educational opportunities is an ideal. Perhaps nowhere has it been nor will it be fully realized. But to strive for anything less seems beneath the dignity of humanity. The government that refuses to claim this ideal as its ultimate goal will be severely criticized. Every sector of society with real or imagined claims of neglect and discrimination will complain that the government is using educational policy to suppress them.

The ideal is costly. To strive toward equality of educational opportunity is expensive. In most cases it demands sacrifices in some other sector of governmental expenditure. It often involves broadening of the face of educational expenditures at the expense of higher education. Equality of educational opportunity demands an attack on the systems that maintain the privileged few at the expense of poor.

If the goal of equality of educational opportunity were simply a choice between broad basic education for everyone or lavish and extensive education for a select few, the decision could be made on the basis of political power. A nation with a broad representative democracy would likely choose the former, and a totalitarian or oligarchical nation would choose the latter. But it is not so simple. Education is more than a product of national development. Indeed, education is the *engine* of national development. Thus, the extent of educational opportunity will determine the breadth and quality of national development. In the nation that denies educational opportunity to its people, everyone suffers the consequences, rich and poor alike.

Education has social, economic, and political values. Americans call upon the philosophy of Thomas Jefferson to explain the nation's historic commitment to education of rich and poor. Jefferson's ideal of universal and free education "for the general enlightenment of the citizenry" though not immediately implemented, has been widely recognized as offering the most practical deterrent to tyranny (Brookover et al., in Gordon, 1974, 164).

In today's world the striving of nations for political and economic strength sometimes ignores the social conditions of the people. On one hand, education is respected and sought after for its value in creating job competencies and technological output. But education also has inevitable social meaning. As people become more able, more self- reliant, and more confident, they also become more critical and more

communicative. Few nations have been able to move toward equality of educational opportunity without, at the same time, opening up traditional and restricted social systems. Educated people are inevitably more aspiring people.

Sociologists and historians have observed that education serves the society in contrasting ways: the educational system contributes to social flexibility while at the same time making the society more stable (Havighurst and Neugarten, 1957, 270). National policy decisions can make either of these two qualities, flexibility or stability, dominant. In the interests of political stability, protection of power structure and its ownership properties, the tendency is to emphasize stability. The appeal for equality of educational opportunity, on the other hand, tends toward opening up the social system and providing for “climbing and falling” according to people’s energy and abilities.

Not all education leads to national development. The hope that larger investment in education will result in economic and social development is too simple. Some forms of education maintain existing conditions and thus slow other efforts toward development.

Particularly in the post-colonial nations of West Africa, the first expansions of educational opportunity produced relatively little measurable gain in the quality of life. Until the curriculum of education can be converted from colonial models and elitist academic values to become a functional preparation for participation in new developments, the results are disappointing. One of the most serious mistakes is to expand the wrong type of education. Perhaps more people will be educated, but if what they learn is useless to themselves or to the nation, it is largely a waste.

The universities of many nations are vulnerable to criticism. Beginning as instruments of colonial culture, many still continue to represent cultural values far removed from the needs of the nation. As a means of assuring the upper classes a way to assure themselves and their children superior status and lifestyle, they function all too well.

Most third world universities are still carbon copies of universities in industrial countries; they remain remote from the development problems of their own nations (Botkin et al., 1979, 95). It is not enough to be educating many people into high skills and academic proficiency. Such people tend to develop disdain for their “backward” nation and depart for greener pastures, anyway.

Higher education has two enabling hands, power and service. Many of the great institutions of learning are more proficient at developing people who will use their education as *power*, to influence and to control others. The development of a nation is benefitted more by people who use their education to *serve.* The orientation of the colleges and universities usually makes the difference.

In the primary and secondary schools the curriculum may or may not support national development. The impractical, imported, urban characteristics of many school curricula deny the quality of educational opportunities to poor and rural people. Their basic needs are not well served by such schools and thus they lack interest for themselves or for their children. The exception, of course, is the aspiring villager who wants a city-style and foreign education for his children so they can “escape.” This well-established educational tradition works against rural development and is one of the causes of urban over-population.

> The dichotomy between school and life has been identified as a major limit on learning effectiveness. So long as schooling is in a language foreign to the mother-tongue of children, so long as the values and the rigidities of formal learning are alien to the lifestyle of home, community

> and marketplace, and so long as the content of school studies lacks bridges into the life of people, there will be no equality of educational opportunity. (Botkin et al., 1979, 93)

Politicized Minorities, the Neglected and the Poor

In every nation development is uneven. Some people benefit from development more than other people do. Urban lifestyle, health and welfare conditions often improve before the rural components. Regions or tribal factions that constitute the political power base are sure to receive preferential treatment. And, of course, the middle class, however small it may be, usually benefits more than the lower class.

Overt-discrimination is the most obvious problem. Educational opportunities are still being denied to millions of people because of ethnic, tribal, political and religious reasons. Any government that promises to improve educational opportunity is obligated to open its eyes to the overt discrimination arising out of its own political structure.

The rural poor have been recognized as a neglected sector of society. In recent years many international assistance agencies have encouraged national planning ministries to attack this neglect. Unlike the rich countries wherein the rural poor are a minority, in most developing nations they are a major sector of the society. Thus to deal with rural poverty is very expensive. So far there are very few evidences of large-scale breakthroughs toward educational planning that benefits the rural poor. The increased emphasis on nonformal education could be important since the schools and school curriculum show few signs of dealing with better rural needs.

The cities still get the best teachers, the newest resources, and the largest share of financial resources. In only a few nations is the problem of regional discrimination being studied.

Equal access does not make equal opportunity. Even regions where there is an open access to educational experience, many other factors can work against equal opportunity. The distance to a school, the costs of going to school, tuition fees, uniforms, books, etc., as well as the hidden costs, such as the need for children to participate in the family enterprise, farm or other labor, keep education out of reach for many. The living conditions of the family are also closely related to realistic educational opportunity:

> Learning that promotes the goals of survival and dignity cannot be developed and encouraged in a vacuum. For example, it makes little sense to launch a major program to stimulate learning among people living below the subsistence level without at the same time adopting policies conducive to…improvement in their levels of food, health and habitat. (Botkin et al., 1979, 85)

The assumption that industrialized modern societies are no longer confronted by problems of equality of educational opportunity is incorrect. Access to education, the contribution of education to social welfare, and the socio-economic values of learning are persistent issues in any society. They are never solved, though they may be ignored.

"Confusing perceptions of justice, of the nature of our society, and of the functions and needs of individuals are widespread," according to Boyer, Waters, and Harris, as they introduce a chapter on the current problem of justice, society, and the individual in American education (in Jelinek, 1978, 163). The faults in justice systems and the malfunctions of education are being urgently addressed in the American society. Although the United States is not part of the third world, we are nevertheless continuing to confront our own development problems. Social realities have led to inequality of educational opportunity for certain Mexican-American, Native American Indians, and African-America people (Jelinek, 1978, 172). No less than in a developing nation these are important problems for the United States. Development and

strength of any nation are dependent on the integrity of the solutions to just such problems. Every nation must learn the importance of creative self-criticism.

Education can lead to frustration. Education, almost any sort of education, is associated with hope. Perhaps it is deep in the human consciousness to sense that development of one's understanding is a fulfillment. This sense is the fountain of hope and the hope is the stimulus of great plans. Education thus creates the demand for more education.

Those who plan education must anticipate the pressures that will be created by even a relatively small success. Even worse are the false hopes about economic advantages. Education cannot create jobs. The economic condition of the country, especially its industry and function in the international marketplace, are more closely related to employment. Education can alter the employability of a person, but the primary question remains: for what job?

> A major limitation on use of expanded education to promote economic development is the *absorptive capacity* of the modern sector of economies in emergent nations….The first stages of industrialization create few jobs….The schools do not create unemployment, but they contribute to the complex situation which leads youth to leave the rural scene in search of jobs in the cities which cannot cope their numbers. (Hanson, 1969, 350)

Difficult Decisions

The choices that must be made require great wisdom. Education for development, and especially the ideal of equal opportunity force planners to confront some difficult issues.

Adults or children? Historically education has been for children. In virtually every society today the major educational concern is for the socialization of children. Surely adults can continue to learn throughout life, and many do. But education usually means schools and schools means children.

National development through education demands concern for both children and adults. But this demands even more resources, so the emphasis on children usually wins out. It is more sentimental than logical to put the major educational investment into children in a developing nation. Educational quality cannot be achieved by emphasis on children alone. The false hope that through the children society can be transformed still persists.

The problem was clearly identified many years ago in the 1957 report of The Pakistan Commission on National Education:

> …once pupils leave the village school they become assimilated by the community rather than function as progressive forces for its enlightenment. Many forget in a short time even the skills of reading and writing. The reason is not only that the atmosphere of the village discourages reading, but also that little reading material is available to sustain a positive interest. In spite of their schooling, children tend to retain the old prejudices, attitudes and way of life. *The education of the adult is clearly important even to ensure the continued literacy of the children.* (in Manniche, 1978, 59)

Literacy for all? Even the most optimistic assessment indicates that one-fifth of the adults in the world are unable to communicate through the written word. These people are mostly concentrated in the most economically deprived regions of the world's most economically distressed countries (Botkin et al., 1979, 91). Any discussion of educational opportunity must take into account this most difficult of all

educational problems. In many cases, people are illiterate because the political decision has been made to keep them illiterate; there is fear that increasing their communication skills will risk converting them into a political liability. For many illiterate people poverty is so deep and basic human needs so overwhelming that they see no value in “wasting” scarce energy on the seemingly meaningless rituals of symbols on paper.

Creative uses of mass media, especially radio, can be employed to bring such people into learning for development. Illiteracy is not equivalent to ignorance. But sooner or later, in one way or another, illiterate persons must be helped out of bondage to secondary sources and dependent modes of learning if equality of educational opportunity is to have any meaning.

> The realization of national goals, economically, socially, and politically, is now perceived as requiring the participation of previously bypassed masses of urban and rural citizens, literate and illiterate. (Case and Niehoff, 1976, 50)

The educational needs of the developing world require massive literacy education efforts, but even more important, they require programs of educational opportunity that enable illiterate persons to develop important skills and understanding *before* they become literate. Otherwise, educational opportunity will continue to shrink.

Women, too? That women are proportionally under-enrolled in formal education in most of the world is a well-known fact. Within the past several years this fact has been linked to the parallel observation that most development schemes are based on thinking of, about, and for men.

The same international assistance agencies that have lately been advocating programs for the poorest of the poor and the rural poor are now concerned with women in development.” Educators my welcome this emphasis, especially in the spirit of equal educational opportunity. Surely the fact that such a large percentage of human beings has been assumed not to need educational opportunity is regrettable.

Education of the handicapped. The emotional quality of this area of inequality is overwhelming. The incidence of handicapping conditions is greater in less developed nations (blindness, untreated fevers and resultant brain damage, uncorrected orthopedic conditions, etc.); thus the human loss is staggering. Yet the costs of providing educational assistance for handicapped persons is relatively greater than for others, and the economic advantages are unclear. The funds will not even stretch to cover minimal education for all “normal” persons. What can or should be done for the handicapped? It is not an easy question

On humanitarian grounds, and because the economic contribution of the handicapped can be turned from the negative to a positive, the handicapped should be included in any honest attempt to provide equal educational opportunity. But when there is not enough money, the cold trade-off emerges: neglect one handicapped person for the education of four “normal” persons.

What is education worth? The effective economic value of a given amount of expenditure in education is hard to assess. Many outcomes of education are remote, abstract, and, more often than not, cumulative across a person’s lifetime. The econometric procedures of our time are inadequate to address this vital question: what is education worth?

The economic question must be addressed, at least with logic and common sense. Educational planners can, for example, invest in education that has greater likelihood of relating to development needs. Hanson warns:

> …many educational models and generalizations based on experience or research within advanced nations are not directly applicable to problems arising in the social, economic, and educational settings which characterize emerging countries. (1969, 357)

The quest for more functional education has led to a worldwide recognition of nonformal education. While not necessarily equivalent to formal education and thus not a "less costly" substitute for schooling, nonformal education does offer great hope for broad access to functional education. The nonformal education frame-of-mind accepts health, agriculture, nutrition, family welfare, job skills, and virtually all such vital areas of life as appropriate situations through which to develop learning experiences for adults and children alike.

> …Nonformal education methods…are in a number of respects better adapted to the present educational needs of the developing countries than are the formal schools. They are designed to achieve more immediate results, especially in preparation for…socially useful jobs…In building upon…stronger motivation due to its more obvious relevance to real-life problems and needs…(Case and Niehoff, 1976, 51)

Ten years from now we may no longer be talking about nonformal education, but *education* surely will still be important and our perspectives about education will be larger. *Participation* may become the key issue. The Report to the Club of Rome[1] identifies participation as a major feature of both national problem-solving and of the form of education that enables it. In the report Botkin warns that

> …if participation is to be effective, it will be essential that those who hold power do not block innovative learning. Participation is more than the formal sharing of decisions; it is…cooperation, dialogue, and empathy. (Botkin 1979, 13)

Responsible Commitment to Equality of Educational Opportunities

Pursuit of the ideal of equality of educational opportunities can stimulate social reconstruction. In the United States as recently as 1954, several states were still claiming that separate educational resources for the white and black races provided equal opportunity. This position, called "separate but equal," had replaced the earlier practice of exclusion of black people from educational opportunity, a legacy from days of legal slavery. But the Supreme Court of the United States decided that the only valid equality would come from free access to the same resources.

Thus today the only allowable discrimination in educational matters is on the basis of abilities and previous record of the person. Despite our historic claims to freedom, the nation was 178 years beyond its own colonial revolution before the issue of racial discrimination was faced squarely (Shoemaker, 1957).

The ideal acquires deep social commitment. Botkin sees the same problem at the heart of the developing nation's need for more open, participatory education: "What is especially important and currently lacking is socio-political will'" (Botkin, 1979, 129).

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[1] See http://www.clubofrome.org/?p=324 for a description of the founding purposes and activities of the Club of Rome. Last accessed June 2013.

Drawing on L. J. Lebret's concept of development, Goulet comments that "There is no development unless all people benefit, unless the common good is achieved. Privilege systems, excessive gaps between the city and countryside, alienating divisions of labor are all ruled out" (Goulet 1974, 45).

The lesson can be learned from the world's experiences in literacy education. It applies just as well to the issue of equal educational opportunity. Experience thus far has shown that there are several factors vital to the success of literacy programs:

- National political resolve.
- Dynamic social and economic structures, more likely to succeed in the society on the move towards greater social justice.
- Awareness and participation of the population.
- Plans…geared to economic and social development. (Bhola 1980, 1)

Education is at the very life-center of human personhood and national development. To consider matters of educational practice is to deal with the basic conditions of human life and social-political systems.

It is the nature of the system itself that perpetuates the feeling of powerlessness and not something basic in people. Before successful education can be experienced, children of diversity must begin to feel power that comes from self-confidence, self-worth, a sense of security and place, the uplifting quality of group identification, and the salutary effects of becoming aware of the value of one's own ideas and feelings (Charnofsky, 1971, iv).

The quality of educational opportunity depends, ultimately, upon making these conditions available to all human beings.

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COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

Schooling as a Defective Approach to Education

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract

Schooling does not equal *education*. School is the major means society uses to pass along the information and the habits of mind that are expected in ordinary life within a society. At its best, schooling is the focal point for a series of years wherein children are expected to develop practices and appetites for establishing a life-long quest for effective knowledge and its real-world applications. The author reflects on the role of schooling, describing its contributions and its limitations. Unpublished paper, 1974.

For more than twenty years I have been engaged in teacher education and curriculum development in many sorts of educational institutions. At its best, the systematic designs and plans for making knowledge interesting and worthwhile so rarely inspire confidence. Meanwhile, learners frequently confront conditions that repress initiative and undermine self-respect. Exploration and discovery are so easily suppressed by a learner's frustration and growing resentment. Nevertheless, school is an asset, not a liability. Without schools, the conditions of society would rapidly deteriorate. For most young people, school becomes the doorway to the world of knowledge and skills. Despite its flaws, school offers hope and a path upward for many.

A winsome teacher can provide lifelong inspiration. But for some learners, such teachers seem out of reach. Schools are too much like factories. They institutionalize and regiment young people whose motivations seem weak or off-course. Too often, schooling seems to make strong learners shine, but to neglect those most in need of help. The life-enriching potentialities of the schooling experience are often lost in the high-structure environment that demands conformity in matters of behavior, social control, and relationships. Those who "float to the surface" are often highly supportive of schooling, ready to accept and even to justify the school whether or not it is clearly repressive.

Characteristically, those students who are able to "get with the program" can develop respect for themselves and for the educational experiences. The problem is this: the positive outcomes are not predictable and not at all assured. For many, there are more problems than solutions. But there are exciting exceptions that warm the educator's heart. I am not discouraged. But I often wonder. Why is the *good* that schooling can bring so often overshadowed by the blights that seem so persistent? Is there truly a basis for the trust that is given to the schooling process as widely practiced around the world? Is schooling gaining ground or falling short on its intended outcomes? Educational expenditures are increasing, yes, but is something missing? Do schools deliver on their promises? Answers to these questions seem elusive. I am neither jaded nor negative, but I will confess holding some suspicion that we may be headed toward a major upheaval. Its harbingers are heard in the emergent industry of educational technology.

At its best, increased technology promises cost savings, one of the most unlikely goals. Historians of education recognize that the Twentieth Century has been marked by one attempt after another to save money (and time) by using a variety of media to educate. Shifting the cost of educating from manpower to mechanical and technological media is recognized as the current motive. At what cost? Anticipating what outcomes? Thousands of teachers have fought a valiant fight, and many tens of thousands of dollars have

been invested in machinery, materials, and electronics. But has it enabled more young people to gain better understanding and sound judgment?

Sadly, the increased expenditures seem not to result in educational experiences that are more sensitive, inviting, and supportive. The value of in-service education and broad-scale professional participation in educational improvement hardly needs to be justified. Obviously, anything that can be done to make poor schools better is worth the effort.

In many situations it is an uphill battle. When the psychological and moral condition of an inherently coercive system molds teachers and students alike into competitive, compulsive neurotics, and when teachers write profound and flowery "truths" in graduate-school night courses and then spend their days harassing children, I feel frustrated and downhearted.

Educators have developed their own folklore about these conditions: "The teachers who will have these kids next year are expecting us to get them ready for this-and-that, so we have to get them ready," and "The teachers who had them last year messed them up so badly it's all I can do to salvage even a few of them."

School itself may be partly at fault. Not long ago, while engaged in a study of the problems that have caused many people in the United States, Great Britain, and around the world to become disillusioned with schools and schooling there emerged a list of twenty characteristics of schooling that can hinder effective learning. After living with the list for several months, it began to make sense: school improvement is continuously necessary because of inherent characteristics in the schooling approach to education. In other words, if the schooling approach is going to continue, it should be understood that certain problems come along in the bargain, These problems, once clearly identified, can be either reduced or eliminated. Weaknesses and defects of the sort that we usually focus on during "school improvement" activities may indeed be predictable and should be expected. Seen in this light, schools are like leaky ships that founder in the tide whenever the bilge pumps get fouled up. That goes a long way toward explaining what we often see! So learning how to fix the pumps is likely more sane that putting the ship in dry dock!

Everett Reimer, in *School Is Dead* (1971, Doubleday) and Ivan Illich in *Deschooling Society* (1970, Harper & Row) may go further than necessary. Their critics assert that they would sell out, or burn out, the whole defective system. It is embarrassing to note the degree of reasonable judgment in their arguments. Many of us are grateful for many of the things schooling has done for us. Especially for certain abstract, conceptual, and highly sequential learning, schooling brings about positive outcomes very well for many learners. But to drag *everyone* through experiences for which they can see no need and thus to create a lifelong disdain for learning seems counterproductive. There must be a better way!

Every educator should take a share of responsibility for the weakness of schooling. Many of us have benefitted from schooling. Thus we have an obligation to help to refine and improve it. Toward this end, the following list of twenty characteristics is proposed as a series of valid tasks for the repair crew. Addressing any of these weaknesses and flaws with worthy corrective action could move toward improvement in education as a social enterprise.

Sources of Weakness in the "Schooling" Approach to Education

1. All learners are assumed to be much alike in terms of needs, interests, and abilities.

2. Conforming behavior is preferred over divergent and nonconforming behavior.

3. Learners are increasingly made more competitive at the price of cooperation.

4. Learners are expected to be receptors of learning rather than producers and communicators.

5. The learner's part in educational decision-making is minimal and tends to be steadily reduced.

6. The responsibility for attitudes and feelings about content and about learning itself is attributed to the student.

7. The content to be learned is justified in terms of *future* needs of the learner.

8. Schooling's major justification is its value as preparation, mostly expressed in terms of eligibility for more schooling.

9. Evaluation is concerned almost exclusively with cognitive knowledge of facts, information, processes, and skills.

10. Learning experiences are designed or selected on the basis of values of the adult and established world.

11. Abstractions of experience in the form of language and symbols are substituted for realities.

12. Rewards are symbolic more than real. Even the satisfactions of seeing oneself develop are subordinated to imposed systems of rewards.

13. Punishment is assumed to increase learning.

14. Punishment is a virtually sovereign right of the teacher.

15. The teacher has ascribed authority, thus creating a hierarchy based on unearned status.

16. The social distance that separates teachers from learners is increased by assigning different sets of rights and expectations to each.

17. Learning experiences are designed and limited to fit time blocks.

18. Learning experiences are designed and limited to fit standard locations and space.

19. Testing provides the criterion of success.

20. Success is the surpassing value.

These twenty characteristics of schools and school-learning relate negatively to effective learning. Increasingly people are searching for alternatives. Some of the "alternative schools" are attempts to create alternatives to the schooling approach; so, indeed, are some of the "extension education" movements. But even here, so often a borrowed offensive flaw from the schooling approach limits what can be accomplished. Sometimes all that happens is a re-labeling of the same old bag of tricks.

In any case, liberation from schooling is a worthy goal. We need to abandon the assumption that schooling is at the very center of any valid concept of education. The mistaken assumption is that learning depends on schooling. Surely, organized formal education is important. Education is a central part of life's

learning experiences, with schooling at the center of the process. The “schooling” frame of mind assumes that that schooling is society’s most effective and efficient means of providing education. The contrasting position is that human existence is a process of learning and development, and that human society can provide many ways to help people to learn.

A liberated viewpoint recognizes schooling, despite its defects, as *one* of many valid ways to educate. This outlook sees learning more openly. The person learns, the society provides *many* ways to help people learn, and new possibilities will continue to emerge!

In the years ahead much more attention will be given to “non-formal education” and “alternative forms.” Don’t panic; these may be the voice of liberation. But don’t jump too soon on the bandwagon, either. There is likely no perfect way to educate.

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Effective Learning in Nonformal Modes

Ted W. Ward, Lois McKinney-Douglas, and John M. Detoni

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Abstract
From the final report of the seminar on nonformal education convened by the South East Asia Ministries of Education Organization (SEAMEO) with the cooperation of the South East Asia Development Advisory Group (SEADAG) and the government of Malaysia. Penang, October 11-14, 1971.

Regardless of the current wave of worldwide interest in the topic, *nonformal education* remains a non-descriptive arbitrary term. "Nonformal" relates more to the motives of education rather than the modes of education and uses virtually the whole range of instructional procedures found in formal education. When education is carried out by organizations recognized as "educational" (for example, the Ministry of Education or the University), we tend to think of the education as being "formal." When education is carried out by agencies that are not part of educational institutions, the efforts are described as "nonformal" education.

The distinction can be misleading since both formal and nonformal modes share similar strengths and limitations. Further, it does no justice to innovation in established institutions to label them as "formal" without recognizing their nonformal elements. Some of the most important innovations in education during this century have resulted from experimentation by formal institutions in developing truly nonformal modes of education. The significant expansion of cooperative extension services, as in rural and community-life education in the U.S., adult experiential education in many parts of the world, "radio classes" as in Australia, Colombia, India, and Italy, and other expansions of the efforts of ministries of education to broaden public education through communication media are nonformal contributions of the "formal education" sector. The tendency to polarize formal and nonformal education inevitably diverts attention from the central issue of effective learning.

Fad or Honest Search?

Little inherent difference exists between effective learning in nonformal situations and effective learning in formal situations. In contrast to both formal and nonformal learning, *informal* learning is most apt to be different, since informal learning is likely to be "unconscious" in the sense of incidental and non-intentional so far as the learner is concerned. For example, learning of one's mother tongue is mostly gained through informal learning situations.

We need to be reminded that schools do not make people learn. Certainly schools can provide opportunities for people to learn, and schools can even help people become more interested in learning. But schools in general are a way to bring people together with educational resources. Whether or not the people learn and what is the value of what they learn are issues sometimes overlooked. It is not enough to build schools and stock them with resources.

Those who are concerned about effective learning, whether the educational setting is formal or nonformal, must evaluate the relevancy of educational experiences to social values and select procedures and methods that are appropriate to the learners.

Whether or not the current wave of interest in nonformal education is a fad is a legitimate question. Education in the twentieth century has manifested the same volatility and instability as have most other institutions. The advent of the communications revolution has aggravated an already unstable situation. The pendulum swings from one extreme of philosophy and methodology to another. Thus the term “nonformal” may add little clarity to an already confused situation. If we are engaged in one more semantic exercise or one more attempt to find utopia through putting new labels on the status quo, then the excitement about nonformal education is indeed a fad. However, our experiences with those who are seriously concerned about nonformal education leads us to the conclusion that the phenomenon is neither trite nor futile.

Those who are seriously interested in nonformal education usually express their concerns as a search for alternatives to costly and/or unresponsive formal systems of education. Thus the issue is rarely the degree of formalness of the educational operation, but its costs and its capacities to achieve suitable objectives. “Nonformal education” is then the non-descriptive term applied to anything people describe as an alternative to formal education. However, the technologies and pedagogies of formal education may be employed in nonformal education to the extent that they can be used to reach different objectives and reach them at lower costs.

Many of those most clearly identified with the search for nonformal alternatives in education are frustrated by the tendency of formal education to enrich and perpetuate an elitism within their societies. It is charged that such educational systems do little or nothing to solve the problems of massive ignorance, poverty, and isolation from the determination of governing authority and human destiny in general. Others seek alternatives to offset the weaknesses of the “establishment.” Notably, the kinship of reformers and revolutionaries in South America, Africa, Asia, and North America derives primarily from the fact that they are all seeking alternatives to contemporary western-style institutionalized education. This fact constitutes one of the stronger replies to the charge of faddism. “Nonformal education” may be a faddish label, but the earnest quest for effective alternatives to the present use of educational procedures and resources to enhance the human condition is significant.

In summary, alternatives are needed because of one or more of the following factors:

1. To provide education for those who are not being reached by formal schooling.

2. To provide education at lower cost.

3. To direct educational objectives toward goals that are more closely related to the needs of society and to learners’ needs within their society.

Planning for Nonformal Education

Within the scope of this paper it is necessary to emphasize the particular issues and problems of planning for nonformal education.

1. *Specify the learning to be achieved.* Nonformal education is typically concerned with learning that has a high degree of “practical” usefulness. Thus instructional procedures are concerned with real-world applications of learning. For example, assume that the practical problem for which the nonformal education is being designed is the need for operators of tractors for community farms. The training program should specify the operational skills of tractor operation and tractor maintenance. Learning would be specified in terms of its practical use, not simply in terms of abstract or theoretical understandings. The learning objectives for a family planning program would not be specified as “knowing birth control

techniques," but as the composite of understandings and behavior changes that represent the *actual adoption and practice* of family planning procedures.

The emphasis on applied learning is not only a concern of nonformal education. Formal education, in some countries, has undergone a similar shift in learning emphasis. But the investments in applied education are most often in the sector of nonformal education.

2. *Describe the target population.* The target populations for programs of nonformal education are typically specific and delimited. In spite of persistent limitations of access, it is within *formal* education that the education-for-everyone approach has been most often applied. One of the continuing dilemmas of formal education is how to provide educational experiences for a diverse population and thus broaden access. A current criticism of American education is that in its effort to provide uniform educational experiences for a widely varied target population it fails to provide appropriate experiences for those from different cultural backgrounds or for those whose academic background has been inadequate or atypical.

One of the most important requirements for effective learning is compatibility of the planned experiences and the learners. Each proposed target population must be carefully studied and understood in terms of three major factors that relate to effective learning: 1) motivations, value systems, and reward systems within which learners live and work, 2) previously acquired skills, and 3) expectations about learning and the learning environment.

Because of its importance, a detailed specification for understanding target populations is presented later in the paper.

3. *Specify the instructional tasks.* Jerome Bruner[1] was among the first of the psychologists of learning to warn that instructional design and learning are separable tasks. Identification and description of *learning* objectives is followed by the design of instructional experiences to facilitate the learning. The creative design of various learning experiences requires data about the target population, specific learning objectives or intentions, awareness of the full range of possible instructional alternatives, and insights into the relevancy of the instructional alternatives to the cultural context.

Specifying instructional alternatives consists of 1) identifying and/or creating instructional procedures suited to the learning objectives and 2) making choices among the alternatives in order to move ahead in the development of instruction. Finally, with further data from the target population, instructional procedures are evaluated and revised.

4. *Specify the administrative support functions.* Support for an instruction ordinarily involves technology and its maintenance, communication with participants and facilitators, identification of location(s), and necessary resources, and so on. Nonformal education often involves negotiation, and joint planning with other agencies is often necessary when resources are shared.

5. *Specify the level of performance to be achieved.* The level of performance differs from the learning itself in that it is concerned with accuracy, rate of performance, or quality of the skill. An important question is what will constitute the lowest acceptable level of performance for any learner. Since instructional materials must take account of judgments about importance, frequency, and quality, the

[1] Jerome Bruner. *Toward a Theory of Instruction*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967)

level(s) of performance should be determined before the actual design. Planners of nonformal education typically establish a set of standards that represent acceptable levels of mastery of skills or understandings and then design procedures whereby learners may attain those levels.

6. *Prepare instructional materials.* Differences in linguistic demands, conceptual level, degree of abstraction, and basic differences in learning objectives make it difficult to adapt materials used in formal education to nonformal learning experiences. Similarly, materials that originated in another culture are most often unsuitable, especially as learning preferences vary significantly across cultures. Therefore planners typically create new instructional materials and procedures for nonformal education in context.

7. *Equip human resources.* Planners create learning experiences for those who manage instructional experiences and provide support to ensure that the various human roles will be compatible and supportive. It is recommended that the personnel are analyzed in the same way as target populations, skills specified, and learning experiences designed accordingly.

8. *Design evaluative procedures.* Evaluation in formal education is more often concerned with *student* accomplishment. Students "pass" or "fail" to the degree they "apply" themselves and "work hard." In nonformal education student feedback and performance data are elicited at several points to inform *program* improvement. Typically, in the early months of a nonformal program, the major objective is to gather evaluative data. Thus many programs begin with small-scale test sites or learning experiences. Compatibility of test sites and small-scale learning experiences with the broader contexts and target population is part of the design process.

9. *Evaluate participant learning.* The primary purpose of program evaluation is program improvement. Evaluation of learning is also necessary to help to help participants achieve desired levels of competency and understanding. Testing, therefore, is consistent with goals and desired levels of performance. Written examinations are rare. Most evaluative feedback is based on observations of performance.

Basic Questions for Planning

Effective nonformal education is a complex universe of experiences in which the learners themselves are a contributing part. Further, learning results from the interaction of *deliberately designed* educative experiences, multiple environmental influences, and the learner as a unique personality. Since identifying all significant variables is impossible, planners select the more important factors for intentional inclusion in the program.

One of the more important responsibilities of planners is adequate and appropriate analysis of target populations. Design for nonformal education involves consideration of motivations, expectations, and abilities of learners and the rewards and reward systems in which the learners and the learning experiences operate. Why do learners get involved in nonformal education? What do they expect from the experience? What is the extent of their capabilities? What are the potential constraints on their learning? Particular questions and issues related to this responsibility follow:

Questions related to *motivations* of learners:

- What motivations are evident?
- What motivations are consistent with educational goals? Which are inconsistent?
- How can consistent motivations be enhanced?
- Which inconsistent motivations should be suppressed or discouraged?

- What other categories of motivation are compatible with the educational goals?
- Which of these motivations are worth building on?

Questions concerning *rewards:*

- What rewards exist in the personal-social-occupational environment of the learners?
- What rewards are in harmony with the educational goals?
- How can these rewards be used appropriately to enrich learning?
- What other rewards are consistent with the educational goals?
- Which of these rewards should be recognized?
- What rewards are inconsistent with the educational goals?
- Which of these rewards should not be recognized

Parallel questions about *expectations:*

- What expectations can be determined?
- Which expectations are compatible with the educational goals?
- How can these expectations be fulfilled?
- What other expectations are consistent with the educational goals?
- Which of these expectations are worth building on?
- Which expectations are inconsistent with the educational goals?
- Which of these expectations should be suppressed or discouraged?

With reference to the matter of cognitive styles, mental and physical *capacities* of the target population, the following questions should be investigated:

- What is the level of ability to comprehend abstractions, verbal and symbolic?
- At what level is the reading comprehension?
- What mechanical and manipulative skills are evident?
- What are the factors of health, attention span, alertness, concentration and application of effort that will affect the learners?
- What learning preferences (in terms of cognitive styles and habits of response to pedagogy) can be accommodated by the instructional design?

The questions specified above are concerned primarily with describing and understanding the target population. Though it is important to consider the findings from these questions and to make appropriate accommodations, the complexities inherent in planning for nonformal education remain significant. The tasks however, can be more clearly defined in relation to key areas of understanding:

Understanding historical and cultural sources. Within every society there are traditions and value systems that have shaped education. Before attempting to augment or significantly alter the educational resources of a community, examination of institutionalized efforts, familial and tribal influences, rituals and indoctrinations is necessary. Such understanding is necessary if new nonformal resources are to be designed in such a way as to integrate with existing formal and informal systems of teaching and learning.

Understanding the target populations. In order to plan effective nonformal experiences, attention must be given to the motivations and rewards that drive learners, the expectations resulting from their previous learning experiences, and the learning characteristics that have been fostered by previous formal and informal learning experiences. Education without an outlet for the learning is useless. Incentives for learning should be perceptible to the learners and should be specifically rewarded within a relatively short period of time.

Understanding the administrative demands of education. For effective learning, nonformal education should correlate human and physical resources and communicate with all contributing agencies. Nonformal education should also operate within an evaluative structure that provides data for continuous improvement of instructional procedures.

Summary

Designing nonformal education that will lead to effective learning is a complex undertaking. The relationship of the learning experiences to the learners' characteristics and life experiences and the need to develop an administrative and evaluative framework to assure the continuous refinement of the system constitute the most demanding tasks.

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Quibbling about Words—A Necessary Task

Ted W. Ward and John M. Detoni

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Abstract
The authors attempt a working definition of nonformal education. They discuss its relationship to formal education and outline key strengths and challenges. This article originally appeared in an institutional planning document, Nonformal Education: Discussion Papers, Number 2, "Nonformal Education: The Definitional Problem" Ted Ward and John Dettoni, Institute for International Studies in Education, Michigan State University, 1974.

A comprehensive and standard definition of *nonformal education* is not yet available in common usage. Perhaps such a definition will not emerge until after much more study of the educational issues and potentialities inherent in the variety of experiences now called nonformal education. The implied and real distinctions between formal and nonformal education should be seen within a systematic and holistic view of education. It seems useful at present to provide a tentative definition of the term "nonformal education," in order to better identify our current view among the many variations. Whether or not "nonformal education" is viable in the long run, it is useful now to highlight alternatives to *formal* (institutionalized) educational enterprises. To use such a term is an honest yet unfilled attempt to distinguish among the major educative forces in a society.

Nonformal education is a negative descriptor, and thus it says less than the term *formal education*. (It is like defining a car by saying it is a non-horse, non-airplane, non-tractor, etc.) Often "nonformal" has been understood as being without form or discernable structure, organization or purpose. "Formal" on the other hand connotes procedure, purposes form and order. Yet much education—in addition to the forma1 schools—in the community, the home, church, industry and other similar social institutions and business organizations has form. Thus *schooling* is perhaps even better than *formal education* to denote the particular sort of education provided by the educational establishments. Nonformal education on the other hand usually indicates education that is "non-school." Indeed the issue is non-school rather than *without form.* The distinction then is not the matter of "form" versus "form-less"; rather it is nonformal modes of delivery, as distinct from formal agencies and institutions. Formal agencies are given over to the teaching task. In simplest terms, the distinction between telling and demonstrating begins to suggest it. Nonformal education is a more active and participatory means to the educational end. Usually nonformal education focuses companionate efforts on improvement of social and personal living, occupational capability and vocational competency. In these emphases, education is not the goal; it is rather the means to the goal. Education is of concern because of what it can quite directly enable the learner to do rather than for any symbolic value. It is of value only as it can help students to make changes in themselves and their environments in accord with their goals. In some societies formal education is seen as having, intrinsic value; whereas nonformal education is almost always seen to have functional or practical applicability of the utility of the learning it produces.

Formal and nonformal can also refer to the administrative structure and style of the educational effort—or even the arbitrary labeling of the management or sponsor. A family planning program differs from a primary school on the basis of administration. The family planning program is nonformal education and the primary school is formal. Yet both are in a basic sense formal and institutionalized. The military

services teach basic mathematics; and so do primary schools. Because of the lack of label "school" on the former, it is nonformal education while the primary school is formal.

By using the above understanding of nonformal education, the military services, youth corps operations, agricultural extension, and solicited assistance of all sorts suggest nonformal education. Indeed, these are concerned with educating, but they are less concerned with theory than with practice. And thus their approach to teaching and learning is more "hands-on" and less propositional. Observing the teaching underway would likely anticipate function and application more than attempting to remember disconnected pieces of information. To call all of this "nonformal" stretches the language quite far. It might be more precise to call them "non-school," yet here we are again in semantic difficulty because they may call their educative operations "schools. Virtually all uses of the distinction between formal and nonformal education seem defective. They all seem too arbitrary to be supportable as part of a coherent theory. The formal/nonformal distinction is at best a sub-division of some larger construct. The problem up until now is that nonformal education has been relatively undefined, because the non-school sector of education has been of little interest and concern to educational planners. Thus, though we now need a term to designate this large and sprawled sector of educative resources and operations, the best distinction we can make is arbitrary and disjunct from systematic theory.

Taking the largest possible view, we see that educational operations function within a society; and a society, through its educational enterprises, creates formal and nonformal educational institutions. Thus thinking, talking, and planning education is becoming a less bounded and confined enterprise. We are alert to education's breadth of scope and complexity of purposes. We can think more holistically and examine the whole function of education for a given society.

Source of authority is dichotomized into two codes that govern the social mandates (authorizations) of education. Norms are the informal socio-cultural codes. Policy, on the other hand, is the formal structured, superintended instituting of education by some formal authority in the society. (This could be anyone from the local teacher to the national minister of education.) In contrast, the family, neighborhood and peers educate the child or the newcomer towards informal goals and by informal means through extra-legal authority (namely, social norms).

Methods of instruction is dichotomized into overt and covert, indicating the extent to which deliberateness is reflected in discrete, identifiable and. obvious procedures in executing the educative functions. Overt procedures are the easily identifiable and structured modes used by society's institutions to teach. Covert procedures are the subtle "caught" teachings presented to each learner throughout his or her lifetime by all the functions of society. For example, the family rarely uses overt means to teach the skills of speaking the mother tongue; the school rarely uses anything but overt means to teach a second language, but it may use only covert modes to reinforce and enrich the fluency of mother-tongue speech. These matters are rarely structured in any way, thus more precisely they are in the informal learning sector—a sort of no-man's land beyond formal and nonformal education.

In various realms and on various occasions school, family, religious orders, government and community exercise the authority of norms or the authority of policy and instruct in covert and overt ways. The formal/nonformal distinction now gains perspective: as typically used "nonformal education" is an arbitrary sub-division of authority-by-policy. The distinction is made (as suggested above) in terms of the administrative structure, style, and labeling of the agency. Note that "nonformal education" does not ordinarily apply to authority-by-norms. This is the arena of socialization and enculturation which is more precisely designated as "informal education."

Education within a society can be viewed from a slightly different perspective in order to provide an additional clarification. One continuum, is "where" instruction occurs, i.e., the setting. It asks whether the setting is more or less flexible. A less flexible setting is one in which the environment places constraints upon the learner. It is a setting where people assemble to learn under the constraint of that environment. Usually the less flexible learning environment is fairly rigid and exacting. A more flexible setting is the learning environment characteristic of out-of-school learning. It is more fluid and lacks the narrow constraints on behavior and subject matter. For example, the school classroom is a less flexible environment-and the school playground a more flexible one.

The second continuum is "how" the instruction occurs. It asks the question whether the instruction is informal or planned. The informal mode is casual, based upon social norms. This mode can be found in either the more flexible or the less flexible setting. In contrast, the planned mode is a systematic attempt to instruct, based upon some sort of educational policy. It has a programmatic sequence and approach to what is taught. It, too, can be found in either setting.

The process of socialization or enculturation includes the casual handing down of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in flexible environments in order to bring people into a culture. When these casual things are done in fixed or determined ways it is generally thought of as schooling. Schooling thus can be seen to be part of socialization. The school has an effect because it exists and has an effect even beyond its structured curriculum. Schooling, in the sense it operates casually (imposing norms) is socialization; in the sense that it operates in a structured way it can be said to be formalization.

Summary. A tentative understanding of the major elements that go into a definition of nonformal education are as follows: 1) authority for content is based on policy, practice, or skill; 2) both covert and overt procedures and methods are used; 3) instruction is planned, systematic and follows some sort of organized program; and 4) it occurs in a more flexible setting. If we put these all together we arrive at this point: Nonformal education is a planned instructional design which uses both overt and covert procedures in a more flexible environment to teach towards a goal determined by a regulated policy, practice, or skill.

Nonformal education focuses on practical, functional, and often, work- and job-related education. A primary value reflected in most nonformal education is on the immediate usefulness of education—in terms of personal growth and occupational enhancement. A second predominant value element is person-centeredness. Since those who are engaged in nonformal education are usually keenly aware of the practical and immediately useful goals for their educational experiences, they tend to center their instructional approach on the particular or categorical needs of their students. In other words, nonformal education is need-centered. Particular content is determined by identified student needs. A third element is that often there is no certification of the instructional staff. As often as not, the teachers are those who themselves have mastered the cognitive-affective-psycho-motor skills involved but do not have formal accreditation, in the sense that this concept is used in the area of formal education.

Relationship of Formal and Nonformal Education

As defined here and elsewhere nonformal education seems to be set in juxtaposition to formal education. This is unfortunate since it may connote antithesis. Rather there are several positive relationships which point to synthesis.

First, it is becoming obvious that few if any of the developing countries are wealthy enough to support two major national and competitive educational schemes, especially if they are in conflict. To do so would debilitate both personnel and financial resources and would tend to divide the country rather than

unite it. It is much more intelligent to consider a single, workable educational program rather than seek to build new or enhance alternative educational programs. Interestingly, there are a number of nonformal alternatives already showing themselves in many countries. The question then is what to do with them: allow them to continue to develop as competitive, alternative systems; repress them; adapt the formal educational institutions to the nonformal model; or integrate the whole into a broader concept and plan for educational development?

Second, while in theory the goals of formal and nonformal education seem to be different, in reality both are attempting to do the same thing from different perspectives. Both are trying to bring a people and economy to increased personal and national productivity. Both formal and nonformal educators are aware that education, of the right sorts, is an important instrument for national development.

Third, both approaches to education often use similar if not the same methods and materials. Or, with some modification many instructional materials can be used interchangeably.

It is probably appropriate to note at this point that nonformal education is seen to be responsive to the cry of the masses for relevant education. Formal education has been beset with this demand for a long period of time with relatively little response. Now that alternatives to formal education are being planned and provided, formal education itself is belatedly attempting to become more flexible and concerned with real-world applications. Thus the formal institutions are becoming somewhat less rigid and are patterning their approach to the nonformal model—suggesting points of ultimate parallel in materials and procedures.

Fourth, though stakeholders in both nonformal and formal education are working to increase the level of education for national and human resources development, they realize the enormity of the task in terms of personnel, finances and materiel. Formal education is beginning to recognize that it has not met the expectations of either its constituents or its own leaders: the problems have overcome the promises. Nonformal education is often frustrated by in-country restrictions, stereotypes, and lack of resources. However, nonformal education has several things in its favor that formal education does not. The fact that nonformal education exists in more flexible settings, is person-centered, focuses on practical things, and yet is systematic all tend to make nonformal education more effective and efficient for *development*. So then, while both formal and nonformal are facing similar frustrations, they do so for different reasons: formal education because of its limited effectiveness, and nonformal because of its inability to do more of what it is good at doing.

A word of caution is in order at this point. Nonformal education is regarded by many as “anti-establishment” education. It is often promoted as the antithesis of formal or institutionalized education. Perhaps one of the key elements in the controversy is that conventional *schooling* has failed—not necessarily that education has failed. There is a high probability that under certain influences and in certain hands, nonformal education also will fail.

It may be that *effective education* is the issue. In our own domestic situation, and also on the world scene, we are just now coming out of an era of “oversell” in education. During the emergence of nations of the Third World, we have seen policy makers grasp for the economic and welfare gains that are thought to accrue from education. The result has been that the modes and forms of education that have been grasped have been built upon models of education essentially foreign to these nations. Many models were created on common Western European and American concepts of educational design and institutional management which often were irrelevant to the host countries. As we emerge from the era of oversell, frustration has set in and there is a feverish search for alternatives—simple and culturally relevant ways to provide effective education.

We must assure that educational functions relate to societal welfare, broadly and specifically defined. As outside consultants and helpers, we must find ways to help without exploitation. The emphasis on nonformal education will not prevent further exploitive operations. In fact, given the motives, it can be as exploitive as any other form of outside management of institutions. Those who want to help must be constrained by a commitment not to repeat the impositions of technocratic achievements that have accompanied past "helping" activities. A much clearer theory of educational functions within a society drawn from sociological, anthropological, and psychological sources is needed. The tendency in the United States has been to draw very heavily from psychological theory and to be less careful about drawing from anthropological and social theories as they relate to education. A socio-anthropological view is concerned about the interaction of learners for their educational good.

What is education within a society and how does it function? Here is the primary question that must be answered before beginning to innovate. The emphasis on nonformal education is less a matter of new information or ideas than it is a matter of new focus or emphasis. But if it is to be used responsibly as a total educational plan for national development, it must be seen in relation to the whole of educational efforts that exist within a society.

One of the problems in education as it relates to national development is the tendency to state goals too generally. Often when people come to a point of frustration in defining their goals, they will adopt a generalized statement that is supposed to define itself, and they substitute it for the very difficult work of defining the appropriate educational goals. In many cases this tendency has been seen in the relating of formal education to national development. Where it is ineffective it is because its goals are not brought into alignment with the fulfillment of stated national needs. In our eagerness to assist national development we may apply goals that we have developed in our own framework (in another part of the world) and use them as *substitutes* for locally defined goals. The real issue is what sort of education will most effectively relate to the next steps that can be justifiably taken. Involvement of American public and private agencies in national development overseas must be disciplined by objectives defined within the national situation.

Nonformal education is not a compromise. It is a response to a "now" situation. We have before us an occasion to revise and to innovate instructional modes. The nonformal education movement may open the eyes of the world to see alternatives to traditional, formalized approaches to instruction and to see outside consultants operating as technician-helpers rather than as goal setters.

Strengths of Nonformal Education

Several significant strengths are inherent in nonformal education.

1. It is a more effective approach to solving certain problems of education for national development and individual growth.

2. It begins with the felt needs of the people in order to help them achieve their goals and in so doing help the nation to develop.

3. Nonformal education tends to be more cost-effective and efficient in its result. In particular, instructional technology and communication media are important resources and have the potential to *support* learning effectiveness and reduce certain costs.

4. Nonformal education provides a more eclectic, multi-disciplinary approach to the problem of development in a country. Numerous disciplines are integrated in order to arrive at workable

solutions. As a result, programs will be developed from a holistic viewpoint toward the students, sub-culture and culture.

5. A developing country cannot wait decades to achieve progress. Because nonformal education is more flexible and adaptable more can be accomplished in a shorter period. While short-term gain may have more political than economic value, the tenuous conditions in many countries demands movement towards development of the entire country rather than merely the few who have access to formal education.

6. Nonformal education does not require one generation to grow into leadership before results can be assessed. Effects are possible in a reasonable time which allows funding agencies to assess and reassess program effectiveness over a relatively short period.

7. The flexibility and pacing of nonformal education allows for timely and consistent feedback concerning the instructional design and learning processes. Thus facilitators can analyze and continually modify procedures to meet the needs, goals and expectations of the participants.

Challenges to the Effective Implementation of Nonformal Education

Nonformal education is confronted by several challenges as well.

1. Though an important resource for nonformal education, many educational planners invest in technology before basic questions of needs, goals, and availability of personnel and matériel are answered.

2. Planners may avoid the difficult work of cultural analysis, goal setting, and resource inventory before designing nonformal experiences.

3. Conflicts between government ministers, political restrictions, and demands from departments of education are particularly challenging because of the inherent fluidity of nonformal education.

4. Nonformal education can be oversold to developing countries. As a result nonformal education might be seen as a panacea—but without the time and resources necessary to develop workable procedures.

If the strengths of nonformal education are to be fulfilled and problems overcome, careful insightful planning is needed. The functional roles of education within the culture of a society must be understood. The nonformal alternative is well worth the effort. Educators need to talk, think, and write about the whole field.

Two Modes of Nonformal Education

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
As one of the early writers on the topic Ward claims "squatters' rights" to its clarification and definition. In this article he describes and distinguishes among the "big three" in the modal purposes of education: informal education, formal education, and nonformal education. Unpublished paper by Ted Ward, Institute for International Studies, Michigan State University, not dated.

Nonformal education is not yet a standardized term, more's the pity. As one of the early writers on the topic I claim "squatter's rights" to the following points in its clarification, if not definition—particularly as one of the "big three" in the modal purposes of education: informal, formal, and nonformal education.

Informal education is socialization as represented by the teaching and learning of the ordinary and commonplace information and skills required to function competently in a society. It just comes along naturally as one deals with life. It is rarely planned or structured.

Formal education *(schooling)* as represented by the teaching and learning that are assigned to and preserved by the common schools and the school-based series of educational events organized as a sort of ladder toward the reaching of higher places in the society. Formal education is the only self-justifying of the three purposive modes. You learn because further learning in this mode will be built upon what you are learning. In general, the clue that it is formal education is the "counting toward a degree." Primary school is formal education; medical college is formal education. Formal education includes any deliberate, staffed, funded and organized education that uses the schooling mode and fulfills a step-by-step purpose on the "ladder" of becoming educated.

Nonformal education is a socio-political designation that tells us more about the social role than about the form. It is concerned with functional learning in planned contexts. Similar to formal education, there is a plan, specified purpose, and intentionality. Similar to informal education nonformal education is contextual and "hands-on." It justifies itself in practical learning much more than in honorific paper and symbols. Nonformal education includes many types of learning experiences. It is a broad term in the same way that formal education broadly embraces all sorts of schooling. Teaching village health promoters how to get their families and neighbors to talk and think about the relationship between sanitation and health is nonformal education; helping people discover their own worth and the potentialities for seeking a better life is non-formal education. Nonformal education is a broad term that includes everything from swimming instruction in a youth club to the unionization of a factory. These are different sorts of education.

The use of the term nonformal education is more narrow and specific than its contrasting term formal education. Nonformal education is not just a theoretical category of the social processes of human learning; it has a particular importance in reference to the accelerated change processes required for deliberate national development of community development. In most cases, nonformal education is concerned with the human learning tasks associated with a particular program of social change.

No single methodology is characteristic of nonformal education. Indeed, most methodologies of nonformal education are also used in formal education. The distinctiveness of nonformal education is its

function in the community or society. At this point, a comparison should be made *within* nonformal education: there are two basically different modes of non-formal education:

NFE Mode I: Facilitation of Technology

The mode of nonformal education that many think of first is the technology-facilitation mode. Examination of the literature of the first decade of nonformal education reveals this mode as the major focus of Coombs (1972) and other development planners. Thus, in respect for the intentions of those who first popularized the term, when nonformal education is used for the facilitation of technology, it should be called NFE Mode I.

The need for human learning and the development of skills for the appropriate utilization of new technologies and the solving of ancient problems through proper applications of scientific knowledge is the concern of NFE Mode I. Thus, one thinks of such matters as health education, family planning, marketing cooperatives, improved agriculture, and a host of new employment-generating skills as being the emphasis of NFE Mode I.

NFE Mode II: Pursuit of Humane Values

When the spotlight was turned on nonformal education in the early 1970's, many theorists and practitioners were already well aware of Paulo Freire and his analysis of the socio-political meaning of underdevelopment (1970). For such people, the linkage between nonformal education and the pedagogy of the oppressed (to borrow Freire's language) was obvious. For the more doctrinaire of these believers, facilitation of technology could have no meaning apart from a socio-economic transformation. For some, this transformation was to be rooted in a political revolution; for others it was to achieve its ends through a process of personal/communal renaissance, generally called conscientization. Either way, nonformal education in the service of broadly defined human fulfillment can be called NFE Mode II.

Conscientization, a concept that refers both to heightened consciousness (awareness) and deepened conscience (concern) of the learner has become the watchword for NFE Mode II. In Freire's writing, conscientization appears to be less a methodology than an outcome or the evolution of a complex process. Conscientization is a master objective to which all other objectives are subordinated—in the absence of which nothing else counts.

The philosophical nature of all of this—indeed, the general and vague nature of such an educational purpose (which hardly lends itself to crisp measurement)—is disconcerting to those who see development traversing the more precise path of technology. It is no wonder that nonformal education has become divided into two schools of thought.

Reconciliation

More can be gained from a quest to unite and blend than can be achieved by further isolating NFE Mode I from NFE Mode II. Both are needed. Knowledgeable combining comes less from the high degree of tolerance and acceptance shown by Srinivasan (1977) than from a deliberate subordination of lesser to greater values.

In community health, which has become the particular focus of my own recent fieldwork in nonformal education, we can see the necessity of both Mode I and Mode II. If the Quechua Indians are to be free of the oppression that disease and premature death has inflicted upon them for generations, basic knowledge of the technologies of sanitation and nutrition is essential. Thus one argues for NFE Mode I. But

in the worldview of these people, there is little to build the technological skills on. They have no particular views of themselves or the world they know that can recognize in the health technologies anything of worth. Their life is as it is, as it has been, and as it will be—what is to change? Outsiders with their ideas of what the Quechuas *need* will continue to come and go—life remains the same.

The conscientization that is now emerging among the participants in the Chimborazo Quechua Community Development projects is the foundation for their emerging concern about health. These folk of the high Andes are discovering that they have worth, and that their dignity finds fulfillment as they act to affect their environment. Conscientization is not health; but health without conscientization is hard to imagine.

So it is with the two basic modes of nonformal education. Both are needed. In many cases, Mode II is the prerequisite. In other cases, Mode I can be undertaken directly. *The people must decide.*

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

The *Rail-Fence Analogy* for the Education of Leaders

Ted W. Ward and Samuel F. Rowen

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Abstract

The Rail Fence Analogy is an uncomplicated metaphor for an effective and consistent learning process typically applied to leadership education. It was written in 1969 with assistance of Sam Rowen; their work is combined here. The article has been widely used and borrowed. The original conception was published in a working document of Michigan State University. Many variants of the Rail Fence Analogy have appeared in print, sometimes misrepresenting the fence as a railroad, but the idea stands. No matter the words, as long as the picture is clear!

Preface by Samuel Rowen (1969)

As those engaged in theological education by extension began to give progress reports, a polarization arose as to which was the superior method of training, residence or extension. These discussions often proved unfruitful and a true assessment of theological training became more difficult. In *The Rail Fence Analogy* we can see theological education by extension in its proper perspective as part of a worldwide trend to fashion better procedures of leadership training. By definition, leadership education is specialized training for a high-level, client-oriented service. The development of a pastor through professional education must provide the knowledge base in an action-function form. The ministry specialization requires practical contexts in which to develop the leadership competencies needed in the service of people. The trend now in professional education is to include field-based experiences as an integral part of the curriculum design and to design opportunities to integrate newly acquired knowledge with these practical experiences in context.

It is within the framework of the three functions of curriculum design as explained in *The Rail Fence Analogy* that theological education by extension has developed. The students learn not in an abstract or remote environment but in the actual experiential context in which the knowledge must be applied. The opportunity for perceiving the value of new information is experientially available. Theological education by extension is not an attempt to make the best of a bad situation. It is a part of a worldwide trend based upon substantial research on how people learn.

A sober assessment of the accomplishments of our present institutions, in spite of many positive contributions, reveals that they have not produced the quality of leadership that the churches need. Simply changing to an extension program will not automatically solve the problem. Designing a sound professional (theological) education is broader than the institutional management decision of extension or residence. The prior questions include the following: What constitutes a valid theological education in Manila, or Tokyo, or rural Nigeria? What does the student need in order to know, to do, and to be? How can learning experiences be structured in order to achieve these goals?

Now for some history. Here is the way I remember our first experience with the Rail Fence Analogy. It wasn't our first collaborative workshop, but it proved to be one of our most effective. Always at his best in a discussion mode, many of Ted's most useful contributions emerged during group interactions. The *Rail Fence Analogy* is one such case. He introduced it with these words: "In a doctoral seminar at Michigan State University a few weeks ago, we were talking about learning context. The question we were exploring was

something like this: 'What is essential for a good learning experience for adult educators?' Ted shifted the discussion a bit and it came out like this: 'What is needed for effective learning?' With help from others in our group, we listed and sorted a variety of learning experiences and were busily dreaming up names for the various clusters. We logged everything onto large sheets of newsprint. Ted helped the group move the lists toward minimally overlapping sets of learning components. Soon the walls were covered with ideas and we were really rolling along. No two lists were alike but the similarities were getting clearer.

Someone with an artistic flair drew a sketch of a fence and began adding labels. As the others began to pick up on this nudge, the similarities increased and the varieties among the fences settled down. The first really convincing picture was simple but said a lot. It showed a simple two rail fence with a row of several fence posts! Ted was impressed and we all breathed sigh of relief. Our learning exercise had produced something very useful. There were some short discussions about how to name the parts of the fence, but the consensus quickly grew. Several fence-like drawings were emerging. The images were tentative, but some common elements were evident. People were trying out various labels. Suddenly it came together and several groups worked together to shape up and label the first rail fence! It was simple but clearly suggestive, and it showed relationships that made sense! From the cluttered piles of ideas and our imagination, we had created a graphic design that Ted talked with us about for the remainder of the hour.

We concluded that our drawing suggested three components: our answer to the question of the hour was that we needed three parts: (1) the top rail, that we named *cognitive input*, (2) a lower rail that we named *practical experiences*, and (3) a series of fence posts we labelled as seminars 1, 2, 3, etc. Ted seemed pleased, although he really hadn't done much. He simply started in on one of his endless stories. I remember how it started: "The learning process is like a rail fence. The top rail keeps in the horses, the bottom rail stops the pigs, and the fence posts hold the whole thing together, keeping the rails properly related to the earth where they are rooted. My grandfather was an Illinois hog farmer, so for me it is a vivid picture. It's a great set of symbols and it says it all so well! What it shows is a perfect metaphor for the combination of these three components, and it even suggests how they work together to fulfil their collective purpose. The top rail suggests *cognitive input*, the bottom rail suggests *field experiences*, and the fence posts suggest *seminars*, periodic times of reflection on what the other two components are saying to the learners! The resulting analogy is purposeful, firmly rooted in reality, experiential and closely relating the *thinking* and *doing* components. It truly represents my favorite trilogy from graduate school days: 'Knowing, Being, Doing—the know-be-do formula.'" Ted summed up our session with this suggestion: "The first two parts should be designed for clear application of each part to the other. The third part should not be continuous, but spaced across time as periodic group encounters, commonly focused on these questions: What are we learning? What do these inputs and experiences mean to us?"

It is important to remember the way Ted used the word *curriculum* in *The Rail Fence Analogy*, and elsewhere in his writing. *Curriculum* does not refer to a list of courses. Curriculum refers to the entire educational process and its net outcomes. Therefore, improving the curriculum does not refer simply to the adding or subtracting of courses. It speaks to the necessity of rethinking and remodeling the entire educational process.

Theological education by extension offered an alternate strategy for solving some of the perplexing bottle-neck problems in theological education. The *Rail Fence Analogy* was first published in a larger paper written by Ted at Michigan State University in relation to contemporary trends in professional education in general—for doctors, lawyers, dentists, architects, engineers and so on. However, his reflection on professional education in these fields offers insights into the particular problems we face in theological education. Following are some samples from that larger paper.

The Rail Fence Analogy by Ted Ward

Good educational programming requires a balance and blend among a variety of experiences. Although there is essential agreement among professional educators about what sorts of educational experiences are valuable, it is no longer popular to search for the “best way” to educate. The real issue in curriculum design is not what experiences are best but rather *how much* of *what kinds* of experiences should be used to achieve the intended objectives. Many curricular designs are now used in professional education. Rarely do any two institutions use identical curricula to achieve given professional goals. Even the U.S. Office of Education, in its current efforts to seek out and encourage development of “model curricula” for the preparation of teachers, does not attempt to alter this trend. Instead, participating institutions are encouraged to design programs that reflect the particular resources, needs and capacities of local situations.

However, current curricular developments tend to reflect three common characteristics: a) increasing use of field experiences, b) more variety in methods of providing cognitive learning, and c) greater articulation between field experience and cognitive learning through seminars, symposia, and other forms of “sharing” experiences. These three characteristics are illustrated through the metaphor of a two-rail fence. The fence has three parts: an upper rail, a lower rail, and fence posts. The upper rail represents the cognitive input, the lower rail represents field experiences, and the fence posts represent the seminars. The seminars are periodic linkages between cognitive experience and field experience.

The design for constructing a two-rail fence may be compared to the design of a curriculum. Of what material is the top rail to be constructed? How substantial should it be? How far above the ground? Of what materials will the lower rail be constructed? How substantial? How will it compare with the upper rail, in terms of separation and parallelism? What will be the nature of the supporting posts? What is the optimum spacing for tying the structure together in a supported, articulated and coordinated whole? In a fence there are two sets of variables that determine the desirable characteristics: the use or function of the fence, and the balance of the components. With reference to the former, a fence is good if it performs a designated function over a stipulated period of time. A decorative fence does not need to be strong enough to contain cattle, but a cattle fence may or may not also need to be decorative. The fence’s function and expected durability in relationship to its cost are important considerations. With reference to the second set of variables, *balance*, the proposition is that a fence’s components, like the links of a chain, need to be selected or designed for balanced strength. The “weakest link” principle pertains: a fence is not made better by increasing the size of the upper rail (unless, of course, that had been the weakest link); conversely, to decrease the strength of the posts weakens the entire system.

More illustrations can be seen in the way the two sets of variables, function and balance, relate to each other. For a start, consider the matter of spacing between the posts: for a decorative function, the spacing can be longer than for a fence that must restrain livestock. Spacing of the rails is also dependent on function—rails must be closer to each other and closer to the ground for sheep than for horses.

The Upper Rail: Cognitive Input

Although the ability to recall information (facts and figures) is not the central purpose of education, its importance must not be discounted. “Cognitive input” refers to the learning of the informational knowledge. Cognitive input is basic to competence and excellence. Cognitive data (knowable as information) ranges from simple concrete facts up through abstract concepts and problem-solving strategies. Cognitive input, in a sense, concerns the focal things to be learned; but it would be more useful to think of cognitive input as *the information that can be learned by reading, hearing, or looking.* Cognitive input is provided through a wide variety of instructional modes: through textbooks, assigned readings,

lectures, recordings, films and programmed instruction of several sorts. New media of instruction are sometimes employed so that the cognitive input can be more effective or learned more efficiently.

Unfortunately it is often the cognitive input component that is likely to suffer from a learner's low motivation and from rapid obsolescence of the content. A curriculum that over-emphasizes cognitive input is likely to be characterized by high drop-out rates (premature withdrawal) and by frequent complaints about irrelevancy.

The Lower Rail: Field Experiences

Recognition of field experiences as applied learning for the professions is clearly a trend. For years in the past, internships, apprenticeships, and similar field experiences were suspect as being inferior substitutes for truly scholarly learning. Some said that learning that could not be committed to the form of print should not be recognized as educationally valid. Today many of the problems in the professions are so new that textbook answers are not available. Books alone cannot provide all that is needed for a timely and substantial curriculum. Getting experience "where the action is" seems to be one useful answer for the demand that education be more relevant.

Early in this century, clinical experience was recognized as a necessary part of medical education. The Carnegie Foundation's support of Abraham Flexner's study of medical education in the United States played an important part in this development. First, clinical experience was recognized as an essential part of modern medical education. It then followed that field experiences in general have been acknowledged increasingly as a valid aspect of the curriculum in virtually every professional field.

Field experiences are not all the same. For example, the degree and kind of supervision varies from one program to another. But the essential ingredient remains the same: exposure to the environment and life problems of the practitioner *during* the period of formal educational experience.

Recognition of the validity of field experiences has also had a remarkable impact on the concept of in-service education, sometimes called continuing education to denote its life-long characteristic. The older, and simpler, practice of transplanting the campus-oriented courses to some remote point, syllabus, text, and professor, is disappearing. The modern extension and continuing education operations capitalize on the fact that in-service professionals are engaged in day-by-day experiences that constitute a rich source of material for valuable learning. Experiences of the practitioner's world thus become the sources of further knowledge, the motivation to learn, and the basis for evaluation, reconsideration, and planning. When extension education makes effective use of the field experiences that confront the in-service practitioner, it is a worthy competitor to the more formal and classical forms of education. A problem-centered approach to extension teaching is certainly a great improvement over the "transplanted course" approach.

The Fence Posts: Seminar

If students are to make a solid connection between the cognitive input and their field experiences, they need someone to talk to—preferably someone who is learning along with them. Often something exciting happens when learners get together *to put into their own words* how new information relates to their doing an effective job. If left to chance or individual initiative, new information may never result in appropriate changes in the professional practice. Even worse, it can result in incorrect applications to practice. Misunderstandings in the cognitive realm can result in disasters in the realm of practice. The seminar, as an opportunity for reflecting, evaluating and hypothesizing, can reduce the gaps and the misapplications, resulting in more potent and responsible transfers from theory to practice, and back again to better theory.

"Seminar" is a word carelessly used to mean whatever its user wants it to mean which obscures its importance as an instructional approach. But until we find a better word "seminar" will have to suffice to indicate the less structured experiences that lead to integration of cognitive input and field experiences through sharing and discussion. The hallmarks of a good seminar are the occasions and stimulations to reflect upon and evaluate learning from both the cognitive input and from the field experiences with a premium on relating the two. The objectives of a seminar can usually be expressed in terms of applying principles and concepts to problem-solving tasks.

Educators in the past have idealized Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other as a model of the pedagogical relationship. This model seems deficient in the light of research on the value of peer interactions during a learning experience. A more useful model, at least for the education of leaders, may be the two-rail fence—two lines of parallel linear flow supported and integrated by spaced interactive seminars—a model of the relationships among the three major aspects of a curriculum for educating leaders.

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

What Happened to Theological Education by Extension (TEE)?

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract

In an undated, previously unpublished paper, Ward called attention to the probability that TEE was becoming ineffective because of too much emphasis on its technology and too little attention to its problems. Over 30 years ago, Ward undertook a two-continent tour to examine the uses of a programmed instruction text he and Margaret Ward had written, and the seriously inadequate efforts being made in a number of missions to establish TEE programs for pastoral education. As a result of the tour, the Wards burned about 200 remaining copies of the text believing that it was contributing to TEE's ineffectiveness. The key problem was that so few missionaries knew how to design and/or conduct learning experiences or materials for TEE. Ward's correspondence about this issue was the origin of *What Happened to TEE?*

What went wrong? Theological Education by Extension seemed like such a good idea: Increasing the number of pastors, providing improved basic pastoral education at lower cost, allowing leaders to stay on the job while engaged in studies. Any possibility of achieving these outcomes would surely be greeted with enthusiasm. Yes, it might require a bit of change, but no one would object. Theological Education by Extension (TEE) would also resolve the economic problem that slows the growth of the church: requiring the most promising of the emerging leaders to undergo the social and economic hardships of taking two or more years to prepare to serve the church. These hardships are especially burdensome in the typical third world situations where the support of family and local churches is especially limited and where the personal stresses are burdensome and unfamiliar within the culture. Long periods away from family and community often result.

TEE seemed to promise an alternative to formal schooling as typically required for ministerial preparation and academic qualification. The necessity of relocating to an institution at distance and taking on unmanageable expense would be eliminated. The idea seemed so exciting, so promising, so simple, and so cheap. Perhaps the unexpected problem emerged from the series of hopes just mentioned.

Exciting? Yes, to the supporters it was offered a great thrill speculating what TEE would mean for educational reform, effective ministry, and church growth. But to the majority of educators, especially the power-managers of schooling, it sounded very much like one more episode in the ancient story of boom-and-bust educational innovations. This newest educational gimmick brought along an additional handicap. It is especially hard to support new strategies, especially when they suggest no more school buildings and worse, learning without teachers. Looking more closely, and with a bit of stretched imagination, the promoters assumed that while seeking new employment, the best of the present-day supply of teachers would happily become the designers and writers of these much-needed new miracle study-books.

The caricature above is somewhat exaggerated to help the reader begin to understand why the excitement rapidly gave way to suspicious disdain.

Promising? The hopes were very optimistic. Here is "the innovation of the century" with its prospect for ushering in a whole new mode of theological education that could transform the field. Perhaps it would bring to theological education the sort of transformative improvement that Abraham Flexner's

work had brought to medical education at the turn of the twentieth century. But wait, Flexner's efforts were research-based, not simply speculation.

TEE was pioneered by engineers, preachers, and a handful of administrators. Most of the authors of the movement had little research experience beyond rudimentary demography. They lacked the major requisites of effective change agents, particularly an understanding of social change process and the necessary conditions for encouraging institutional change. Innovation was simply expected to happen; no one knew how to instigate it.

Distrust and suspicion became commonplace. Resistance grew rapidly. Even the early adopters soon became aware of the obstacles. The few who had made investments with such great hopes became disillusioned. The sleeping giant, formal schooling, yawned once or twice and nodded off. Why? What went wrong?

Many of the promoters of TEE were particularly keen about developing a new medium and a whole body of new instructional literature: programmed instruction (PI). But very few knew much about PI or how it was designed. But was all of that really important? The promises seemed enough to assure success. Not only did it sound too good to be true, it indeed proved to be a fading vision.

The miracle stuff turned out to be extraordinarily difficult to develop. The few trial programs seemed to be limited to "Sunday School" levels of trite information-memory. The hope for curriculum that would prepare seriously attentive and responsive pastors seemed to be out of reach.

Experienced teachers vigorously reject the very idea of putting themselves out of business. Thus teaching without teachers was seen early on as an ill-conceived goal. Similarly, the level of linguistic facility demanded for the design and writing of programmed instruction was well beyond the majority of missionary-volunteer educators. Whatever was assumed about TEE, the coupling with programmed instruction was ill-conceived. It proved to be an Achilles heel.

The dominant promoters of TEE were evangelizers and experienced flag-wavers. One of the most disturbing problems was the disinterest in utilizing the educational community itself to guide the search for a better way. It is readily acknowledged that institutional people tend to be defensive, resistant to change, and somewhat stubborn about their own status quo. In retrospect, a successful introduction of the innovative features could have resulted from a more careful, orderly, and less vigorously promoted attack on the time-honored traditions of the academy. Successful change agents know the hazards that can be avoided: misjudging the capacity, motivation, and competency of the "old guard," for example. When the campaigns toward TEE began, there was little attention given to the innovative educators with proven insights about the ways and means of working toward change. In fact, the efforts were invested too narrowly in the mistaken belief that change could be made rapidly and with a minimum of preparation. The failure to recruit persons with research-based competencies in educational management and innovation was evident very early.

Instead, much time and effort was wasted by exalting a handful of willing disciples; few of these had any actual experience with even the most relevant forms of nonformal education—literacy campaigns, rural development, community development, and collaborative promotion of public health and agricultural innovation. At the heart of the issue is the evident narrowness of missionary competencies. In sum, the TEE disaster has prompted a few mission agencies to re-think the narrowness of their recruitment practices, and to consider adding a few carefully selected specialists in appropriate technologies fields.

Simple? Theological Education by Extension was heralded as a valid and simple solution to the major gap in the evangelization-to-church-growth enterprise. Development of leadership for the church is a major concern. Christian converts need to be introduced to the Bible if they are to grow spiritually. At the heart of Christian growth is prayer partnership. The Christian life is not solitary; discipleship is a shared task. Churches are strong when the community of faith grows together. Leaders must develop the capacities for listening attentively and interacting wisely, guided by the truth of Scripture. Thus the pastor must be a community leader, and the wisdom required demands an education rich in experience and nurtured in respectful sharing of understanding.

Surely a more effective approach to leadership education is still needed. Seminaries seem handicapped by a rapturous infatuation with an accumulated mass of erudite information. Pastors commonly show dissatisfaction with the way they have been educated: too much information, too little attention is given to real human needs, inadequate emphasis is placed on the formation of understanding and the nurture of spirituality.

Cheap? Although education hardly seems "cheap" from any perspective, the sad fact is that what is tolerated as competent education in the "keeping school" mode is already carried out at nearly minimal costs. Short of inventing an intellectual funnel to fill human brains on a wholesale basis, lowering costs and increasing intellectual competencies are rarely compatible. Suggesting ways to save money are soon recognized as unsupportable propaganda. Education, responsibly defined, is a complex matter, hardly given to short-cuts and clever schemes.

Schooling itself may be part of the problem. Far too often, teaching is practiced as if it were dedicated to building memory. The focus is on information. The proverbial ancient professor who teaches from threadbare notes exemplifies this mode. Even each "joke" is scripted, to be recited at its own particularly dull moment. Yes, this sort of "teaching" can be common in the crowded lecture hall and can be packaged and sold (or given away at low cost) in a PI textbook. But does this sort of teaching and learning meet the standards for a competent theological education?

Time to Start Over? The pace of technological progress is increasing. A new start for TEE, as it was imagined in the past, is unthinkable. Programmed instruction has had its day on the scene. Some good came of it, but very early on PI was by-passed by a wide variety of educational uses of the computer. Already we live in a very different age.

TEE had been touted as a way to vastly increase the number of students that could be educated, especially in hard-to-reach places. There really was no practical limit; just keep printing the PI booklets. And, of course, mass production suggests greater cost-effectiveness. For the more experienced and sensitive educator, this image was quite repulsive. For those who committed themselves to a relationship-grounded form of education, the quantitative argument for TEE fell on deaf ears. Or worse.

Certain things still hold true. The defunct professor described earlier still can be found tiresomely at work in the lecture hall—but this professor's newest tasks are keeping the dullards from texting each other or escaping to the more compelling internet. Of far greater significance are the emerging reminders that learning must be understood as two different concepts of the mental processes:

1. Learning is what happens when information is committed to memory.

2. Learning is the very complex process that we simply call developing understanding.

These two different ways to conceptualize learning represent a virtual watershed that differentiates competent teaching from incompetent teaching. The first of these concepts is represented by rote-learning, drill-and-practice, repetitions, and usually “out loud” reciting with mechanical utterance of word sequences, as if their sound patterns were ultimately important. Example: As you stroll toward an elementary school in many parts of the world, especially in much of Asia and in various Islamic regions, the dull buzz slowly becomes as a rhythmic pattern—always a sort of accented monotone. And there it is: what much of the world has long accepted as the mumble of “busy learners.”

By contrast, the heavy lifting of human learning is the discussion among learners, interacting as they bring their thoughts together, bouncing them off each other to critique, compare, and refine ideas and to explore what an idea means. This second concept represents the real meaning of learning, developing understanding. The important issue is not selecting methodologies on the basis of their cleverness or technological feasibility, but rather considering what sort of teaching and learning will meet the standards for a competent theological education.

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

Comparing Methodologies

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
Nothing else in this compilation deals directly with the characteristics of nonformal teaching. All else is focused on the idea of nonformal education, and especially its purposes, and role in the development process. To help in closing this gap, an original and somewhat short piece was prepared. Unlike the other inclusions, it is not a reprint or restoration. It is less concerned with the competitive debate over formal versus non-formal education and gives a picture of the teaching processes and facilitator's role.

Learning is Everywhere Always

Many innovations slip onto the scene with little fanfare. Others force their way into common acceptance and practical use only after ponderous promotion and all sorts of drum-beating. It is not clear whether nonformal education is truly an innovation, but those most directly participating in it are true believers. Most of the strong supporters and especially those who are writing about it share similar backgrounds and characteristics. Many have been innovative educators, particularly "adult education" practitioners. This fact alone helps to explain the prominence of attention to issues common to teaching older learners. It is not surprising that most of the literature concerned with nonformal education is more specifically focused on out-of-school and in-service education issues and constituencies. A valid criticism of the nonformal education literature is that it gives more attention to *promoting* nonformal education than it gives to spelling out its methodological uniqueness.

That so little has been written about the actual teaching practices recommended for nonformal education is a fair criticism. It is true that most of the discussion has focused instead on the "sales job" for the nonformal approach. Is there some reason for this apparent bias? Yes, and it is easy to understand. Most of the methodological territory is not new. Nonformal education in its many actual uses is not new to adult educators. The literature of adult education methodology is already in common use. In fact, the more well-reasoned complaints about the "nonformal education hype" have come from this sector where skepticism has been most evident.

Educators engaged in adult education are a much smaller set than educators serving as classical "school teachers." Most professionals who define themselves as teacher education specialists are similarly committed to teachers who are teaching children. The more recent growth of the professional training and in-service education demand from the technical, industrial, and business sectors has added to this shift. The change has not been a move *away* from childhood education; rather it is an increased emphasis on adult and professional education added to the continuing expansion of formal higher education. The adult education literature has been seen as being exclusive to that field because of its apparent uniqueness. Not much of it has spilled over to affect and improve educative practices common to ordinary classroom teaching. For some, the most significant impact of the nonformal education frontier is that it is the dramatization of the importance of needed changes in educational practices and standards whether the context is formal or nonformal.

The social distance between teacher and learner is overdue for reexamination. For nonformal education, a standard practice is to avoid the terminology of *teacher* and *student.* Instead, *facilitator* and

participant or *learner* are commonly used as typical in adult education. The concept of teacher role is also different. Whereas in schooling the teacher is primarily “the one who knows,” in nonformal education the facilitator is the one who assists others in the discovery process. More precisely, the facilitator is the one who helps lead toward new understandings. Note the shifted emphasis when the facilitator is included as one more person who is also learning.

Changes in the Learner’s Role

Practices in nonformal education are commonly collegial. The difference is not simply matter of age! One of the reasons that primary school is a happier place is that the teachers are generally more genial, empathetic, and relational than in the upper grades. Surely younger children are more easily led by kindness. They are less inclined to assert themselves in conflict-oriented ways. Relationships and learner roles in nonformal education are more similar to what primary teachers learn to expect. This factor in particular demands more careful attention if formal education is to be improved.

The tendency in formal education is to move year by year into greater emphasis on control. The learner’s role in a restrictive relationship is increasingly stressed. The control factor alone accounts for much of the tension in formal schools. Methodologically, nonformal education as generally practiced is more collegial and less control-oriented.

The tension between teachers and students is exacerbated by the privileges of status. Teachers generally play the teaching game from the power level. The evaluation system is a power tool. Control of schedule and agenda is a power tool. Teachers generally control the learning process. Their rights to sort out and control learners are rarely challenged. Nonformal education generally transfers much of this responsibility to the learners; self-evaluation is more common. Decisions about such simple matters as what to do next are shared, not imposed. The teaching style, then, is more collective and less coercive. The tools and symbols of authority and power are exercised in a more egalitarian framework. Responsibilities for decisions and their consequences are much less like a power game. The competitive advantage based on position, rank, and authority is minimized.

Contrasting Methodologies

Comparing formal and nonformal education reveals greater differences in conceptual structure and style than in methodology. Differences can be seen in the roles of teacher and learner as well as in contrasts of structure of the learning environment. Perhaps even more important are the consequences of these differences, purpose, motivation, and standards of outcomes. Consider the evident differences and then reflect on the value of the consequential outcomes:

Style of Procedure

Respect is a key component of nonformal methodology. Cultivating respect should be the major motive and first value to be sought in each learning encounter. Respect for each participant in a learning experience is a mutual commitment. Verbal apology for violating this value should be a definite and sincere consequence of any violation. It should become a habit that is so predictable that it will be a conscious barrier and constraint against offense. Other than this concern for preserving the quality of the dialogue, coercion should be carefully avoided. The facilitator uses encouragement and constructive commentary to motivate, not negative criticism and punitive actions. Learners are encouraged to provide comments and suggestions. Facilitators accept criticism with constructive spirit and are ready to enter into interactions with an eye toward constructive debate. The presumption that the teacher is always right is carefully avoided. The shared-level style of verbal interaction may prove to be difficult to learn, especially if age-

difference or difference in levels of experience are substantial, but superior age, education, or experience should not be seen as entitlement to talk down to a learner. Facilitation procedures are essentially invitational. The fact that students have *chosen* to participate in the experience is respected

Institutional goals and values should be observed by all persons in the learning environment. In cases of dispute or non-responsiveness to these standards, orderly processes for clarification and further discourse are available and open, but not commonly needed, because the group's consensus is adequate to return the group to forward motion

Conceptual Structure of the Learning Environment

Differences can be seen in the roles of teacher and learner as well as in contrasts of structure of the learning environment. Nonformal education uses a less rigid schedule along with a more flexible variety of instructional materials. The skills needed for effectively using the nonformal environment are more demanding. While the nonformal facilitator may appear to "wing it" more than the school teacher, the guidance of the nonformal learning situation requires delicate handling and surely more continuous reading of the clues from the pattern of interactive flow.

Comparison of Formal and Nonformal Learning Experiences

A. Formal Learning Process. The formal teaching and learning process commonly begins with a specified textual introduction. The teacher's first task is to identify a sequence or series of factors that will connect the text with the assigned topic and its implications. All facets of importance are assume to be available in the text, and will be identified and noted for further consideration. The sequence of exploration and interpretation is systematic and controlled. The text or a specially prepared document will provide the steps to be followed. Discoveries will rarely deviate very far from the path outlined in the text or assigned reading list. Constructive conclusions will be compared with the assigned sources for validation.

Creative teachers, of which there are many, invent procedures and strategies that embellish their formal teaching in numerous ways. Formal education thrives on the ingenuity of creative teachers. But within the four walls of the formal school, there are limits. Every teacher comes to realize that there are restrictions and constraints that work against change. Schooling is thus more predictable, more habituated, and more traditional because it is committed to a system that discourages invention. The key to this system is its rigidity and sameness, from hour to hour, day to day, and even from place to place. Teachers and pupils conform; it is less risky and "safer" to do things in the customary ways, with minimum nuance

B. Nonformal Learning Process. Nonformal education by contrast moves beyond The four walls. Its "classrooms" tend to be open to the real world of experience; its lessons are drawn from lively reality, and its commitment to invention and discovery is rarely suppressed. Nonformal learning processes are less bounded, less restricted, and less traditional. For example, a common teaching-learning technique is "building thought-chains from spontaneous starts." As learners reveal their current thoughts, the facilitator persistently asks, "So where does that take us?" Distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant contributions becomes a group-task.

Learners are encouraged to share insights and especially to suggest new ways to comprehend the issue under discussion. Discussions will focus on new connections emerging in the learners' judgments as they discern the more significant issues and ideas.

Learners are expected to reflect on meanings and to search out sources, including background, propositions, and reasoning that related to the insight. Verbal communication is encouraged because it is basic to sharing the discoveries and thus gaining new learning outcomes.

Observing competent adult educators, whether in formal or nonformal situations, can reveal some common characteristics. These will add up to a vital contrast in methodology. A few specific examples follow. Many of these factors are unique to nonformal education; all are valuable guides for facilitators.

1. *Listen very carefully.* Although a thoughtful teacher will be always thinking ahead, it is very important not to lose contact with what the learners are saying. To lose some part, or even to lose the tone, of the comments from the learners is apt to result in serious gaps in the facilitator's part of the dialogue.

2. *Avoid the use of yes/no questions.* The tendency to start discussions and even to preface attempts to keep the discussion going smoothly by asking trite questions that seem to predict their own response is a habit that MUST be broken. Any contribution from the facilitator should be carefully calculated to open the conversation further, not to shut it down.

The facilitator always expects at least a sentence or two of expanded response from the learner after every question. Asking a question that elicits a simple and likely predictable response is not a constructive move. The facilitator develops the habit of avoiding asking questions or making comments that can be answered in only a few words.

3. *Listen for comments that expand understanding and create space for the new thoughts they bring.* An experienced facilitator will be alert for clues to ideas that will weave threads of nuance into the discussion. The point here is to avoid grabbing control by changing the subject; instead to be very attentive to possibilities for deepening or providing more breadth to the flow of thought.

Responsiveness to a learner's subtle shifts and twists of thought is the doorway to more advanced and more careful reasoning. A competent facilitator will carefully resist predicting responses expected from a learner. Avoiding the tendency to pre-judge comments from others requires discipline! The facilitator also learns not to seize some stray remark and to make it fit his or her own presuppositions. The key is to stay "on track." An effective facilitator will not control the discussion, but and instead may guide and shape it, always seeking to find new pieces to add to the maturing ideas.

Following is a synopsis of the nonformal educator's perspective of learning:

Life is Real Because of Learning
Discovery *is* learning
Imagination *is* learning
Showing *is* learning
Explaining *is* learning
Reasoning *is* learning

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

Innovations in Education: What's Next?

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
An exploration of the particular opportunities and challenges confronting Christian education. Key underlying values are discussed. Reprinted from Ted Ward. Innovations in Education: What Next? *Church Training* Vol.11 (1) October 1980: 14-15.

Christian education has taken many of its ideas from public education. Because of the enormous amounts invested in research in the public education sector, Christian education will continue to profit from looking over public education's shoulder. But the value system of the Christian community is distinct and, in some matters, at odds with the values of the secular society. Christian education and public education march to different drummers.

Unrest in Public Education

"If it is important to society, let the schools take care of it." Though rarely stated so plainly, this proposition seems to be the basic axiom of American educational policy. In no other nation of the world are the schools given such wide-ranging responsibility for so many needs of such a large percentage of the population. We still reflect Thomas Jefferson's view that democracy cannot succeed apart from a deep national commitment to providing essential education for all the children of all the people.

Fortunately for America, we have held to Jefferson's proposition. But the tensions and most of the pendulum swinging arise out of the difficult question that follows: "How much of what sort of education is essential?" All sorts of answers are available. Just ask anyone. But no two answers are exactly alike. Many assume that the answer lies in lists of important subject matter; others assume that the answer lies in the child's growing-up processes: whatever is necessary to help the youngster become an able and happy human being. Still others find their answer in the demands and challenges confronting society. It is especially from this last position that the current tensions arise. Since one's view of history and one's basic beliefs and values determine how the "needs of society" are understood, it is hardly surprising that there is so little agreement about what education should attempt to accomplish.

No other professional sector of society has been so boldly manipulated by legal and judicial processes. No other sector has been so pushed and pulled by public opinion. The surge of interest in private elementary and secondary schools is explained, in part, by the frustrations that have become common to opinions about public schools.

Should schools lead social change? Can educators be expected to create schools that contradict the general standards of society? One of the most difficult problems confronting the public-school teacher who has strong Christian beliefs is the conflict of values within the general public.

Now that the American society has become self-conscious about pluralism, it is harder than ever to stand for anything important without being criticized. Teachers find complaints awaiting almost any statement of conviction. Not everyone can walk the tightrope across the competing forces.

Conflict among the professional educators is yet another source of unrest. Scarcely twenty years ago the major topic of professional journals was how teachers and administrators could better work together. Despite the rapid expansion of public education (to accommodate the post-war baby boom), the system as a whole was rather harmonious. But as the public schools began to be isolated from the people, tension within the school crumbled what was left of the old human service ethic. Teaching, for many teachers, was now a job—like any other job, except less secure. So tenure was forced into the picture and, hard on its heels, unionization.

Innovation and Technology

Against the bleak background of problems deep within the fabric of public schools, another drama has been unfolding: the entry of communication technology into education. The movement has been accelerated by the hope that technology might provide much needed cures for the besetting ills.

Since World War II, innovation in education has been largely a matter of technology. After long years of chalk and slate, overhead projectors became popular. After centuries of *live* instruction, photographic, broadcasting, and recording technologies have made possible "canned" instruction. Even the old art of printing has been put to new uses: programmed materials in book form are assumed to replace part or all of the need for the teacher. Computers are the latest thing—many see educational uses of computers as the ultimate technological innovation. The computer can be programmed to teach almost anything. Perhaps.

The American attitude toward educational innovation has revealed an addiction of sorts; a little bit leads to more. As with the false teachers of 2 Timothy 4:3, Americans have itching ears to hear of some new technological innovation—some new way to do the teaching job more cheaply, quicker, or better. The faith put in new gadgets is rarely justified.

We have been on a "gadget high" for quite some time. But one thing is certain: many educational leaders are looking in other directions. More basic matters of educational quality are coming to the surface. The gadgets don't count for as much as the human relationships. So much depends on the sort of relationship established between the teacher and the learner—learners respond best to human beings who care. We need teachers who accept students as valuable human beings, encourage them to put effort into their own development, participate with them in exploring their potentialities, and take satisfaction from seeing them become able to stand on their own feet.

Surely a competent educator can make good use of instructional materials and equipment. It isn't fair to see technology as all good or all bad. Indeed, children learn more from good *machines* than they do from poor *teachers.*

Perhaps we are still in the earliest and most primitive period of high technology, and in some later period human beings will discover ways to protect themselves from domination by things, equipment, and systems. We can hope so. But for now, many people are running scared. Computers, electronic recording, digitalization, and the impersonal control systems that they provide are not so welcome in the schoolhouse as they were just a few years ago.

Innovation as People

Defenders of instructional technology argue that media systems are hardly to blame; the problem is how they are used. The assumption that a device or material is a neutral factor, good when used correctly and bad if misused, is reasonable—except for one thing. Instructional technology not only *extends* the

teacher or *enhances* the teaching acts, but these very devices and materials can get *between* the teacher and learner. They can alter or even destroy the relationship.

Quite possibly, educational innovation through technology has run its full course. The next generation of "improvements" is already emerging, and it seems to be of a different sort. Partly as a reaction to technological excesses, and partly because of a new emphasis on human values, innovation now seems to be moving in the direction of restoring the emphasis on the learner. Following are several illustrations of this trend.

More attention to moral and spiritual development. The earlier and extensively misused "values clarification" efforts are giving way to more comprehensive efforts to deal with moral and spiritual values in a context of responsible authority. Such programs as *Quest* are spreading even into public schools a new awareness that illicit interpersonal relationships, drug abuse, and alcohol consumption are moral and spiritual problems that can be wisely confronted.

Smaller, more intimate learning environments. Partly because of the inadequacy of mass communication technology in education, there is a trend away from the large-scale schools and educational schemes of just a few years ago. The prestigious Carnegie Council's new report, *Giving Youth a Better Chance,*[1] calls for smaller junior and senior high schools.

Lifelong education. Especially if the value of secondary schooling should be downplayed, community colleges and other sources of *functional* learning may become much more important. Our complex world requires that a competent person be educated—no doubt about it. But halfhearted exposure to schooling isn't going to meet the needs. In order to clear the deck so that schools can have one more try to get their house in order, the Carnegie Council is suggesting that vocational education be moved out of high schools altogether and that youngsters be free to leave school at age 16 if they want to, with the option of getting more training in vocational centers and community colleges later when they see the need of it.

The importance of functional learning is being recognized. In the past fifteen years there has been an increased emphasis on adult learning. No longer is it acceptable to talk about "finishing your education." Education—continuing to learn and develop—is a part of life, for one's whole lifetime.

Implications for Christian Education

What does this mean for Christian education? First, the church's educational programs should be geared to lifelong education and particularly to the use of nonformal modes of education. Spiritual development doesn't depend on classrooms; but it does depend on participation in discipleship experiences in fellowship with others of God's people under the lordship of Jesus Christ. This means growing and sharing together—lifelong.

[1] *Giving Youth a Better Chance: Options for Education, Work and Service*, by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1979). The report examines problems faced by America's youth before entering higher education—problems created by a severe labor market and limited resources allotted for education and vocational training.

Second, the major emphasis should shift from childhood education to adult education. Putting priorities aright again in keeping with biblical teaching, the responsibility for children is upon the parents. The responsibility of the church is to develop and support the parents.

Third, the Christian education sector should boldly establish its leadership in the realm of moral education. The relativistic secular society is, in part, on the verge of looking once again to religion as the source for desperately needed anchorage in a troubled age. Christian education must be ready this time.

Most important, Christian education should be head and shoulders above all other education in terms of the connection between knowing and doing. Biblical Christianity places relatively little value on meaningless ritual and memorized nonsense. The important concern is for spiritual development. Indeed, with such strong emphasis on the relation of knowledge and action, Christian education might very well be in the forefront of the next important era of educational development.

Leaders Among the People of God

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
A study of leaders and leadership development in four parts: futures of theological education, qualities of Christian leadership, the church as a learning context, and a basis for lifelong learning. Unpublished paper by Ted Ward, October, 1993.

Futures of Theological Education

Theological education has never been all of one piece. The demands of this time and of the near future suggest that a greater variety of creative models of education is needed. What is appropriate in one situation or for one sector of the church has reason to be different from what is needed in another. This conclusion is underlined by the increasingly global consciousness of the church.

Issues

Mandates. Christianity is essentially the worship of the creator-God who has ordained a rationality and capability for understanding as the cornerstone of worship. God is honored by efforts to perceive His essence and intentions in the guidance of history and the redemption provided in Jesus Christ. God has further specified that leaders have a responsibility for the equipping of the whole community for service and especially the identifying and nurturing of others who will also take responsibility as leaders. Theological education, at least in the generic sense, is the essential process of furthering the understandings of what God has said and how the Scripture applies to the circumstances of life in various places at certain periods of time. The task of theological education thus holds together the constancy of the Word,' on the one hand, and the changing realities of context and history, on the other.

Anxieties. Institutional survival seems to be a major concern. Will our school survive? How secure are our jobs as pastors, professors, and administrators? Any answers must be tentative. Nobody can respond with certainty; but surely many schools will be forced into radical change or closure. Perhaps it would be less self-centered to ask, "Is *theological education* coming to an end?" The answer is certainly negative. Theological education in one form or another is as old as the Holy Scriptures; it will surely continue. What is less likely to continue is the dominant form of the past hundred years or so.

Issues of purpose. "Preparation for ministry" is a phrase likely to change. Perhaps part of the contemporary misfit between institutions and the churches relates to the antiquated notion that without schooling there is no preparation and without preparation there is no ministry. A faulty theological understanding of church and leadership within the church is at the root of the problem. The church is the people of God and its proper leadership is a matter of shared servanthood. Ministering to and among God's people is to be a common task of all the saints. Notions to the contrary can be commonly traced to the traditions of the church's period of domination by hierarchical Roman Catholic polity, governance, and worship. The academic arrogance of presuming to "prepare ministers" or to impose academic qualifications on those who are called to ministry is an extension of these errors.

The clergy-laity dichotomy is exacerbated by certain presumptions of theological education. While granting that a responsible pastor needs to be skilled in the handling of the Scriptures, his or her goal

should be nothing less than helping the people of the church in their developing this competency for themselves. That most Christians will not make the effort does not add to the stature of the pastor. Pastors who presume to be above the people tend to use their education as a badge of authority, thus adding to the relational distance between themselves and the leadership lying nascent within the congregation.

Issues of scope. Theological education is increasingly caught between two extreme views: theological education is only for the clergy, or it is for everyone. This contrast is hard to reconcile. Some want to keep clerical education clearly separated from education for the laity. Others want all of God's people to have the same opportunities. The narrow view is hard to defend except among the most formal and liturgical fellowships. The latter position leads to a host of practical problems such as the obvious difficulty of providing an expensive and time-consuming educational experience for everyone. The unresolved question remains. Who needs how much education of what sort? The issue relating to the level of skill necessary to handle the biblical languages is a particularly puzzling exemplar of these questions.

Issues of form. Christians, as "people of the Book," should have the answers to the following questions. Where is it written that theological education should be provided in a school? Where is it written that a three-year degree, enrolled full-time, after a four-year bachelor's degree is the ideal model? Where is it written that certain courses are essential and others are optional? Where is it written that ideally the student should live on a campus during this series of formal learning experiences? Where is it written that students must be given grades or scores based upon their ability to recall bits of information and that these grades or scores should be considered the basis for honor among the saints?

The church has been able to make fairly good use of the formal education model. It should not be abandoned simply because it is not spelled out in the Bible. (Jesus might have used the telephone, had it been available.) But to some extent the formal model of schooling *was* already in use by the time of Jesus' ministry, and He chose not to use it. Instead He surrounded himself with learners and struck off across the countryside, from village to village to city, teaching in the context of His ministry and involving His learners in action from the very beginning of their development as His disciples. Such an approach startled the more formally educated groups (John 4:1, 2).

Today the formal model of education is defended almost as vigorously as the Gospel itself. Creative alternatives are rarely sought. When any changes are proposed they are either talked to death in committee or they are dismissed on the grounds that if God had wanted things to be any different He would have made them that way from the beginning. The social contrivances of the post-industrial era are blithely accepted as having a clear track back to the apostles. Is it heretical to ask if God might be on the threshold of revealing to the church some fundamentally different way or ways of accomplishing the vital task of leadership development?

Alternative Scenarios

Minimal change. Despite the readily available evidence of shrinking enrollments and financial instability in many theological schools, especially those without substantial endowments or well-developed ties to growing denominations, the leadership people in theological education seem largely committed to a wait-and-see attitude. Some are delaying the studies that might spell out a more viable future; some are simply taking as a matter of faith that God is so happy with the status quo that He will preserve the institutional forms and ultimately show that change is inappropriate.

A more critical reading of the "handwriting on the wall" suggests that these assumptions are very risky. Without substantial change, a significant number of institutions are likely to find themselves in irreversible difficulty very soon. The unaddressed problems include the following:

The changed and still changing nature of the students enrolled in theological education. They are older, more experienced, more commonly married, and often with children. They have greater financial burdens, they must continue employment, and thus they tend to be part-time students. They often are already engaged in substantial ministry in the churches. They are more diverse in their educational backgrounds. They are more able to discern the value of an educational task, and thus they are more inclined to resist and resent simplistic assignments and ineffectual or inappropriate tests.

The increasing costs of higher education. Formal education is forcing out the less well-supported students. In theological education the problem is compounded by the relatively poorly-paid positions into which graduates must move if they are to remain in salaried ministry. Academic debt is becoming less manageable.

The changing concerns and needs of churches. Churches and the communities in which they minister are confronted by circumstances hardly imaginable when the categories of the classical theological curriculum were laid down. By merely standing still, practical theology, for example, has become a virtual museum, reminding of a now-lost era when the largest single task of the minister was pulpit oratory. Today's pastors lose their jobs or choose to leave for substantially different reasons: incompetency in dealing with people amidst the complexities of their real world, ineffective management of church finances, incompetent development of lay leadership, lack of vision, and failure to understand the nature of adult learning and spiritual nurturance.

Two-Tier Survival. Theological education may well split into two major sectors, a more academic and higher order of substantially longer programs to satisfy the needs of churches that believe they need leaders with doctoral-level theological education, and a lower tier of academia to serve the vast majority of the churches through a more functionally-oriented and shorter education. The models for this bifurcation may already be in place, as many Bible colleges are returning to their roots, narrowing down to provide an undergraduate education that leads directly to employment in ministry, while the highly academic theological schools push further into an esoteric and scholarly elaboration of their fervently defended educational models.

Church-based forms. As especially the larger churches become more assertive and more insightful about their own possibilities as educational centers, it seems likely that there will be a return to educational forms common to earlier centuries of leadership development in the church. Using the internship model coupled with intensive small-group educational experiences, many a church will come to be its own source of leadership resources.

When this possibility is effectively fulfilled, it is likely to lead to a new emphasis on outreach and missions, bringing about trends that will spell out a whole new order (or the end) for the established denominational and independent mission boards. If the seminaries and theological schools do not find effective ways to provide help and extension ministries the emergence of church-based theological education may spell the end of an era for the so-called "modern missionary movement" and its counterpart, domination of theological education by formal schools.

Responsive resource centers. Perhaps the schools of theology can find ways to respond to trends and become hubs of shared resources. Serving the churches has become a lower priority in so many cases,

but God can turn this around. Seminaries and theological schools constitute substantial clusters of human and literary resources that will still be needed in the cause of leadership development in the church regardless of other eventualities. Effective dialogue and planning among the several sectors of the church and the agencies that were originally conceived as resources for the church is the way forward.

Qualities of Christian Leadership

Guidelines from Scripture. Where and how do the attributes, qualities, and skills of Christian leadership develop? The Apostle Paul provided lists of qualities and characteristics which were to be used in the selection of leaders for the church. These lists include, by inference, matters of intellect and knowledge, but they are predominantly concerned with attributes of character, social-relational skills, and personality (See 1 Timothy 3:1-13).

Intellectual competencies. The emphasis on intellectual development, knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures, and similar matters that are given such a prominent place in theological education is in substantial contrast with the biblical guidelines for the selection of leadership in the church.

Much faith is placed in formal schooling. The church has long been among the vanguard in the promoting of formal education, and much good has come from it. But schooling is relatively ineffective in matters of spiritual development and character formation. At peril, the church persists in its misguided over-confidence in the value of formal theological education.

Socio-cultural emphasis. Regardless of the perspective from the academic environment, the leader in the church must understand the perspectives of the people of the church. The increasingly complex cultural mix in today's typical church makes necessary the qualities of leadership that were characteristic of the days of the apostles.

Skills of leading people. Leaders of God's people must first of all be followers of God. But the major shortcomings that cause pastors to leave the ministry often relate to rudimentary problems of interpersonal relationships. Leaders need the respect that comes from treating people well and providing encouragement and nurture. The skills of leadership that matter most are an interaction of appropriate skills manifest within the gifts of personality and wisdom that enables leaders to avoid the many pitfalls of egoism and control-seeking.

The not-so-well hidden curriculum *of theological education.* Professional educators, and especially those who are concerned with curriculum, curriculum theory, and curriculum research, often make note of unannounced and unclaimed meanings and messages in an educational experience. These are identified as "hidden curriculum." The term is based on the not unreasonable idea that often we are teaching toward purposes that are not quite openly confessed or claimed. The outcomes of the "hidden curriculum" are often tacitly accepted by those who operate the educational enterprise although they are not quite willing to admit it. In other cases, the outcomes are even "hidden" from the educators themselves—a kind of self-deception in which something undesirable is happening as a byproduct of good intentions. For example, consider the following two outcomes of formal theological education. Who intends that these two ideas be taught?

1. *Leading is knowing*. Living with a constant emphasis on academic learning influences people more than is commonly recognized. One's world becomes defined by the values which regulate one's life. One goes to school in order to become able to lead; the emphasis in school is on knowing. Thus it is easy to come to the conclusion, perhaps consciously, but surely sub-consciously, that these matters of "important to know" are somehow the stuff of competency.

So easily then, the person who spends many years in the academic environment in the anticipation of leadership in ministry comes to equate the capacity to lead with the extent of knowing.

2. *Ministry relationships are like formal schooling*. Being a student is similar to being a child, especially in that both these situations stimulate the longing to be different—to escape the subordinate role, or better yet, to reverse it. The student role is essentially responsive; the teacher role is usually dominant. Many a seminary graduate moves from the seminary to the church by seizing the chalk and the stick, the symbols of authority in the classroom, and moves them into the church. Pedantic leadership is not apt to be well accepted in the church. The pastor cannot pose as a school teacher. The people cannot be expected to sit quietly in neat rows.

A place for spiritual development. Leading that serves God and His people begins with following God. Academic concerns in theological education are typically given priority over spiritual concerns. A partial explanation lies in the ancient lore among students: *Students give more attention to things that they believe will be on the test.* But evidence is piling up to warn theological schools that churches are very often disappointed with the quality of spiritual leadership offered by the recent seminary graduate. A further comment on the real world of theological education is found in the following observation from educational research: *Teachers tend to teach what is easiest to test.*

Since spirituality is not easily tested, its importance in the academic scheme hardly seems worthy. Instead, all sorts of informational and textual materials related to spirituality are included. Obviously, this accumulation of information does not add up to true spirituality.

In reference to the development of leadership for the church, certain ways of organizing learning are more appropriate than others. The most promising ways and means are those that provide the following characteristics:

- Learning that is *experiential.*
- Learning that involves *functional responsibility.*
- *Engagement with others* in contexts and circumstances that allow *follow-through and long-term engagement.*

Learning within community. Where will these three characteristics be most readily available? Rather than in the solitary and highly individualistic situations so common in the context of formal education, spiritual development will be available within a community in which one can be engaged in service. Effective development of Christian ministry skills and attitudes is more apt to occur where there is continual interaction with a sector of the community of faith, at least in terms of a relationship with a mentor, or better yet, a mentoring network within a larger circle of the Christian community. The learner needs relationships with others.

In light of the scriptural evidences, God intends that learning of most matters and surely of the relational skills of leadership should be social experiences rather than individualized solitary encounters with information.

Leaders must develop in wisdom. The learning experiences gained in theological education should move the leader of the church in the direction of wisdom. The distinction between knowledge and wisdom

in the biblical wisdom literature is well reflected in the scaling from knowledge (as memorized information) to capacity for judgment (evaluation) in the insightful *Taxonomy of Learning Outcomes* (1954) by the late Benjamin Bloom (University of Chicago).

Bloom identifies six levels of the use of the human mind in cognitive operations. These six levels are best represented in a sequence of upward steps from the first to the sixth. The importance of each step is reflected in its being part of the enabling of the next step. Every level of learning has worth. The major point is that each step demands a more elegant use of the human capacity for complex thought. Thus it can be assumed that each level upward reflects development and more extensive utilization of potential mental ability. The well-educated and mature person should be able to operate appropriately at each of the six levels, utilizing all of the earlier levels in effective ways.

A Synoptic View of Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Processes

1. **Knowledge** (in the sense of bits of data committed to memory).
2. **Comprehension** (to the extent of being able to re-present INFORMATION in one's own words).
3. **Application** (capability of putting understood information into action).
4. **Analysis** (the mental task of taking an idea apart, sorting, classifying and examining its several parts).
5. **Synthesis** (the mental task of combining one idea with a relatable other idea and thus making a more thorough third idea).
6. **Evaluation** (the use of well-analyzed and appropriately synthesized ideas as the basis for a judgment—think wisdom).

Sadly, tests and assignments in higher education, including theological schools, tend to emphasize the first two levels partly because of the difficulty of testing at higher levels.

The Church as a Learning Context

Development of leadership for the church and for the godly influencing of the larger society is one of the defining responsibilities of the church. An integrated or holistic view of human spirituality leads to a view of the church as being concerned with the whole of human development.

Seeing the church as a learning context is important for other reasons. The church is a network of communities of God's people. Within these communities people who are born into the kingdom of God through the saving work of Jesus Christ enter into relationships which are intended to provide nurturance and appropriate stimulus for spiritual development. The Christian is not born full-grown spiritually; a central mission of the church is to provide the context and the resources for the development of God's people.

Historically, local churches have delegated certain functions and have chosen, sometimes wisely, to establish institutions for the furtherance of specific aspects of their mission. Such institutions are assumed to lead to increased effectiveness through economies of scale. The resulting institutions are often highly regarded as examples of Christian cooperation and inter-congregational unity. Hospitals, schools, colleges, seminaries, and mission boards are the major categories of institutions thus established. Unfortunately, two negative consequences tend to appear over time: the church can lose its intimate involvement with the delegated parts of its mission, and the institution can take on a deterministic life of its own with steadily decreasing concern for accountability to the church. The first of these consequences distances the delegated mission from the consciousness of the people in the local congregations. The remoteness of

theological schools provides one clear example. The education of pastors and other employed leaders in the church is somebody else's responsibility; the church may make direct or indirect contributions, but the level of influential involvement is often less than the church has over its lawn-maintenance service.

The second consequence, the tendency of institutions to take on a life of their own, is clearly seen in the degeneration of colleges and universities, both denominational and independent. Having lost the essence of their mission, they go their own ways with minimal value and little accountability to the churches. The story is not so grim with theological schools. But here a different concern can be raised—the easy acceptance of seminaries and Bible colleges which have no clear linkage and accountability to the churches.

Limited images of the church as a learning center. The assertion that the local church itself is a learning center usually calls to mind the programmed educational activities of the church: Sunday *School*, Vacation Bible *School*, Teachers' Training *School*, and for the occasional conference being called a *School* of Prophecy, for example. The schooling image is the mental starting point for much of the programmed activity of the church. But, the attendant assumptions fall pathetically short of the functional potentialities of the church as a learning center. Few people stop to consider that far less is learned in school than in the socialization processes of society.

Socialization into the community of the people of God: Clues from Deuteronomy 6. This passage depicts God at work informing the community of faith of its continuing responsibility for building a particular sort of society in which the young and newcomers will be socialized into a God-consciousness and an awareness of the behavioral dimensions of their responsibilities as godly people. The Deuteronomy 6 text is commonly offered as proof of the importance of Christian education. But in this text, as in all other biblical texts on teaching and learning, there is not even a hint about the schooling model. The concern is altogether focused on the nature of a family and a community in which the young will learn their God-consciousness as naturally and persistently as they learn their first language.

The dominance of formal education. Any conversation or writing about the church's role in education must deal with the fact that fuzzy words tend to confuse the issues. *Educating, teaching, learning,* and *development* are each important words, but they tend to run together in overlapping and sometimes contradictory ways. One clear example is the heated arguments that rage over the word *training*: for sensitive educators, training is what is done to animals; humans are to be *educated*, not *trained*.

When one's thinking about education starts and stops with images and procedures of formal education, the possibilities are sharply limited. School-like relationships, environments, assignments, and cognitive outcomes are assumed to be appropriate. The walking-talking-doing activities in deliberate learning through experience are overlooked or downgraded as less than valid learning. Thus Jesus' example is denigrated. The result is unnecessarily tedious and bookish teaching, abstracted from the realities of life.

Defining learning. For John Dewey, learning was "reorganization of experience." Dewey was especially concerned that learning should be understood as an active process within the learner. To learn is not simply to receive information. Dewey also talked of learning as a "representing of experience." (Dewey emphasized it as "re-presenting," referring to the verbal presenting of things conceptualized in the mind).

For Jean Piaget, as well, learning is the "modification of experience by behavior. We learn by doing things—by re-sorting and rearranging the elements of the environment." Those who study learning in the context of actual human experience agree on several points: the meaning of an idea depends heavily on the

mental material available from previous experiences and perceptual images. Further, the process of learning is an active meaning-making activity in which the learner's worldview, biases, personality, and significant others constitute a set of powerful filters through which the new encounter with evidence or idea will be interpreted.

Defining the three socio-cultural contexts of education. Analysts of education generally differentiate three sorts of educational events, ranging from the highly formalized to the "natural" and ordinary events of living within a culture. The following taxonomy is useful for Christian educators especially as a reminder that the intent of Christian education is to develop the church as a particular kind of environment for whole-person development (socialization), and the mode represented most clearly by the activity of Jesus and by most of the church-community educating down through the church era is *nonformal education*.

Socialization. The ordinary teaching and learning that occurs through interactions with a social context. Learning "at mother's knee," "on the streets," and so forth.

Formal Education (Schooling). Teaching and learning that is carried out through the ordained or decreed and formalized institutions of society, usually schools, and always linked in some clearly defined way to the structured ladder-like chain of academic accomplishments which earn recognition, status, credentialing, and usually greater wealth.

Nonformal Education. Deliberate teaching and learning, not casual or merely circumstantial, but not linked tightly to the formal social ladder of schooling. Methodologically, nonformal education typically uses procedures of teaching and learning drawn from the lore and practices of formal education, but it does so with greater flexibility and freedom, generally using experiential learning in preference to classrooms and lectures.

Nonformal Education about Socialization. Deuteronomy 6 is one of the most specific illustrations of a view of education as generally used in the Scriptures. Nonformal education is used to guide and inform in matters of the sort of family and worship contexts through which God intends humanity to be shaped into communities and nations which honor Him. In these passages it becomes clear how adults are to conduct themselves in order that younger people will be brought into full participation in the community of faith.

Moving Theological Education to the Streets. Among the most promising possibilities for theological education is the growing awareness that the development of ministry capacities demands extensive participation with many sorts of people within the contexts of their ordinary worlds. Thus nonformal education that emulates many of the characteristics of the coming-and-going of Jesus as teacher is becoming more valued.

Learning the Social Skills of the Gospel. Certain learnings are of special concern to the Christian community: compassion, nurture, reconciliation, and hospitality. These concerns are not unique to the church; indeed the church does not always appear to invest them with greater value than does general humankind. But for the Christian they are the epitome of social skills that need to be developed in response to the Gospel.

Incarnation of the Word—Learning to Walk the Word. The evident epistemology of Hebrew thought demands that *knowing, wisdom*, and other such terms denoting mental process be understood to imply acting upon, behaving in, and demonstrating obedience to the truth as the very essence of knowledge. Thus a community of experiencing and sharing people is the requisite for theological education. It is not enough to *know about* God and the things of God—one must actually *know God*. And to truly know

God is to *walk* with God. Thus the line between academic functions (the intellectual processes of learning God's Word) and the nurture of spiritual development must virtually vanish.

A Basis for Lifelong Learning

The Christian community has done as well as almost any of the major subdivisions of the American society in the matter of lifelong learning. The Christian church has long embraced a lifelong encounter with exposition and application through regular exposure to sermons. Christians assume that there is always more to know; in recent years there seems to be an increasing valuing of the knowing of the things of God.

A foundation for continuing education. Substantial theological evidence supports the premise of lifelong development. The cultural context of the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, assumes that the progression toward wisdom is a function of maturing across life.

Teaching for foundation-building. Whether or not learning is an end in itself is a major concern even within theological education. Two contrasting positions are commonly taken by teachers: some assume that anything anyone will ever need to know should be at least represented and given attention in the formal curriculum. Others assume that trying to anticipate and deal with everything within the scope of even three or four years of formal higher education is futile. Teachers holding the second position are more inclined to find ways to introduce channels of inquiry and to teach the means and procedures by which the student can begin a process of lifelong learning. By contrast, those holding the first position tend to organize and deliver great quantities of information, often overwhelming the students and leading them toward frustration and resentment.

Within schools of theological education it is not unusual for faculty members to be so thoroughly informed in matters of the content of their specialties that little mental energy or professional time is left to come to any sort of professional understanding of learning processes and the art and science of teaching. Thus the inadequacy of the "cover-everything" approach is not addressed. When such professors are in the majority within a department, they often control the departmental examining process. Students in their courses likely will perform better on tests than the students of the second type of professor. Follow up studies of alumni confirm this result. However, professors who give more attention to the laying of a sound foundation of learning skills and put substantial trust in the students' prospects for continuing education are more often those whose graduates later attest to continuing to learn.

Sustainable habits. Graduate education in an applied discipline such as theology is a professional development experience; thus it must meet the tests of applicability and functionality. For the leader in the community of faith nothing is more practical than the skill and habit of reasoning theologically. People who cannot or will not think in God-centered abstractions and theoretical constructs are seriously under-educated. Tragically, it is possible to hold three-year and four-year theology degrees without having built the habits of thinking theologically. Academic theology, whatever its form, should be held accountable for helping theology students develop sustainable habits of reasoning and thought, not just demonstrating on some Olympian field of memory and verbiage that they have all the right answers to a set of rather predictable questions.

Reading. The ways to use books and other print media will continue to be an important part of leadership education. Reading is a highly efficient and fairly precise way to get in touch with what the experiences of others have taught them. Reading also provides one of the important avenues through which one's perspectives are broadened. If academic reading is altogether guided by and ultimately limited by a formal bibliography, the habits of inquiry will, at best, be only partially formed.

Dialogue. The very word *dialogue* frightens some Christians. It suggests to them an openness and willingness to get in touch with people who hold different views. And so it should. Dialogue—the process of systematic and focused conversation and explication of mental paradigms—is an enriching and fulfilling part of the learning process. Through dialogue we not only hear other ways of expressing ideas and gain insights through others' perceptions, but we gain facility and confidence in the organizing and expressing of our own understandings. One of the best arguments that can be made in support of residential study is the deeper quality of dialogue that it can encourage—assuming that the academic environment is used for that purpose. Further, even as the Apostle Paul demonstrated in several new situations, notably in Athens, dialogue concerning people's culture, religious presuppositions, and worldview is a basic necessity for effective evangelization.

Language Learning. Differing views of the extent and level of accomplishment in Greek and Hebrew are likely to persist. One might well predict that the argument will not become more heated; it couldn't. Surely, Christian leaders can benefit from some degree of familiarity with the underlying premises, parallels, and contrasts of meaning in the biblical languages in order to test for consistency of doctrine; but to argue the absolute necessity of this competency for every leader within the church seems unrealistic and quite possibly unnecessary. But it seems reasonable to argue that multi-year advanced degrees should give substantial attention to the biblical languages and becoming bi-lingual in some second major world-class language as well. Ministry in the years ahead is surely going to be more rewarding for those who can help to bridge the linguistic gaps that are becoming ever more problematic in the modernized world. And the threats of syncretism, quasi-Christian cults, and universalism are apt to demand responsible Biblical exegesis to a greater extent than ever.

Culture learning. The major international need in this post-ideological world is for intercultural and especially interethnic reconciliation. Leaders are increasingly responsible to help the people of God learn the rudiments of intercultural reconciliation. The model in Acts 6 is more important with every passing year. Leaders must be good culture learners and effective teachers of culture learning.

Relating gifts and ministry. Across one's life God provides gifts as needed for the ministry of the church. The leader must continually reassess the needs of the ministry, prayerfully seek the intervention and blessing of God for appropriate response, accept the need for developing in new ways as the servant of the creative God.

The Skills of Self-Assessment and Planning. Leadership education should develop self-understanding and planning. Systematic and dedicated self-assessment should be a mark of the responsible leader. Many of these skills are appropriately developed within the context of planning. The leader should continue across life to gain skill in thorough self-assessment and the interlocking of understandings thus derived with the on-going planning of ministry tasks and functions.

The crucial rudiment: lifelong spiritual development. All else in life takes on importance as it supports and nurtures spiritual development. For Christians, nothing is more important than the spiritual essence or center core of human personhood. From this spiritual core of the person the ministries of the Spirit of God are transmuted into social action. Spirituality is reflected in worship, a fountain of responsiveness to God's holiness; it is reflected in the humility of a Christ-like walk of life, extending into the good works of life as the evidences of faith (as emphasized in James).

Lifelong nurture and continuing maturation of faith. From an educational viewpoint, spirituality can be conceptualized as a three-sided space. Every Christian, at a given moment of life, is positioned somewhere within that triangular field, closer to one corner or another, or perhaps located in the exact

center. With every passing day, and according to the seasons of life, one moves about in this space, drawing upon the three nurturing processes in a refreshing and renewing way—or else clings stubbornly to one corner in preference to the others. The three corners represent three venerable processes in the demonstration and maturing of spirituality:

1. *Learning from the Book.* Lewis Sperry Chafer, in *He That Is Spiritual*, exemplifies the strength and vitality of this "corner" of the triangular space. Major emphasis is on the knowing of what God has said about the spiritual life and the ways in which Christian spirituality is nurtured by the Word and God's Spirit. Because of the emphasis on scholastic rationalism among evangelicals, this form of spiritual nurture has broadest acceptance and is least vulnerable to criticism.

2. *Developing through meditation upon the Person and work of Christ.* Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471) in *The Imitation of Christ,* exemplifies that sort of spiritual meditation and discipline that fulfills the mystical identification with the person of Jesus Christ. Although many people in the evangelical tradition associate the images of spiritual mysticism with the pre-Reformation Roman church, the literature of Christian meditation has always been appreciated by those who see the importance of prayer and fasting.

3. *Manifesting and nurturing spirituality through the works of godly justice.* Donal Dorr, in *Spirituality and Justice*, focuses the most controversial of the three corners of the triangle. By no means is this book alone in stressing the connection between spirituality and justice, but its effectiveness in connecting the biblical materials to the ministries of Christian help and witness in an unjust world is exemplary. For many evangelicals the re-discovery of the epistle of James and the awakening of social consciousness has led to the recognition of the powerful effect that applied ministry and the works of the Gospel have in the life of the spiritually maturing believer.

The leader among the people of God must be committed to a lifelong spiritual development in which some sort of appropriate relationship among these three nurturing experiences is discovered and maintained.

Stewardship of life. Continuing education and lifelong learning are nothing short of the ways and means by which a godly leader keeps sharp and fit. Such stewardship of life, its spirituality, mission, and resources, is an appropriate response to the grace of God shown through the Lord Jesus Christ.

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The Anomaly of Theological Education: Institutions Serving an Institution

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Abstract

An exploration of the relationship of the church to its serving institution: the theological school. Factors related to leadership development, the nature of the church in relation to the schools, and lifelong learning are discussed. Reprinted from the Foreword to *Theological Education Matters: Leadership Education for the Church*, by Linda Cannell (Chicago, IL: Morgenbooks). Accessed at www.amazon.com.

The church is more than an organization. It is a body of people; biblically it is identified as "the body of Christ." It is a community of faith, a collective of those committed to a belief. But the church is often mistaken as an organization, and as such, it is assumed to be represented by one or more institutions of education, especially because it is associated with training academies of many sorts: Bible schools, ministerial seminaries, theological schools, divinity schools. Whether such schools are *served by* the church or are intended *to serve* the church is one of the most confused issues in all of professional education. Exploring this issue and identifying the historical and philosophical roots of its confusion are the driving motives that have led Linda Cannell to write this book.

Although the church can be classified sociologically as an institution, it is more metaphysical than this term suggests. Biblically, the church is identified with the qualities of personhood as "the bride of Christ." This metaphor's distance from the realm of organizational structures and management is dramatic and surely intentional. The special relationship of Christ and his followers is identified in the vocabulary of relationships. The intimacy of this relationship is revealed in its special form of affiliation. The church is a family, not merely a membership organization.

The church functions within two domains: the physical universe of human relationships and the spiritual realm of eternal and transcendent truth. Great care is required to reconcile the ways and means of the differing value systems of these two domains. The difficulties in maintaining such reconciliation are especially evident in matters of leadership and in the ways and means of developing leaders.

Dealing with the physical universe requires accepting the importance of information. Those who lead—whether at the level of supervision and management or at the level of planning and evaluative judgment—must know the basic stuff of the job. They must be prepared through appropriate modes of experience so that they know the skills, understandings, and roles needed to fulfill the job. They also must be carefully oriented to the social and emotional context of the job—inspired and motivated to fulfill their appointed role in the organization, to represent faithfully the ethos of its purposes.

Whether this need to know is a matter of memorizing facts or of developing complex reasoning and spiritual maturity in order to make appropriate choices and judgments (some of us believe the latter is the preferred outcome), it seems to call for some kind of educational intervention. Leaders of the church must *know*, they must *do*, and they must *become* in order to be exemplars of the values, style, and social-emotional orientation demanded for the tasks, management, and purpose-fulfillment of the organization.

Thinking of job requirements and necessary competencies in terms of learning tasks, however, leads to several dangerous habits. First, it leads to the presumption that skills and knowledge are the only sorts of qualifications that are important to establish qualifications. (What about character traits and moral judgment?) Second, it exalts the qualities of a person that can be assessed through objective testing. Testing objectively justifies a piecework mode of teaching that dehumanizes our development and growth processes. (Is it enough to assess the stuff on information shelves and to come up with scores for the skills that a person possesses?) Third, it overlooks the human quality of interrelationship. A person is not simply the sum of what is remembered and what can be done with that information. (Do fragmented facts and catalogs of information add up to a fair representation of one's personality, style, sensitivities, and being, a true assessment of the person?)

Such a tendency to oversimplify, to dry out, and to objectify in cold and inhuman representations leads educators today to warn against excesses of the objective testing movement. The resultant conflict in this domain is just the tip of the iceberg of the current dissonance between school and church.

The Question of Values

Institutions of one sort can effectively serve institutions of another sort if their values are consistent. When any institution, the church, for example, is served by another institution, a school, for example, the similarity of their purposes and values will determine the worth of the service. If the purposes and values are different on any significant issue, the service will be weakened, quite possibly invalidated. In the business and financial world, banking institutions can serve business institutions well because banks and mercantile institutions share the same competitive values and profit-making purposes.

On the other hand, the likelihood of conflicting purposes when medical and pastoral personnel are called upon to serve military purposes is accommodated by setting them apart as noncombatants; this status is formally recognized by the Geneva Convention. These humanitarian specialists are dedicated to different purposes from those of soldiers and military commanders: *saving lives*, a high value of most religions, stands in contrast with *ending lives*, which is the immediate purpose of modern warfare.

Conflicts between the fulfillment of higher moral values and the possibility of doing possible damage to those values is a matter of concern to most honorable institutions and organizations. For this reason, most universities are constantly on guard lest their research facilities be used for immoral or dishonest purposes.

My attempt to connect issues of selection and training of pastors to matters of warfare and immorality may seem strained. But to the extent that theology (the study of basic sources in religion) involves one institution (the church) entrusting itself to another institution, schooling, to be the developer of its leaders, the parallels are clear. Perhaps it should be stated more boldly: *the church has not consistently been well served by the schools and school-like institutions to which it has delegated the responsibility to prepare its own leaders.*

The church, as understood by Christians, is itself an odd case among the religious institutions of human societies. The church of Jesus Christ is far more than a New Testament manifestation of the synagogue of the Old Testament. It is far more than a temple or place of worship (a mosque, for example). Yes, *church* (Gr. e*kklesia*) occasionally denotes a place of worship, but more often—and more substantially—the term denotes an assembly of followers of Christ, whether in a place or on the move. Always the distinction is illustrative of a common commitment to God through the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of this glorified and ascended person, Emmanuel, God with us.

The purpose of this body of people, the family of God, whether in whole or in a specific place, is always the same: to perpetuate Christ's call to humankind. *Repent and be baptized.* It is not an organization, surely not a club or a collective of delegates to a meritorious organization. The distinctives of the life and motives of Jesus were intensely personal: truth, hope, compassion, faith, forgiveness, gentleness, and mercy. These values are difficult to embody; even those who are sincerely committed to Christ find themselves engaged in a lifetime of challenge and inspiration. A common trait of Christians is that they accept the futility of self-improvement toward the goal of becoming Christlike and give themselves over to the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Who Chooses the Leaders?

Leadership of this assembly, the church, was not left to chance. It was charged to carry out its purposes under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as leaders were identified, equipped, and gifted specifically for the offices and services of the church. This process borders on the mystical, although deliberate decisions and choices are illustrated in numerous biblical examples.

Selecting and preparing leaders to enable the church to carry out its ministry, as established by Christ and the apostles, is a responsibility charged to the church. Nowhere in Scripture is this task assigned to another agency or institution. Thus each theological school must accept its accountability to the church, lest it become a potential source of dissonance. All churches and organizations of churches do not see this matter alike. Various arrangements are made to assign the labors and responsibilities of educational tasks. Some scholars underestimate the importance of harmony on these matters. Others are intolerant in their insistence on assigning *sole* authority to the local church or to the institutions of the denominational affiliation.

For some, it is a matter of convenience and management: the special work of preparing and certifying pastoral leaders is a service *to* the church, not primarily a responsibility *of* the church. Such a view allows that the tasks of selecting and preparing leaders can be delegated to specialized institutions of pastoral education and training—schools. This reasoning has long-standing acceptance and support, although it seems inconsistent with New Testament teachings and practices. In recent years, as schooling has become more concerned with technology than with philosophy and history, important questions are being raised about its appropriate role within the church.

Because of the worldwide growth of the Christian church and the diversities and dissonances arising in various cultural situations in which the church is emerging, understanding the shapes, forms, and diverse formation of church leadership requires careful examination and reflection.

Schools for Developing Leaders

Three factors are linked to the presumption that the church needs schools.

1. *Christians identify themselves as the people of the book.* While this self-description is not absolutely unique to Christianity, it would be hard to find a more likely claim by a more self-aware group. In Old Testament Judaism, tracking God's dealings with his people, in an era much less familiar with writing, God provides Moses with carvings in stone to explicate his law to his people. In modern times there has been an unbroken chain of expository writings that document God's guiding hand in human history. The Christians' great book, the Bible, has served to stimulate and initiate the creative spirit of missionaries and inventors. "Bringing the Word" requires two things: a bringer and the book. *Bringers* are first identified in the Old Testament as prophets, and their role is fulfilled in the New Testament as "Apostles." This book, the Bible, has been the focus and the calling of uncounted generations of scribes, translators, and copyists.

This emphasis on the book may have led to a fundamental distortion within Christian doctrine and practice. The preoccupation with the written text has led to a perpetual discourse about textual accuracy. The concern itself illustrates the dilemma: either the text is an accurate representation of the truth or it is not. Indeed, but the issue is in the meaning of "representation of the truth." When loyalty to the text is exaggerated beyond the truth itself, we become vulnerable to bibliolatry. In defense of the Bible's presumed inherent linguistic precision, all sorts of campaigns are mounted in which the issue becomes accuracy of translation rather than a search for inherent evidences of *God's* consistency. It is quite a leap to think of a printed book as Word in the same way we think of the divine Person as Word. The apostle John speaks of the latter when he says of Christ, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God….The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1–2, 14). The cause of Christ would be better served by book-centered scholarship if it were fulfilled in light of the teachings of the Epistle of James (e.g., James 1:22, 27; 2:14, 18, 26; 3:13; 4:17).

2. *Loyalty to a school fulfills the human pride in affiliation.* Human cultures generally discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate ways to identify oneself as an affiliate of a religion. Christians, especially, are sensitive to displays of pride and superiority in the name of Christ. It is assumed to be more seemly to take pride in the schools that have been instrumental in one's religious development and to substitute glorification of the academic realm for glorification of the religion. Thus symbols of academic achievement are deemed acceptable where symbols of spiritual development would be inappropriate.

The prestige of an outstanding theological seminary or university is marketable; it has value in establishing the worth of the degrees that the institution grants. By no means is this a recent phenomenon. To have studied with the "right" mentor and to have partaken of the intellectual aura of a "great" scholarly community have apparently been venerated since earliest times. Today, however, competition is exaggerated beyond a school's claim of excellence, and excellence is converted to values of the marketplace. To be "the best" has worth on the secular balance sheet, and to have degrees from the best schools increases one's prospects for a large salary.

In many ways, academic experiences can shape the student's philosophical and moral character. For those who understand this, there is more than a touch of sadness when we consider the sorts of schools students tend to prefer. Respect for biblical authority maintained by a school commonly seems far less important than prestigious reputation and the pragmatic value a school provides by sending its graduates on to even more prestigious institutions. Those of us engaged in international education have seen many sincere international Christians put such an institution as Harvard Divinity School at the top of their list simply because of the reputation of Harvard University.

The secularizing tendencies in the church and its leadership spread steadily into all sorts of matters. Preference for academic excellence over spiritual depth is surely among the most serious of these. Closely related, the preference for "book learning" over experience and application leads a person (or a congregation) into habits of personal isolation and disdain for practical applications of truth.

Accreditation is assumed to provide safeguards against deviations from purpose and from excellence. Modern accreditation has a strangely mixed parentage. Among its more admirable intentions is the sustaining of academic quality through standardization of courses and degrees. In its earliest days, American-style accreditation emerged from the complaints of registrars in frontier universities that they needed protection from increasing numbers of poorly educated rural high school graduates. Accreditation was originally more concerned with the quality of applicants than the quality of the institution.

As often happens despite best intentions, the methods employed for judging quality and making preferential choices have led to a contradictory extreme: the most apparent consequence of accreditation has become the suppression of innovation in favor of maintaining the status quo, no matter how antiquated or ill-advised. Commonly, the very exalting of excellence is itself over structured in such a way as to suppress any changes that would make an institution unique. Thus a vicious circle results in which the quest for excellence is discouraged.

3. *The human thirst for learning seems more manageable and easier to fulfill when it is regimented.* Church architecture reflects the Roman lecture hall and the Greek amphitheater rather than honoring Jesus' own fondness for seated circles of people, as in the synagogues of his day. We learn to think of church as a big space where all but one or two people sit staring forward in rapt attention as one person interprets a text and promulgates conclusions.

Rarely do we see the preaching and teaching style of Jesus practiced by leaders in the church. For example, Jesus *stood* respectfully while reading the text of scripture but *sat* among the other worshipers to engage in discussion of the text (see Luke 4:16–21). It would not be wise to make such a detail a core value, but neither should it be overlooked. Walking together, eating together, and sitting together, always accompanied by talking together in a dialogic manner, are not the images that first come to mind when Jesus is identified as a great teacher or preacher. But details within the Gospel descriptions of Jesus' interactions with his followers, along with evidences of his tendency to invite himself into social situations with others, suggest a persistent habit—indeed a remarkable style—not just several coincidences. Jesus emerges as an artist—a skillful, warm, compassionate specialist in adult education. The twin maxims that are attributed occasionally to my own style and habits as a facilitator of learning are not mine; I learned them from Jesus: *Learning is lifelong. Learning is collaborative.*

When teaching is scheduled, boxed, structured, "presented," and over organized, it is reduced to a *thing*. Teaching must struggle to free itself from such habits, customs, and limitations so that learning may occur. Learning, at its finest, is a lively encounter with some intriguing aspect of life. Thus learning is the extending of one's thoughts and understandings to encounter, discover, and blend one's past with the unfolding present, thus enabling an active involvement in the shaping of a creative future.

This sort of learning is not a mechanical response to managed and manipulated stimuli. It is not simply arrangements of habit displayed in sequences that satisfy curricular inquiries. Learning is not only responses to questions; it is creation and appreciation of questions. Valuing the human thirst for learning, I have come to reject any manageable, regimented, easy-to-fulfill series of lonely learning tasks. Learning works best when it occurs as part of a community's experience. I learned this from Jesus: *Learning is a lifelong engagement that is collaborative.*

Thirst for learning is an important trait of human life. It should be encouraged and nurtured. Within the teaching-learning ministries of the church, our task is to facilitate—to help it happen. To stimulate and challenge. To nurture and encourage. To be resonant chambers that enable the strings of the discoverer's violin to transform from squeaks and scrapes into an unfolding promise of heavenly melody. The work of Jesus Christ in this troubled world needs disciples who are motivated to serve the church in collaborations that fulfill his purposes. Thus the church may become an institution served by other institutions, allied in God's purposes.

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

Unholy Dissonance: A Threat to Evangelicalism

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract

"I found the sketchy original outline for 'Unholy Dissonance' in some materials I had been planning for a possible submission to *Christianity Today* sometime in 2010. The issue I was trying to get at is that we weaken the very cause we claim to stand for when we expect people to hear the claims we make about Jesus if they aren't seeing it acted out in our lives." (Ward) This essay indicates values Ward sees as essential bedrock for education regardless of mode.

This new century could begin with a rising spirit of hope. The ups and downs of world-wide political strife and economic mismanagement have brought a series of disappointments to almost everyone. Through it all, the church in America has continued in its gradual decline. Although "evangelicalism" has become a more widely recognized category of Christian affiliation, the category seems more and more internally inconsistent and politically explosive. From its origination in reaction to the "modernism" issue in Christian theology, it has come to designate a mixed bag of "off-shoots" ranging from a few very tightly defined denominations and sub-denominations to a large assortment of independent, autonomous, and self-designated local churches, including the clusters of video-churches and the converted shopping malls identified as "mega-churches."

As a social scientist, my life-task is to identify, to attempt to understand, and then to describe and communicate with reason and clarity what I perceive in the world around me. Sometimes an academic person becomes mired in complex explanations and unessential details about matters that need only a simple and clear illustration. Jesus knew this human tendency. He avoided it by commonly using stories and allegorical illustrations. Rarely did he speak to groups without a parable at the base of His message. I am quite willing to follow His example and find the easiest way to explain anything important, especially a dilemma.

The dilemma in evangelicalism emerges because it has become schismatic. Even the meaning of *Christian* is vulnerable. The schism confronts evangelicalism, adherents and critics alike, with a dilemma of the most difficult sort: how can fish that breathe so much air hope to swim? Perhaps more to the point, how can it be that white paint and black paint don't mix and change into gray paint but instead become polka-dotted? *Believers* are rated according to the words they use to "witness." Witness is assumed to be a verbal task. One way or another, the distinctive of being Christian in the thinking of many evangelicals is a matter of *words. I believe that the source of the dichotomy and thus the source of weakness in evangelicalism lies in the distaste for service. Witness* is a good word*. Telling* people about Jesus is what Christians do. Quality in the Christian life is somehow wrapped up in knowing how to *tell it well*. The *it* is "the plan of salvation" or "the four spiritual laws" or whatever verbal formula is the latest evangelical catchword.

Depending on the reader's socio-political leaning, noting the trend in *Christianity Today* brings either reassurance or further evidence that not all is well in Christian America. Not long ago I was asked by a student, "How should I answer the question, 'What does it mean to be a Christian?'" My first thought, nurtured by the rhetoric of many sound sermons was to answer with a definition based on a well-grounded

Bible based statement something like this: "A Christian is a person who has believed the truth of the Holy Bible, confessed before God that sin has affected his or her life and moral standards, and accepted Jesus Christ as God's gift for the salvation of any and every person who so believes, confesses, and accepts." Most evangelicals, and many Christians with variations on these understandings, have answered the question with these three steps: *Believe, Confess,* and *Accept.* Suddenly it dawned on me that these three steps can be accomplished silently with one's hands folded. That is what being a Christian means? Yes, and no. The *yes* is for the words the *no* is for the action! And here is where the evangelical distinctive falls apart and the schisms set in. Action suggests work, effort, doing something about it. Right. And an important theological debate has long raged over the issue of whether salvation is more a matter of God's actions or human actions. The deeper issue is more valid. Can one gain salvation through the quality, amount, and extent of efforts and actions. The evangelical position on this matter is clear and simple. *No.* This rules out candles burned, rituals performed, penitence penalties accepted, as well as confessional ceremonies and prayers to saints. All of this is deemed extra-biblical and is unacceptable for evangelicals.

The origin of the assertion that Protestants are best defined by what they will not do has roots in avoiding the characteristic Roman Catholic practices. But this posture really does leave a gap for evangelicalism to fall into.

The gap itself is only half the issue; the greater problem is the dichotomy between witness and service. The assumption that these two actions really are to some degree competing and in conflict is largely unexamined and too easily overlooked. Indeed, herein lies a grave threat to evangelicalism, the tension between *witness* and *service*. What the inseparable components of the Christian life should be, for many evangelicals, gives rise to conflict. REAL evangelicals put their priority on verbal *witnessing*. They also *believe* that service is a nice idea, if there is any time left. Others hold the opposite position

The majority tends toward verbal behavior. Service is of secondary importance. Test this out wherever you will. Ask an evangelical Christian to give you a valid answer to this question. Which is most important for a Christian? There are three possible answers: "Service," "Witness," and "Not a good question." Unless you suggest the validity of this third response, you will rarely hear it or the first response either from evangelicals. Someday an interesting book could be based on the second chapter of James. It might be entitled, *Dead Faith*.

One way to understand the complex mess that has accumulated around and within evangelicalism is to reflect on the two major themes: *Witness* and *Service*. Some of the most ardent evangelicals are clearly more committed to witness than to service, and indeed they are observably more invested in it. Those in this sector are more likely to support preaching ministries, on the air or otherwise, external to their home churches. Evangelicals of the other sector are committed to service if it enables them to engage in verbal testimony. Thus the meaning of service to others, regardless of their standing before God, is at best a conditional responsibility and never as important as "telling people about Jesus." This dichotomy between witness and service assumes that "Jesus" written on the cup is more important than the water in the cup. It may be that such Christians expect their witness more to "tell" than to "show."

If all these Christians were to see the importance of both aspects of Christian witness, two outcomes would likely result. First, Christians would, as whole, have a more effective voice in world affairs, one consequence of giving more energy and resources to collaboration than to undercutting other Christians. Second, the important effects of evangelization and missionary outreach would be increased.

The Gospel seems evident. Christians are to be witnesses to the saving grace of God evidenced in Jesus Christ. At the very same time, and in ways that are completely harmonized, Christians are to be

witnesses, giving evidence through words and deeds that Jesus Christ is savior and Lord of the universe, and with similar commitment and vigor, to undertake and to fulfill the calling as servants, humbly utilizing the resources God provides to relieve, comfort, and to heal, fulfilling the works of compassion and assistance, thus to be engaged in the saving and restorative work of God in this fallen and broken world. Fulfilling these two grand tasks *together* is what it means to be a Christian.

To engage in one of these tasks, while excluding or ignoring the other indeed suggests bias or incompleteness of the Christian. To the extent that evangelicalism falls into such a flaw it loses claim to its identity as *evangelical*.

COMMON GROUND JOURNAL

A Final Exam for Christian Higher Education

Ted W. Ward

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Abstract
As higher education approaches the twenty-first century, Ted Ward reflects on its future. He names three "horrifying assumptions" that threaten to cripple higher education at the moment of significant influence and sets a four part test, three parts of which higher education must pass. Reprinted from Ted Ward. A Final Exam for Christian Higher Education (Editorial). *Faculty Dialogue.* Fall 1992, Number 18: 5-11.

Now that the decade of the 1990's is well upon us, the business of taking stock and making plans has become an institutional compulsion. If it were not, so there would be even more cause for alarm. Given the rapidity of change in the human condition and the social environment, the need to anticipate the future has never been more urgent. Enlightenment philosophy, wholesale industrialization, and ensuing developments in science and technology have come to a rocky turn. There seems to be no way to assure that brilliant human effort will bring predictably good results.

Pragmatism dominates in political philosophy. Western democracy has outlasted Marxism. Well and good, but after only a fleeting moment of rejoicing it has become frighteningly clear that the frying pan has dumped us into the fire. Raw ethnicity and historical hatred among peoples have returned as the great motivators of war. After the second dozen nations have split themselves into murderous bands of unprincipled racists, we may come to look on the Cold War as "the good old days".

As in most of the post-enlightenment western world, Americans have come to prefer that their wars be fought about ideas and propositional platforms. We have been willing to look past our internal differences and focus the nation on ideological conflicts. But with the end of the Cold War has come a change in the nature of the battleground: ideological conflicts have less appeal as dividers of people. The Los Angeles Civil War of 1992 cannot be explained in terms of conflicting ideologies. Splitting the African-American, Korean-American, and Hispanic-American communities into several warring camps against each other and against the evidently corrupt and ineffectual policing of the body politic may well represent a prototype for the new century. Not a happy thought.

Americans still live their lives somewhat aloof from the worst of the news. How long this can go on depends largely on our capability to deal constructively with the schisms and ethnic tensions within our own country. Sounding the alarm is relatively easy when a nation can see the marauder approaching the walls, but effective mobilization is almost impossible when the enemy is already accepted within the walls and is wearing the disguise of a history that the nation has always preferred to ignore. This next century will bring Charles Dickens' "best of times…the worst of times." How it will unfold depends extensively on the quality of leadership and the integrity of the people. *Here* is the test for Christian higher education. But are we ready? Three horrifying assumptions represent the state of unreadiness for this test:

1. Christian higher education need not be directed toward large-scale issues of human conflict and the quality of life. Its proper purposes are more narrow and personal.

Smallness of vision and smallness of mission are characteristic of a small view of God. Privatizing the Gospel and treating it as "ours," capturing the good news of salvation as a sort of private property is common today. Likely it results from living a half-hearted Christianity in an age of individualistic materialism.

A vibrant and warmly alive Christianity cannot be so introverted and withdrawn as to stand aloof from the realities of suffering society. But is it reasonable to expect an educational institution to stand for anything more substantial and demanding than the forms of Christianity represented by its rank-and-file students? What about the role of education and educators as leaders and purveyors of truth? Should Christian higher education do less than define and defend a courageous and influential role for the people of God?

We can be warned and challenged by the message to the church of Laodicea, commonly interpreted as a picture of the western world's church in recent years. The words of disgust are attributed to the "ruler of the creation," Jesus Christ: "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15,16).

2. Christian higher education represents such a small voice; it seems unreasonable to expect much other than maintenance of the network of little "points of light."

The self-fulfilling prophecy embedded in this assumption is insidious. Whatever happened to "Expect great things from God?" Surely it is not overstepping to assume that God's preferences would be well-served by a dozen or so "points of light" that found ways to turn up the wattage! Should Christian higher education accept such an impotent and defensive posture? What would happen if a wave of encouragement and confidence in the Holy Spirit of God should sweep across half or more of the Christian colleges and universities? Is it so far from the realm of possibility? With God all things are possible.

An assertive Christian higher education that accepts a leadership position among the structures of society is needed. Given the disarray of public and other institutional education in the United States, clarity of motive and message provides a stronger voice than will ever emerge from defeatism and inhibited caution.

3. Christian higher education is already doing a very effective job of developing people who can relate to the major needs in the world today.

The evidence is strongly to the contrary. A charitable response to this claim is hard to find. From time to time a Christian college or university will undertake a project or institution-wide theme that promises to address the larger social context, but before long the steam goes out of the engine. In several specific cases the news leaks out that the alumni or some other sector of the donor constituency has become uneasy with the school's emphasis on controversial matters. Will the boldness of the early church ever return to inspire Christian higher education?

Questions about the future of Christian higher education are common within and among the institutions. Few administrators are comfortable revealing outside the hallowed ivy walls the more desperate of the evident conditions, but anxiety has become a poorly guarded secret. The occasional up-turns in numbers of applicants and live-warm-body enrollment are heralded with rejoicing; the black-ink

ledgers are displayed with a sense of relief. But behind the closed doors and over the fiber-optic networks the hard work of steering away from impending demise consumes a substantial amount of time.

Christian higher education has come to a crucial moment, writing its way through what may prove to be an ultimate final examination. This proposed test has four parts. Passing any two of the four parts may assure survival for several more years. Passing three of the parts will likely take the institution into the twenty-first century. But only a passing grade on all four parts will satisfy the standards of the circumstances that the next ten years will bring upon us. The conditions are already here and easy to read. We hardly need to learn more about what the year 2000 will bring.

Part 1—Survival. Balancing the budget is a vital task. Few institutions could survive two or three successive years of deficit. Keeping ahead of the expenses is a persistent headache. Many administrators are losing sleep, and faculty must be understanding and helpful if they value their positions. But the survival test goes far beyond the fiscal issues.

As a result of the various forms of expansion which are deemed necessary for survival, Christian higher education is undertaking new and often strange enterprises. How much of what sorts of education can a Christian college, university, or seminary sell to what sorts of audiences for what sorts of reasons before losing, distorting, or at least diluting its mission? The issue is not the selectivity of the audience, but whether the institutional program, goals, and practices are understood and accepted by the institution's support team. The old argument about whether or not all the students must be professing Christians is becoming passé. Nor is the matter of expansions into new content especially problematic except for those few liberal arts fans who are against anything that appears to be too practical.

No, the severe test may come when the college faces the need to expand its faculty by including some who lack evidence of personal Christian faith and walk. Expansion, especially getting into unfamiliar academic territory, suggests compromise, especially in terms of "adjunct" or "temporary" faculty. This sort of compromise may weaken the institution's capacity to reflect and give testimony to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is an incremental, one-way road toward becoming a secular institution.

Part 2—Relationships. A concern for interpersonal relationships and the discipline of those relationships to the Gospel gives evidence of the reality of Christ's presence in an institution. The front edge of the effective Christian is a Christlike openness and compassion for others. If the institution is to represent its efforts in higher education as being Christian this matter must be taken very seriously. In the process of keeping school, even the best of academic content can be heard, learned, and stuffed away for future use with little or no consciousness of how it will come to life in situations which inevitably will include other people. In the name of Jesus Christ, God's very personal incarnation, such abstraction of theory from practice is inexcusable.

Even some of our theological seminaries fall into this perverse trap. Such an institution will define itself as a *school* in order to escape into the relatively easy teaching of content with little or no attention to the development of spirituality or interpersonal relationships.

The test before us demands more: what is the relevancy to the human's relationship to God and to other people? Teaching that fails to comprehend and deal with the basic attributes of human ecology is faulty.

Part 3—Community. The New Testament images of the church express communitarian unity as a major feature. Jesus is still building his church. Higher education carried out in Jesus' name is obliged not

only to be clear about how it relates to this task but also to be about the business of helping young people become socialized into relationships of caring, interdependency, patience, cooperation, and restrained competition. The general society in the western world teaches contrasting values and lifestyle. The world desperately needs to hear the Christian alternatives. In my more optimistic moments I see clues that suggest a willingness to seek help on these matters from any source, even from evangelical Christians, providing that they can put their principles into action.

As business, industry, and government are discovering the importance of *community* in the workplace and the extension of those concerns into family as community, we are enjoying a rather rare moment of acceptance of Christian standards. But do we merely *say* we believe? Are Christian community standards being exemplified in substantial ways? How are they being taught? Are the graduates of the Christian institutions able to live well as community people? God created human society. Competencies in that society are crucial. Does Christian higher education help or hinder? Do we pass the test?

Part 4—Mission. Evangelical Christians put much emphasis on communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who do not yet believe. Well and good. The tough test comes when the whole of God's message of reconciliation begins to tug at our relationships with people who are different. God's people are sharers in Christ's mission: "…As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." (John 20:21).

Reconciliation is not a natural habit. It doesn't always feel good when you get involved. It isn't often a good way to make money, although there are some high-priced jobs going begging because there are too few people today who are really good at it. It isn't popular. In sum, reconciliation is a wide open field vocationally, and a much needed matter in this suffering world.

The conclusion of this final exam for Christian higher education deals with the ways in which the institution is providing for effective learning of the skills of "salt and light." It must be more than a slogan, more than an empty promise, more than a fervent hope. To teach people to enter into the ministry of reconciliation is not an option for higher education that calls itself Christian.

A Christian college, university, or seminary should be a place where all participants experience the grace of God through their day-to-day encounters with each other and with the structure of the institution. Further, it must be a place that encourages the habits of a faith-walk in which Christian virtues of character can become a matter of adopted life style:

> For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, and godliness with mutual affection with love. For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-8)

The verse that immediately follows bears a remarkable similarity to another observation made by the angel about the church of Laodicea, as reported in John's account of the Patmos Revelation: "For anyone who lacks these things is shortsighted and blind, and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins" (2 Peter 1:9).

The national condition through which well-intentioned people must work their way into the unfolding third millennium of the Christian era demands that we renounce materialism, individualism and self-satisfaction. Christian higher education can become recognized for its relevancy and strength for the difficult days ahead:

> For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.’ You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. (Rev. 3:17-19)

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