christian educators journal

MARCH 1971

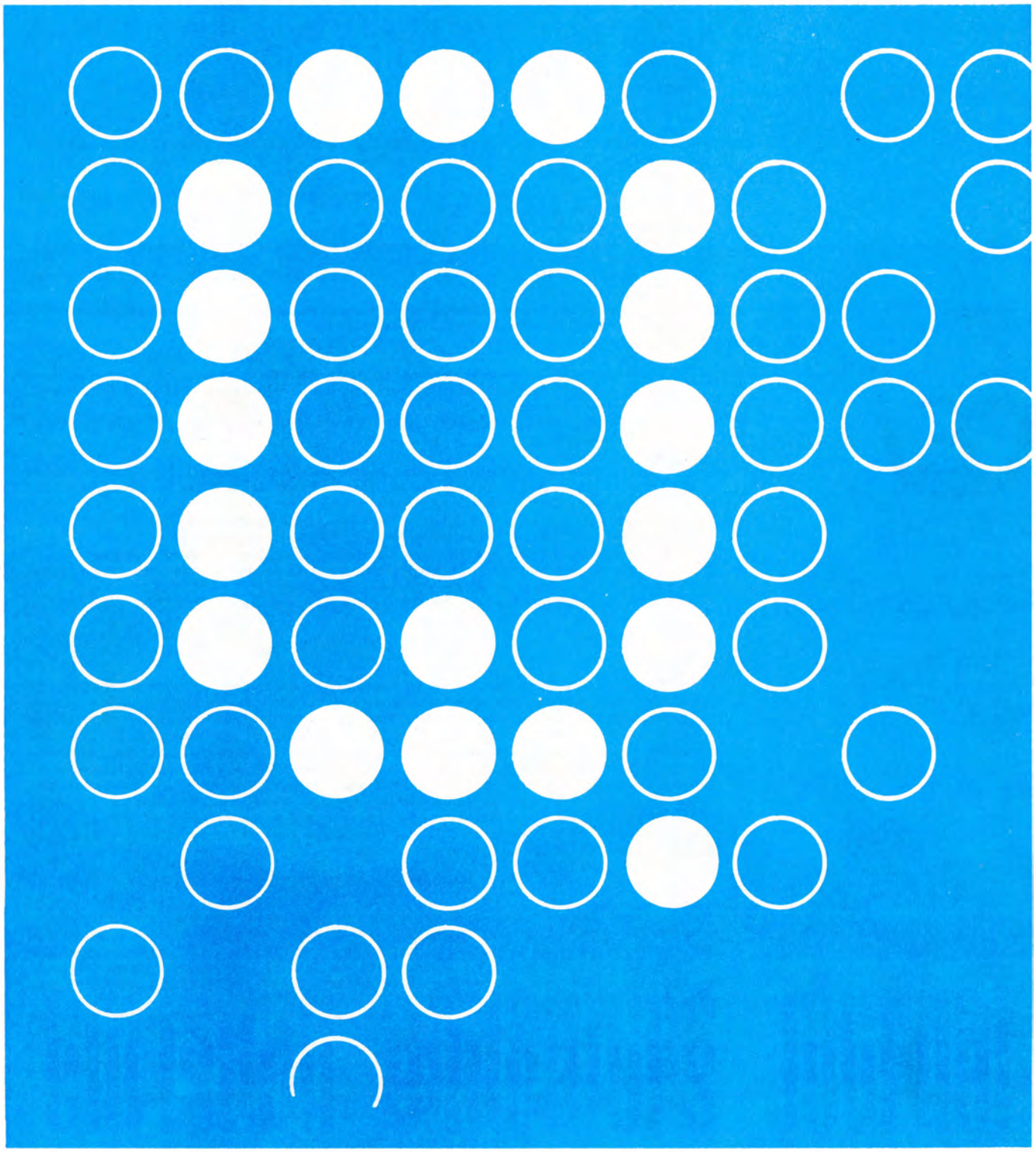

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL, VOLUME 10, NUMBER 3, March, 1971. A medium of expression for the Calvinistic school movement in the United States and Canada.

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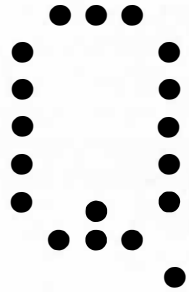
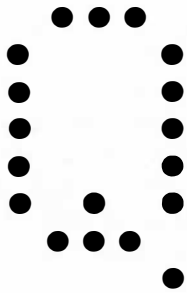
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Christian Educators Journal Association, composed of several member or sponsoring organizations, publishes the Journal as a channel of communication for all educators committed to the idea of parentally controlled Christian schools, whether at the elementary, secondary, or college level. The general purpose of the Journal is to foster the continuing improvement of educational theory and practice in Christian schools. Therefore, its pages are an open forum for significant articles and studies by Christian educators on Christian teaching. Editorial policy favors those contributions that are normative and evaluative rather than merely descriptive of existing trends and practices in American education. All articles and editorials appearing in it are to be regarded as the expression of the viewpoint of the writers and not as the official position of the Christian Educators Journal Association or its member organizations.

BUSINESS MATTERS

Business correspondence concerning subscriptions to the Journal or membership in the Association should be sent to the Business Manager. Subscription price is $3.00 per year for those who are members of supporting organizations and $3.50 per year for individual subscriptions. Issues are published in the months of November, January, March and May. Correspondence concerning articles or book reviews should be addressed to the editor of the appropriate department or to the Managing Editor.

THE  UEST for  UALITY

Our Lord once said: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." (Luke 12:48) He said it as the conclusion to a parable which He had just told His disciples. In it He described a steward who had been given much in the way of power, and opportunity, to serve his lord. In the absence of the master, the steward had neglected his duties, had let things slide, had done a half-job, had even mishandled both funds and those under his care. Jesus said of this steward: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." Jesus then added, by way of explaining this seeming harshness: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."

I believe that we educators of the Christian schools have something in common with that steward. We surely have been given much:

——We live in an age of unparalleled prosperity, for us and for the constituencies which support us.

——We have never had as adequately trained teachers and administrators as we do now.

——We have buildings and facilities which while not matching the grandeur of some public schools, are nevertheless very adequate.

——We above all have the vision of Christian education to direct us.

Yes, we, like the steward in Scripture, have been given much.

And, many might argue, we aren't doing too badly:

——Don't our graduates find ready acceptance into colleges and universities?

——Don't our students rank average or better on standardized tests?

——Don't our schools have a good reputation among local businessmen who hire our graduates?

——Don't our schools stay out of trouble with the law pretty much? Few, if any, of our buildings are firetraps. Few really unqualified teachers remain in our classrooms.

Aren't we really pretty good?

I believe that in terms of this parable Christ says: "That all depends on how much you were given with which to work." He says in effect: "Don't use what others accomplish as your yardstick of quality. Use instead the yardstick of what powers and opportunities God has given you. Unto whom much has been given, much is required."

I believe that we have in this Biblical principle the mandate for a continuing quest for quality in education. Measured by this yardstick of what opportunities we have, we have little reason for complacency. Maybe your school library and professional staff library *is* as good as some others (and maybe it isn't), but is it as good as it *could* be? Maybe we have no more teachers teaching outside their field of competence than other local schools, but these are but minimum standards. Maybe our class size is about the national average, but is that the norm? Maybe our teachers are generally as well qualified as those in adjacent public schools, but can we rest on laurels like those?

Until we rid ourselves of using the inadequate standards of the *status quo* in American education, we become candidates for the condemnation of Christ, and also for the double stripes recommended for such negligence. Unless we rid ourselves of whatever complacency about our schools that we have, we will also not be able to look honestly at any proposals for change, whether in curriculum or administrative policy. Every obstacle, imagined or real, in any proposal will seem insurmountable;

every threat to our individual automonomy will seem conclusive evidence that the *status quo* is good enough.

From where I sit I see stirrings in the teaching profession, but not mass awakening to the great potential for improvement there is in the effectiveness of the Christian school. If we are not moved to move on our own, we shall perhaps be moved by forces outside the profession. Educators are increasingly under scrutiny today, and ominous words laden with overtones of lack of confidence in us abound. Words like "accountability" and phrases like "measurement of outcomes" suggest that we must more clearly prove ourselves, not only in terms of our commitment to increasing quality, but also by producing hard evidence that we are actually achieving our declared objectives.

Hopefully we Christian teachers will not wait until the return of our Lord to be reminded that "to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." By then we shall be candidates for some unexpected double stripes.

—D.O.

HERITAGE HALL HIGHLIGHTS

a goodly heritage bequeathed in print

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS is a favorite hymn of many. The conviction and faith of our forefathers impelled them to establish Christian Schools which in turn have been bequeathed to us. Through years of beginnings and years of depression, they maintained their schools in spite of hardship and sacrifice. Our generation has inherited these society organizations and school properties. But a far richer heritage is found in the vision and goals of Christian education we have received from them.

Heritage Hall at Calvin College contains the writings of many of the early leaders of the Christian School movement. It is our purpose to uncover some of these in order that the faith and vision of those who have gone before may undergird the efforts of those involved today.

—W.H.

The Qualifications Essential in a Christian Teacher

J. Broene*

In my first article under the above caption I emphasized that I did not purpose to discuss the qualifications some ideal teacher might possess, but only those which are essential, lacking which one can not at all be a teacher. And then I insisted that a first qualification is knowledge, knowledge both broad and deep of that which is to be taught.

Are we ready now in this month's issue to pass on to our second essential? Many would think so. Yet we are not. Ample knowledge of the subject taught though essential to teaching is not enough. We must know more. Unfortunately many do not realize this. Yet I am convinced that for everyone who fails in teaching because of ignorance of subject-matter, more fail because of ignorance of something else, because of ignorance of the object of education——the pupil.

* *Reprinted from the April, 1923 issue of* ***Christian School Magazine.***

The great majority of, let us say, sixth grade teachers, are keenly alive to the fact that they cannot properly perform their task unless they have a thorough knowledge of sixth grade work, but many there are to whom it has never occurred that knowledge of sixth grade children is every bit as vital. Animal trainers never commit this error. They could not afford to. Read Bostock's, The Training of Wild Animals, (N.Y. 1903),——a book that contains much sound pedagogy——and you will see that the animal trainer not only knows precisely what he wants to teach his pupils, but especially and above all does he know his pupils. Not only is he familiar with the traits common to all wild animals, over and above that he knows just how the lion differs from the tiger, the bear from the elephant. He knows more. He knows every individual pupil. No two lions are alike any more than any two leaves or any two boys are alike. So our animal trainer knows just how this particular lion or tiget differs from every other lion or tiger among his pupils. He knows the eccentricities, the virtues, the faults, the likes and dislikes of every animal under his care. He is ignorant of these things at the peril of his life. I ask, should not many a teacher go to the animal trainer, consider his ways and be wise?

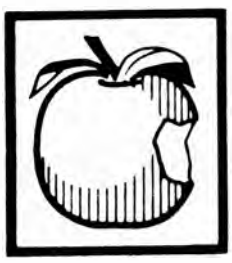
The teacher must know the child. He must begin by seeing that the child is no homunculus, no duodecimo edition of the parental folio. The child has anatomical, physiological, psychological characteristics peculiarly its own. The child differs from the adult quantitatively not only but qualitatively as well. May I briefly support this assertion by noting the following points?

Take the child's bones. They are not only shorter, thinner, and lighter, but their chemical composition is different from those in the adult. Thus the relation between animal and mineral matter, as you know, is radically different in the child from what it is in his senior, and the difference is one that has to be borne in mind by the teacher. Ignorance of this fact and culpable neglect have produced or accentuated bodily deformity.

Again, not only absolutely but relatively the child's heart is much smaller and its arteries are much larger than in the adult. The difference is very striking, and the result is that blood pressure in the child is so much lower than in his senior that to treat them alike may produce disastrous consequences. So too the child's blood is so markedly different from that of the adult that in comparison it has even been called pathological. Thus the red corpuscles of a child as compared with a mature person contain less haemoglobin and more stroma. The amount of fibrinogen is proportionately small. The blood is richer in phagocytes. Proportionately the child's pulse is more rapid just as its breathing is quicker than in the adult. Muscular movements are quicker in the child but not so well coordinated. Visual accommodation is better, while the senses of taste and smell are not so keen. Relatively the child's brain is very much larger than in a grown person. Proportionately the liver of the child is twice as large at birth than after he has matured. Czermak has shown that the child's skin is more sensitive than that of the adult, and I think he has hit upon the correct explanation of the phenomenon.

Of the two the child is more subjective in interpreting his preceptions, hence he is much more suggestable than the adult. He is more analytic in his perceptions and hence his **Unterschiedsempfindlichkeit**, as the Germans call it, (i.e.) his perception of differences in variations of sound and nuances of color is far less developed. He thinks more concretely than he does later. His attention is extremely fluctuating, his imagination exuberant, his judgment undeveloped, in short, he differs in so many and such important respects from the adult that he who is to teach him can not hope to succeed——using the term in its highest sense—— in his chosen profession, until after he has added to a knowledge of subject-matter a knowledge of the pupil to whom he is to impart it.

You must know your pupils collectively and individually. I do not say that, though desirable, a course in child-study is a prerequisite without which you can not hope to succeed in teaching; but this much is certain that whether you get to know your pupil by deliberate study, or whether mainly you fathom him by intuition, one way or another you can not afford to rest till you know your boys and girls, your Johns and Marys, as the animal trainer knows collectively and individually, the pupils that come to him from desert and jungle.



for COMPREHENSIVE MUSICIANS only

by C. Bouwsma*

It was my privilege to attend the Contemporary Music Project Workshop at San Jose State College for two weeks in August, 1970. This article is a sort of testimonial for that experience. Other CMP Workshops are planned for the summer of 1971. Forward-looking music educators cannot afford to miss them.

The Contemporary Music Project of the Music Educators National Conference, with funding from the Ford Foundation, has been sponsoring seminars, workshops and projects during the past five years to develop the concept of comprehensive musicianship. Comprehensive musicianship has been identified as involving three ingredients:

1. Analysis (visual and aural)
2. Composition (creating and notating)
3. Preformance

Most school music teachers have a fair background in performance, a less adequate background in analysis, and little or no experience with composition. The workshops are intended to fill this gap in teacher training.

The rationale for the workshops is this: Training in the practice of composition is an assential part of training for comprehensive musicianship. Experience in conceiving and notating musical ideas is basic to the education of any well-trained musician. This experience will equip music teachers to understand the compositional principles underlying any work and impart these principles to their students. In the course of compositional training, the student should experience the processes by which a composer conceives and notates a musical work, and thus find himself making similar decisions and choices. The students creative efforts must be realized in performance, so that he may experience the full commitment inherent in the act of musical communication, from a conception through its precise notation, performance, evaluation and, perhaps rewriting. These compositional principles are to be absorbed or assimilated through analysis of masterworks and the practice of composition.

During the summer of 1970 three workshops in comprehensive musicianship were held at three colleges and universities in the United States. The purpose of these workshops was to provide the compositional and analytical experiences which would bring music teachers along toward this goal of comprehensive musicianship.

The workshop at San Jose was an exciting and stimulating experience. It was so because it got the participants involved in creative musical processes (composition) under the direction of composers

* *Mr. Bouwsma, M.M., University of Michigan is music teacher at Sylvan Christian School, Grand Rapids, Michigan.*

and master teachers. The 120 participants represented music educators at all levels: elementary, junior high, senior high, college, private teachers, and music superintendents. We were divided heterogeneously into classes of 15-20 to spend our mornings together developing writing skills under the direction of an experienced composer, and analytical skills under the direction of a skilled theorist.

In our particular section each of us wrote and performed for the class four shor compositions: two for piano, one for brass quartet, and one for mixed chorus. We listened to and discussed briefly each other's compositions.

We analyzed music of Machaut, Mozart, J.S. Bach, Satie, Webern, Hackberg, Busa and Stravinsky. I was exposed for the first time to a theory of tonal relationships much more encompassing than the traditional major-minor system of classic and romantic music. It was a brief course in contemporary music theory. Exciting and creative things are now happening in the teaching of music theory.

During the afternoons we attended sessions of general interest dealing with curriculum, rehearsal procedures, and the implementation of comprehensive musicianship in our various areas. We also rehearsed the Stravinsky Mass so that we could perform it on the last day of the workshop. Evenings were generously sprinkled with concerts: Non-western music, contemporary American chamber music, Medieval and Renaissance music, and a demonstration of electronic music. During one of the sessions the composers of the workshop conducted us in some of their published choral compositions.

Workshop leaders included the following: Samuel Adler, Warren Benson, and Robert Gauldin of the Eastman School of Music; Ronald LoPresti, Arizona State; Monte Tubb and John McManus of the University of Oregon; David Ward-Steinman, San Diego State College; Harry Carter, Hayward State College; Beth Landis, Riverside California; Vernon Kliewer, Indiana University; Vernon Read, San Jose State; William Thomson, Case-Western Reserve University; Barbara Andress, Arizona State; Kurt Miller, University of Montana.

As I reflect on the workshop I find myself thinking, "Say, I can compose too! How come no one ever showed me how before." If I am a creative person, then, isn't everyone really? Isn't every child of God creative to some extent? Then shouldn't the primary goal of our teaching be to help the child discover his creativity and give him the tools to express himself? The creative aspect of music ought to come first.

PROFESSIONAL POWER

TOWARD PROFESSIONALISM:

one year later

by Dan Vander Ark*

About eighteen months ago, the Midwest Christian Teachers Association established a committee to give leadership to its members in adopting professional standards. Then, a year ago in this column, Vern Boerman, a member of that committee, reviewed some of the goals of that committee. In his article "Toward Professionalism," he pointed teachers toward certain goals for the teaching profession: the improvement of training for teachers and the improvement of our professional skills before demanding that boards provide more services for teachers.

Now, a year later, the Professional Standards Committee of the MCTA has moved forward toward these goals. Many teachers are still debating just what the word "professional" means for them or for their school. In a recent questionnaire that the membership filled out, that problem of defining professionalism became apparent. For

* *This column is open to all teachers or organizations. This report comes from The MCTA Professional Standards Committee, Dan Vander Ark, reporter.*

example, some teachers think that an elementary teacher has such different responsibilities from a high school teacher that the word "professional" means quite different things to the two teachers. Other teachers equate "professionalism" and "unionism."

While the discussion continues, the PSC has moved toward its goals. We have set up, and the MCTA membership overwhelmingly approved, a resignation policy for MCTA teachers. The policy provides a standard of ethical conduct when a teacher feels he must resign. It has already been used in at least one case in which both parties agreed to the resignation. The help of the policy is that the teacher resigned in full confidence that his resignation was ethical because he in effect had the backing of the 1300 member MCTA. The committee has also conducted two questionnaires, one trying to determine which parts of professionalism the committee should consider first, and a second getting opinions and facts about contracts and what should go into them. The two questionnaires, especially the second one, gave some interesting results.

Of the elementary teachers, 86% were informed regarding their classroom assignment and grade level at contract-signing time. But 30% of the secondary teachers were not informed until summer vacation or just prior to the new school year in September. Another startling finding was that only 5% of the elementary teachers have a regular preparation time each day at school, not counting recess or noon hour.

In other areas only 33% of the elementary contracts and 24% of the secondary contracts require membership in professional organizations. Only 3% of both elementary and secondary mention anything in regard to maximum student load or class size. Among MCTA teachers, over 70% felt that the MCTA should recommend class size, student load, and numbers of preparations.

Replying to the question of preference for a more detailed contract, 63% of the secondary teachers voted yes, but only 44% of the elementary teachers with less than 10 years experience agreed. And for those elementary teachers with more than 10 years experience, only 18% did.

From these results and others, the PSC has made some conclusions. The teachers would support MCTA recommendations regarding class size, student load, and number of preparations. The majority would also like provisions for tenure, for knowing their specific teaching assignments at the time they sign their contracts. Also, more than half of the questionnaires indicated a belief that increased benefits imply increased obligations by favoring contract requirements of in-service training, summer school, etc. Most teachers would like the MCTA to recommend certain standards without making them a part of the contract.

Bill Selles, a retiring PSC committeeman, analyzed the results of the questionnaire and made some remarks at the MCTA convention this past fall about what those results show for the work of the committee and the MCTA: "We are not trying as some people have said, to start a teachers' union or a pressure group to improve the position of the Christian school teacher. We have no right to exist for any other reason than to improve the Christian education of our covenant children in our schools. It is gratifying to note that these things which received the greatest support by those teachers returning the questionnaires were largely the items which would raise the educational standards. Items such as student load, class size, teachers returning to school, knowing what you will teach before signing a contract, would all serve to benefit the education of the students."

We are all concerned about salaries. "But isn't it equally or even more important that we take an interest in the subject and number of students we will teach so that we are sure we can do a proper job of education? Board members may be able to determine the proper pay scale, principals do a tremendous job of administering our schools, but is it fair to assume that the board or a principal is an expert in every subject taught in the schools. Who is better qualified to determine such educational policies than the teachers themselves, not on an individual basis, but as an organization such as the MCTA?

"I believe that the teacher who is satisfied to conduct his or her class, no matter how excellent the instruction may be, and forget about obligations to the rest of the profession is using only part of his or her God-given talent and training. Your school board should expect you to work for better educational conditions. This is part of the reason they are paying you. And this is also part of the work God gave you when you received the high calling of Christian school teacher."

The results of the questionnaire, and Bill's analysis of it, have encouraged the PSC to act on five areas for 1971: continuing contract, in-service training, teacher representation on board committees, class size and preparation periods, and development of teacher-training programs. The Professional Standards Committee has dedicated itself to improving Christian education in God's kingdom. We are still working toward that end.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS EXPECT DIFFERENT THINGS in the Christian School Teacher

by Gordon DeBlaey*

"Playing the role" is a common expression used to describe one's actions. At times the expression is used derogatorily to describe a person who is overplaying what is expected to him. At other times it is used in a complimentary way to describe a person who is acting just wording is expected of him. For at least three centuries the concept of role has been associated with parts played by theatrical characters. Only relatively recently has role become a conceptual tool for social scientists. There is no single approach to role in social science today, but the fact that it has become a useful concept in cultural anthropology, social psychology and sociology indicates the importance of role in describing and analyzing social behavior.

This report contains a few observations on the role of elementary Christian school teacher. Role is here defined as a set of expectations held for a position in society---in this case, expectations held for the position of elementary Christian school teacher. Data were collected in the Spring of 1970 from samples of parents and teachers of both Christian and public elementary schools. Subjects were asked to respond to a lengthy list of possible expectations for the position of teacher. Teachers were asked to respond to each item for themselves, as they thought other teachers would, and as they thought parents would. Parents responded to the same items only for themselves. These data allow us to analyze many different facets of teacher role. One of the more interesting and important aspects of our analysis has to do with role conflict between teachers and parents. There are at least two types of role conflict theoretically: 1) *actual* role conflict which refers to different and/or contradictory expectations held for teachers by parents as compared to expectations held by teachers themselves, and 2) *perceived* role conflict which refers to expectations teachers *think* parents hold for the teacher position and which are different and/or contradictory from the teacher's own expectations.

Our research findings indicate some important differences between public and Christian schools concerning role conflict and some rather interesting conflict between parents and teachers within the Christian school itself. Below I shall present some of the findings related to role conflict within the Christian schools studied in the research. It must be pointed out that these data were not collected from a random sample of all Christian schools and that technically one cannot generalize these findings beyond the samples themselves. Perhaps these observations can be helpful, however, in serving to make us think about the role of the Christian school teacher and to become concerned about the possible lack of agreement between teachers and parents concerning this role.

Space does not allow a detailed description of the teacher role and role conflict indicated by our data. In general, there is actual disagreement between parents and teachers concerning the role of Christian school teacher on about one half of

This column, containing summaries of research, is provided by the Sociology Department of Calvin College. This summary is by Dr. Gordon DeBlaey.

the 80 expectations in the instrument, while teachers perceived such differences on about one quarter of the 80 expectations. Thus, it seems that there actually exists more disagreement on what the role of Christian school teacher should be than what teachers themselves perceive. (It might be noted, by contrast, that this is almost twice as much conflict as was found in the public school system.)

The 80 expectations were divided into three categories: 1) expectations of behavior, 2) expectations of beliefs and attitudes, and 3) expectations of other social positions a teacher should be in. We will concentrate only on the first category which is further sub-divided into several groups of expectations such as how a teacher should handle academic and behavioral problems, what a teacher should teach and how a teacher should teach, how a teacher should behave outside the classroom and in the community.

I will choose only a few examples of what I feel are important areas of role conflict. In the area of community behavior, for instance, teachers feel that attending church regularly is a part of their role and parents also see this as part of the teacher's role, but teachers believe that parents place more importance on this one behavior than parents actually do. As for teaching certain values, parents and teachers agree that part of the teacher role is pointing out to students the existence of sin in the world and teaching the importance of religion but they disagree on whether or not the teacher role includes teaching students to strive for a letter job and teaching students to be politically and socially effective members of the community. community.

In the area of *what* to teach, Christian school teachers do not see teaching the history of world religions as part of their role, nor do teachers think parents expect this of them. In fact, however, parents *do* see this as part of the teacher's role. Teaching fine arts is seen as part of the teacher role by both teachers and parents, but parents do not hold this expectation as strongly as teachers do. Teachers and parents revealed no consensus on whether teaching social studies is an important part of the teacher role, but teachers and parents are in agreement that teaching proper methods of child rearing should *not* be part of the teacher role.

Our role instrument contained nine items that fall into the general area of pedogogical techniques. Role conflict is indicated on all but one of these items. Figure 1 indicates the type of conflict evident in this area of the teacher's role.

Figure 1
ROLE CONFLICT
IN THE AREA OF PEDAGOGICAL TECHNIQUES

EXPECTATION	TYPES OF CONFLICT
1. Teachers should make students work harder if students are having academic problems.	Teachers and parents both disagree but teachers don't think parents disagree.
2. Teachers should make and follow lesson plans.	Teachers don't see this as an important part of the teacher role but parents do.
3. Teachers should use the threat of punishment in order to get better academic work from students.	Teachers and parents both disagree but teachers inaccurately think they disagree more than parents.
4. Teachers should put emphasis on memorizing.	Teachers disagree and parents show no consensus either way.*
5. Teachers should devote more time to "exceptionally able" students.	Teachers and parents both disagree and no conflict is shown on this expectation.
6. Communications in the classroom should go primarily from the teacher to the student.	Teachers disagree and parents show no consensus either way.
7. Teachers should experiment with new techniques in the classroom.	Teachers and parents both agree but teachers agree more than parents.
8. Teacher's primary task is testing students' academic knowledge.	Teachers disagree and parents show no consensus either way.
9. Teachers should assign homework regularly.	Teachers disagree and parents show no consensus either way.

*Consensus is defined as at least 50 percent of the subjects giving a similar response to the expectation.

Space limitations prevent a discussion of each item and the conflict involved, but it is evident that role conflict exists in the Christian school and it would seem that awareness of such conflict could prove to be beneficial for all concerned. The area of conflict illuminated in Figure 1 is, I suspect, among the most important areas of the teacher role (techniques used in classroom) and at the same time among the most difficult areas in which to achieve agreement. Teachers tend to feel that parents are not equipped to decide on the techniques teachers should use (professionalization, academic freedom, etc.) while in our unique Christian school system parents hold a very close and powerful position with respect to the actions of teachers both in and out of the classroom.

CHRISTIAN LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

A REVIEW ESSAY BY
ARTHUR F. HOLMES*

In these days of crisis it is essential that institutions of higher learning reexamine their goals, the basis for those goals, and the means to be employed in reaching them. Higher education is under fire again, by the radical left for its "establishmentarian" ways, and by the reactionary right for harboring the left. Change is bound to come, but it is far better to come as a result of reasonable self-examination than in hasty response to partisan demands from either extreme.

The Christian college is not immune from partisan demands, however exempt it may feel from the revolutionary temper that disrupts secular universities. Private education generally, including the Christian college, is feeling a financial pinch, some of it due to the present state of the economy but some also due to distrust on the part of overly-conservative donors. Financial needs create pressures, both in themselves and through the expectations of much-needed donors. Woe betide that college which has not rationally examined its goals and established its priorities, but which allows itself to be shaped by economic pressure.

The Christian college also faces student demands for relevance and contemporaneity. These may seem plausible until the pragmatism in "relevance" is recognized and until the contemporary is seen as part of a larger historical pattern. Woe betide that college which has not thought in larger terms than the pragmatic, nor faced the human problem in other than its contemporary manifestations.

We live in a post-Christian era. The Christian world view is hardly heard of in secular circles, a Christian ethic no longer shapes our society, and the Christian faith is no longer a leading option for the student world. Other causes have usurped the throne. Accordingly the Christian college must learn afresh to relate faith to learning and to infuse life with meaning and hope, if its graduates are to think and live Christianity in a non-Christian world. Woe betide that college which fails to fulfill this calling.

Calvin College is to be congratulated on the concerted effort it is making in these regards. The report of its Curriculum Study Committee under the title, *Christian Liberal Arts Education* (Eerdmans, 1970) represents the reasoned self-examination of an institution defining its goals and establishing a curricular pattern for meeting them.

The report is of interest to a far wider audience than the Calvin constituency. It should concern anyone interested in Christian higher education who is grappling with the problems mentioned above. A section on the foundations of education first presents some *historical* background, then establishes *theological* bases for Christian liberal arts education, and finally discusses alternative *philosophical* conceptions of the task. A section on curriculum follows, in which proposals are made which Calvin College has already put into effect.

1. *Historical.* The historical material is summary, yet it is both readable and effective. It succeeds in putting Christian higher education in its proper continuity with the past, and it makes plain the tremendously influential role of the church's educational activities. A sense of mandate is conveyed, which gives direction for today.

2. *Theological.* This Christian mandate in liberal arts education is traced to the religious roots of human culture, a theological base which is preferable to the pragmatic claim that liberal education enriches the church's witness to the world, or to the questionable assertion that the church must serve the ends of the society of which it is part. The first of these would hardly justify either the extent or the intensity of real education and the second fails to capture a proper relation between church and society. Nor is it sufficient to advocate church colleges as a "safe" place for impressionable younsters: the church is not called to over-protective paternalism in relationship to its youth. But if human culture——in all its expres-

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sions in the arts and sciences, politics and commerce and whatever——draws its values and direction from the religious foundations of life, and conversely if the Christian faith is committed to a cultural outworking, then Christian education appears as a disciplined preparation for the cultural expression of the faith.

The Calvin report makes this point by clarifying first the relation of faith to life. Faith is not an assent to what is unknown, not even to specially revealed propositions. Faith is rather a supreme loyalty that encompasses every area of a man's life and thought, so that the Christian sees life in its totality as a proper, positive response to God in Christ. Faith and life can neither be separated nor simply conjoined. Faith finds expression in life, in the culture which is distinctively human life. Education must prepare a man to express his faith in the breadth of life and culture.

Second, the report encourages respect for the breadth of cultural activity by developing the idea of Christian community. Paul's metaphor of the body and its members is taken to show that there is no room for a hierarchy of occupations. Every vocation may be a divine calling, and each cultural activity an expression of one's religious commitment. Christian education, as a project of the Christian community, must prepare young people for a broad range of vocations, by developing individuality while cultivating mutual understanding and appreciation.

Third, the report speaks to the place of the Christian community in society at large. By virtue of its range of members, the Christian community is not insulated but in touch with life, and it must learn to participate constructively in a corresponding range of social and cultural activities. Participation is not to be merely judgmental, nor need it be a compromise, for what one does is transformed into an expression of faith. This is the religious root of culture, and it calls for an education that will prepare the Christian to live and think as a member of the Christian community expressing the faith in human society.

3. *Philosophical.* The report delineates three possible Christian views of liberal arts education which it labels respectively pragmatist, classicist and disciplinary. The *pragmatist* justifies learning in terms of its utility for solving practical problems in contemporary life. He therefore lays himself wide open on the one hand to the demands of the "now" generation for relevance and contemporaneity, and on the other hand to pressures from donors. He is rightly criticized for forsaking the disinterested pursuit of theoretical knowledge, a cultural activity which is part of the Christian's mandate. He leaves the student without any systematic structure for thought and action and, it might be added, provincializes education by confining it to whatever we currently find problematic and practical.

The Christian *classicist,* on the other hand, values disinterested theoretical inquiry as a means of developing the man and his mind. He is interested less in specialization ("learned provincialism") than in the whole man and his whole cultural heritage. He will subject alternative viewpoints to a religious critique so that the student may understand his faith more fully and more explicitly. The Calvin report complains that this limits Christian liberal arts education to understanding and judging culture, and forgets the responsibility to contribute constructively, by developing the various disciplines and educating new generations for productive and creative work.

As a consequence the *disciplinary* view is advocated: "teachers and students together engaging in the various scholarly disciplines, directed and enlightened in their inquiries by the Word of God" (p. 47). This means disinterested rather than pragmatically-oriented study. It means examining the enduring structures of reality rather than just the "practical" issues of the day, and it means evaluating the moral, aesthetic, economic and political aspects of things in order to pursue the good. Concepts, methodologies and presuppositions will be stressed, along with their interrelations in the light of the biblical revelation. But Scripture will also help one see the proper aim and limits of theoretical inquiry, help the scholar interpret his findings, and give direction both to inquiry itself and to the uses that men make of their knowledge.

The proposed curriculum, which seeks to implement this view of education, bears careful examination. Of particular interest are (1) the combination of intensive (major concentrations) and extensive (core requirements) study of disciplines; (2) the benefits that this combination offers in terms of a potential for constructive contribution, as well as understanding and evaluation; and (3) a freshman course entitled "Christian Perspectives on Learning" to be taught on rotation by faculty members representative of all departments. This last particular, it seems, should greatly stimulate the integration of faith and learning on the part not only of students but also and even more of the faculty.

What is said in favor of the disciplinary view might be strengthened by considering the nature of man. The pragmatist view reflects a Dewey-like conception of man struggling to adjust to his environment, and aroused to thought by the problem situations which challenge his evolutionary development. The Christian pragmatist may deny this, but what conception remains when man is said to grope for solutions without first understanding the basic structure of nature and society? What has happened to the rationality of the Divinely created order, and to the image of God in man?

Similarily the Christian classicist may reject the humanistic conception of man as a rational and social being contemplating eternal forms and persuading his fellow citizens. But he has not developed the educational implications of the Christian understanding of man in any alternative direction. Created personality is more than rational and social activity, and the *imago dei* is more than contemplative intellect. The disciplinary view seems to do fuller justice to the creative potential vested by God in his image-bearers, without forfeiting either contemplative reason or practical problem-solving in disciplines where it belongs. Above all, the disciplinary view recognizes life to be a creative stewardship that dedicates every activity to the "glory of God." In these days of excessive individualism and "cop-outs", moreover, the corporate character of man before God and in society is a welcome emphasis, for no man can be fully human in isolation. This conviction, native to Reformed theology, both bears reiteration today and merits implementation in the idea of Christian liberal arts education. It is a case of the theoretical understanding of human personality producing concepts relevant to contemporary life.

No one-hundred page volume can cover everything, and the Calvin report is no exception. A further chapter might have been added which history itself will undoubtedly produce, on the problems we must live with in practicing Christian liberal arts education according to the disciplinary view. First, there is the problem of student attitudes and values. College students are perennial dissidents; their attitudes are too often adolescent and their values frequently shaped by a non-Christian world. Yet to make any education work as intended takes more than teachers and administrators and their self-studies. It takes the disciplined commitment of the student to the goals of an education and to the curriculum available. The college's first task is to sell the student on the kind of education offered and the kind of discipline it will take, and so to cultivate the atmosphere of learning. Even so, we have two strikes against us at the outset and cannot expect to score every time.

Second, there is the problem of academic freedom: the liberty to teach, to do research and publish, and the liberty to learn. Indeed, learning presupposes liberty, for truth——like virtue——cannot be forced but must be gladly sought and heartily embraced. Liberal education has sometimes been called education that liberates by teaching the rational and responsible conduct of life. But liberty can be abused. It can also confuse. It is not enough to enforce parameters which define the limits of freedom in a Christian college. Within those limits or without, the pursuit of learning is likely to produce results of an unpopular and untraditional sort. Yet if academic freedom is essential to learning and teaching, we must constantly guard it, and go on to cultivate an atmosphere of trust even where disagreement persists.

Both the problem of student attitudes and the problem of academic freedom seem to focus attention on the atmosphere of learning. This is not an unknown concept, though we understand too little of how to develop and preserve the atmosphere we need. If the atmosphere of learning is important in education generally, it is even more important for Christian higher education, where we expect what is a minority viewpoint in our culture to dominate the thought and life of everyone involved.

Finally there is the economic problem. With the financial pinch upon the Christian college, it becomes essential to sell the Christian liberal arts idea to the giving public. Honest salesmanship requires that we confess our problems. It is high time the Christian college forstalled objections by making it transparently clear that, men being what men are, liberal education is risky business, students constitute an unpredictable variable, truth cannot be forced, and mistakes are made. But honest salesmanship also requires us to reiterate what we believe: that Christian liberal arts education is implicit in the Christian's mandate in this world and, that being so, both its educational liabilities and its economic costs must be accepted. Whether they will be accepted, and whether the proposed kind of education can continue to be realized in ever fuller measure, is something which only God knows and only the future can disclose.

"PETER, PRINCIPAL"

by H. K. Zoeklicht*

As the bell signaling 4th period rang, Ginny Traansma sagged heavily into the battered faculty lounge chair. Across the room John Vroom had already larded his body with two doughnuts and a chocolate eclair, and was now juicily engaged with a Sunkist orange.

"I don't think I'll ever be more thankful for a Friday and a fourth hour free period," Ginny exclaimed to the ceiling. "I can't remember a spring when the kids were as wild as they are this year--why, that fire alarm must have been set off at least ten times this week alone." She glanced at Vroom who was ardently trying to stem the stream of orange juice that had trickled down his right arm inside his shirt sleeve. Ginny sighed, pulled her knitting from the plastic bag beside her, and continued. "P.R. must be ready for a nervous breakdown--discipline cases, calls to parents, board meetings about hiring and rehiring teachers--it's enough to give him a bleeding ulcer."

Vroom recognized an opening for one of his hobby horses: "Kids don't respect law and order today. And if we continue to spare the rod we can only reap destruction. But what can you expect when nobody takes total depravity seriously anymore?"

At that moment, Peter Rip, the principal, known out of ear-shot as P.R., shuffled into the lounge. Paler than usual, eyes laced with red lines of weariness, and mouth leaning tiredly upon his chin, he picked a cup from the table and, neglecting the usual conditioners of cream and sugar, poured from the urn a cup of thick, black brew.

Matt DeWit now entered, ostensibly to grade a chemistry test, but actually more eager to try out a new Polish joke on anyone he could find to listen. Spotting P.R. with cup in hand he smirked "Well, I see you've already urned your second cup of coffee today."

Ginny groaned as she purled three. Vroom grinned in spite of himself. P.R., smiling grimly, said, "I sometimes wonder if I can take any more of this." Mrs. Snip, the school secretary ahemed at him from the doorway. P.R. continued in a mutter as he plodded obediently toward the office. "Maybe next year I won't have to worry about it any longer."

Ginny dropped a stitch waiting for the door to close. "What do you suppose he meant by that," she blurted as soon as she dared.

"I wonder...," mused Matt, serious for the moment, "he said a number of times this year that there must be an easier way to make a living."

"My wife was saying this morning while she was fixing my lunch that at coffee last week Gerda, Rip's wife, said something about Rip's brother looking for a business partner." Vroom paused, unconsciously placing his left hand upon his classroom Bible as though taking an oath. "I bet Rip's not going to be around next year; maybe the Board has asked him to leave."

"Or perhaps the students have just become too much for him," Ginny offered. "You know that the kids don't really like him--they say he's hypocritical and won't listen to them; he only pretends to. Look what happened in chapel yesterday. Almost an hour long sermon from a local preacher. The kids' pleas about chapel go completely ignored."

"Yeh," chuckled Matt, returning to character, "some of the kids say he doesn't give a Rip about them."

Vroom glanced at the halo of light on the ceiling cast by the lamp beside him. "If Rip would act

* *This column, written under a pseudonym, is regularly written by an experienced teacher in mythical Omni Christian High.*

more decisively, exert his God-ordained authority, and discipline more sternly all the law-breakers, this would be a better place and P.R. would be a happier man." He paused, pressing his hands together as if in prayer; then he continued, "If we do get a new principal, I hope he won't be an Eli. We need someone to instill the fear of Jehovah in both faculty and student body."

Matt saw an opening and lunged. "You mean a principal has to act on principle. But you know what they say--principals never lose their principles, they just lose their faculties."

Ginny couldn't forbear a smile at that one, and said, "I guess Bob Den Denker *is* talking about leaving again." Then she returned to the issue and continued more seriously, "I agree that principals as well as everyone else should act from personal conviction and commitment to Christ rather than public opinion. But what's so important too, I think, is that a principal is able to communicate with students--to trust them enough to let them try new things, to give them responsibility for many things in school they *can* manage by themselves, like rules of conduct, the school paper, and chapel. Kids need a mature Christian they can trust as a model for their own lives."

"That bit about trust applies to the teachers too," grumbled Matt. "I had to wait three years before I could get P.R. to let me take my earth science class on a half-day field trip to the river a few miles from here. He said it sounded like a good idea, but he didn't think the other teachers or the parents would like the idea of kids getting out of school for a trip to the river."

"Someone sending you up the river, Wit?" It was Den Denker, tie loose, in shirt sleeves, coming in for a quick cup of coffee as the small groups in his history class worked on their projects.

Vroom frowned at Den Denker's unprofessional appearance and said, "We've just begun to construct Omni's future principal, in case P.R. quits. I'm sure you'll want to contribute some sand to the foundation." He smiled at his cleverness.

Bob deliberately coaxed the last drips from the spout of the coffee urn into his cup before responding. Then, smiling, he replied, "John, I would guess that your ideal for a principal would be an Old Testament patriarch, probably Moses if you had your choice." He turned to the others without waiting for Vroom's reply. "But what have you come up with so far?"

"If you mean besides being a man who knows what he stands for and why, then you might add that he should be a leader for faculty, students, and community, and he should inspire the trust and confidence of everyone he works with." DeWit paused and looked at Ginney.

She gestured vaguely with the knitting needles in her hand. "It seems to me that it's really the principal who sets the tone of the school," she said thoughtfully, "and I'd like to see a principal establish a kind of spirit of real Christian community in the school--where all would practice more mutual responsibility and concern, where everyone could feel wanted and needed and worthwhile. As it is now, teachers and students often don't recognize and care about the individual needs of others."

"You mean like mild-mannered, shy Rita Schaap" said Bob, "A C-student, silent in class, no boyfriends, no belonging to any organization or working on any committees, in short, practically invisible." Den Denker paused to glance at Vroom. "She's in one of your classes, isn't she, John?"

Vroom reached into his pocket for a toothpick to hide his embarrassment of not remembering. He glanced at the clock and discovered with some relief that the bell was about to ring. He turned to Den Denker. "Well, you've got two minutes to make a new principal. What kind does it take to make you stick around another year?"

Den Denker carefully set his empty cup on the table, turned to face his audience, struck a profound pose and began in solemn tones to list on his finger: "The principal should be one who, first, radiates and promotes a spirit of congenial, sincere Christianity; second, one who is dedicated, responsible, industrious, competent professional both as administrator and educator; third, one who exerts wise leadership and effects a productive *esprit de corps* among students, staff, board and community; fourth, one who is guided by a set of reasoned principles and firm convictions; and fifth, one who combines a high idealism with a healthy dose of pragmatism."

Matt and Ginny looked at him with disbelief. Finally Matt blurted, "Right off the top of your thinker, huh?"

Den Denker laughed. "Nope," he said, "that's straight out of the NUCS Handbook for Christian Administrators:*Principals, Principles, and Professionals.* I was browsing through a copy last night, after the Board meeting. By the way, " he added, "last night the Board renewed P.R.'s contract for another year."

The dismissal and fire alarm bells joined in concert to end the dialogue.

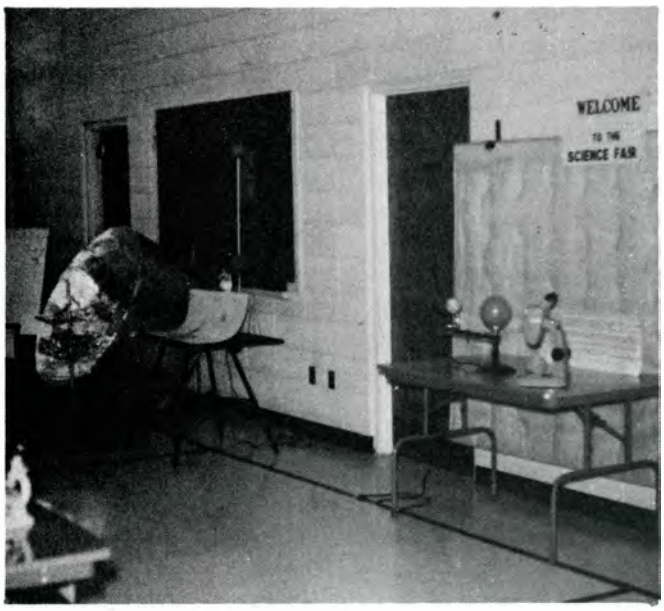
LET'S SPONSOR A SCIENCE FAIR

by Calvin Hoekstra*

In almost every facet of life, experience is the best teacher. A student can learn a vocabulary, memorize a large array of facts, become acquainted with several concepts and theories in any given science course. However, it is when opportunity is presented for these things to be put into practice and used, that they will have a fuller meaning for the student. I submit to you that one way to provide this opportunity for the student is to have him produce a science project.

There are many values that can be gained in producing a science project. The student will obviously gain a better understanding of an area of science. It allows a student to gain recognition for himself. It requires of the student effective planning, detailed work, formulation of answers and conclusions, and specific preformance standards. These values as well as others will most probably in effect be cultivated in other areas of his life. Production of projects and the subsequent display at a science fair can be an appealing extra-curricular challenge for many students. Production of projects should not, however, replace any part of the science curriculum, but rather supplement and enlarge upon it. A science teacher who is willing to sponsor a science fair will be doing much to enhance his science program and add a new dimension to it. This topic will be developed around that of sponsoring a local school science fair. The ideas and thoughts presented are meant to be practical in nature, drawn from my experiences.

You should make up or have made up a welcome poster and table which can be set up in a conspicuous place at the site of the science fair. This could include a few interesting materials or pieces of equipment from the science department.



Sponsor's Starting Point

One of the first things to do is to accumulate some resource material on sponsoring science fairs, developing projects, and on project ideas. There is much resource material that is available either for a nominal fee or free of charge. From this material and from your own teaching situation, formulate some guide-sheets to which reference will be made later.

It would also be in order to schedule, as early as possible, a tentative date for the science fair. Usually a date set in the first part of March works out well. By doing this early you let the students know that the Science Fair is going to be something definite and real.

Certain students can help you to get things organized. Something that is quite effective, is to get the Science Club involved in planning and in being responsible for certain aspects of the fair. This can save a lot of time for you and serves its purpose well.

Student Involvement

Much of our organization will center around the project itself, for after all, it is projects that make up the science fair. You should get as many students as possible involved in producing a project. Have each student produce a project rather than working in pairs or groups. The involvement on the part of students will have to be pursued for the grade level of your students.

In the junior high grades where I have taught General Science, I required projects from all students. Each student entered his project in the School Science Fair, which was judged on a criterion set up for judging science projects. Since they were required they should be scored on your own criteria, considering each individual student's potential, ability, and effort put forth. This score was used as part of the grade for a marking period. I found this procedure to work out very well.

In the senior high grades student involvement is a bit more difficult to generate. Potential participants should be challenged to produce a project. This could probably be done in following up an area of interest expressed in a science class. I find that one other area to use is the Science Club. As sponsor of the Science Club, I require or certainly encourage each member to produce a project. I see real potential for high quality projects produced by such club members.

Selection of Project Topics

Invariably you will be faced with students who would like to do something but don't know what to select or how to start. Start off with a guidesheet that provides some train of thought on how to select a topic. Several examples from such a guide would be: start with an area that interests you; followup by reading and doing some research at the library, and then ask questions of your science teacher, a doctor, local electrician and

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others competent in your area of interest. The sponsors, should make as many ideas available as possible. Make sure the students are aware of the resource material that you have accumulated. While keeping a file of titles of the projects done in school science fairs of the past, you should encourage the development of their own ideas.

It is important that the selection of the topic and the initial planning by the student is done as early as before Thanksgiving. If plans for the science fair are made early, then student selection of topics will be stimulated. In fact on occasions some students will do their work over the summer, such as collecting insects, fossils, rocks and minerals, or gathering other data to be used for their project.

Once a student has selected a topic for a project, he should record it with you. When this is done you might ask a few thought-provoking questions about the subject. You can help by anticipating a few problems he may have to face, or by giving a few helpful hints and pointers for the topic.

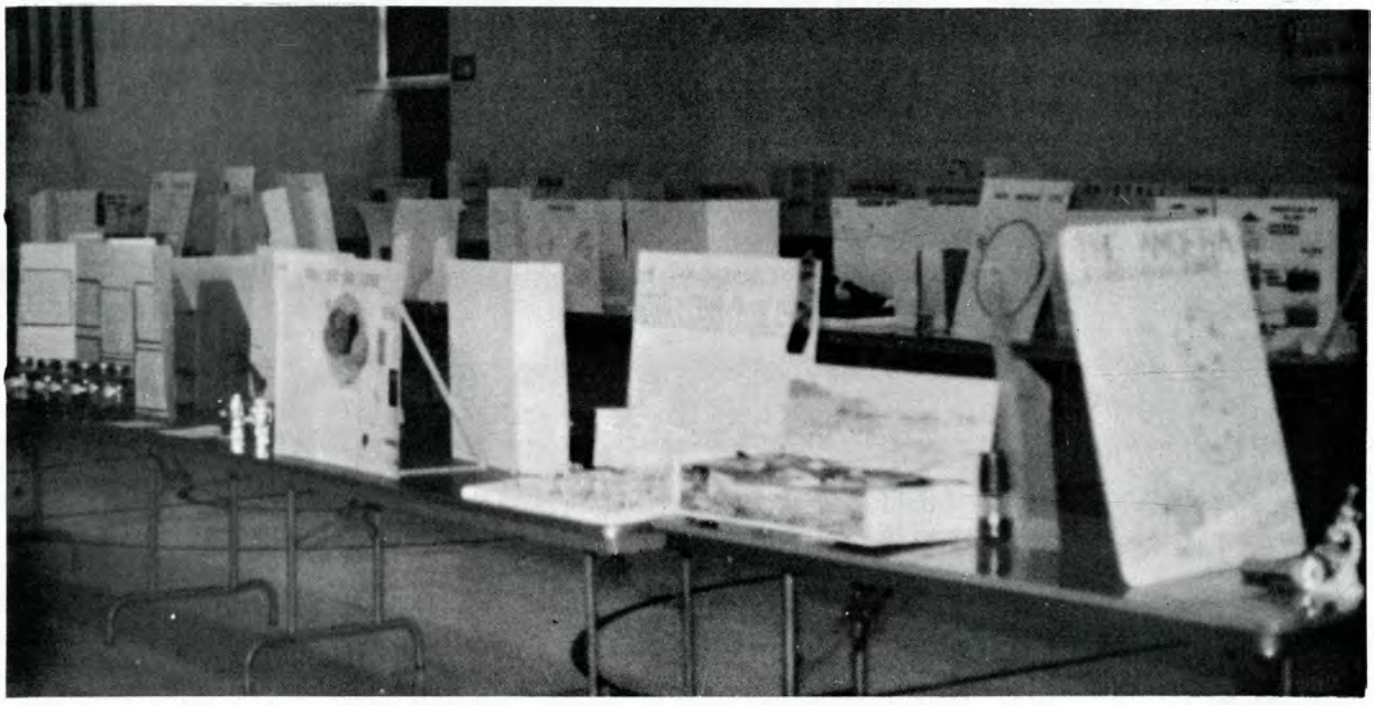
We can again do much in making available some handout material that will serve as a guide to the student producing a project. A few points could be made here: 1) Sketch out the development of your idea on paper. 2) Select a good descriptive title. 3) Try to tell a complete story of what you have done and of what you have found out. 4) Include photographs, color, and light if it will help your exhibit. 5) Limit the amount of reading matter. 6) Keep the exhibit simple in arrangement. Reference should also be made to the International Science Fair rules as they pertain to all classes of fairs. I might add here that it is good to have available to the students several of the evaluation sheets used by the judges.

I believe that the production of a project can and must be inexpensive. There are a few exceptions to this, but for the most part inexpensive locally obtained materials will serve the purpose well. This stipulation has several desired outcomes. Creativity and originality will certainly be added to the project. For this reason and others there should be no implication or encouragement that much money will have to be spent to produce a project.

Planning the Science Fair

Several things now take priority as plans progress. First of all, work out with your principal a definite date for the fair, assuming of course that a tentative date was scheduled earlier. Inform the students of this date on school bulletin boards and in the science classrooms. They should be aware that the projects must be checked in one day, judged, and then open to the public. The type of

Make sure that you reserve an adequate display area. A gym or an all-purpose room is the best.



science fair you have could be rather flexible. If your school and the number of prospective entries is small, then it would be best to plan your school science fair in conjunction with Parent-Teacher conferences, a school Open House, or something of this nature. If you have a large number of entries then it will very likely be best to have the fair as a separate school activity. By all means plan some kind of situation so the public can see the projects which will highlight the science fair activities.

You should make up or have made up a welcome poster and table which can be set up in a conspicuous place at the site of the science fair. This could include a few interesting materials or pieces of equipment from the science department. This poster and table gives you an opportunity to give the Christian perspective to science. Another inportant aspect will include your selection of judges. Try to gain the services of three competent people from several areas of science. You, as the sponsor, should serve as an advisor to the judges, and in some cases you could serve well as one of the judges.

Several other things deserve mentioning, Make sure that you reserve an adequate display area. A gym or an all-purpose room is the best. Be certain that you have enough table space available and that there are enough electrical outlets available for use. Buy an adequate supply of ribbons and certificates. Probably local businesses or industries could be helpful in supplying the awards.

Then last of all, give the fair some publicity. Interesting notes in the school newsletter or newspaper and in the local newspaper can be used. Follow this up with publishing the results of the fair. It also adds a note of interest if several pictures are taken and used in the local newspaper or put on school bulletin boards.

The Science Fair Itself

When the time has come for the students to enter their projects in the School Science Fair, have some type of check-in table set up. At this table the student's name and project title should be recorded, along with an identifying number to be placed on the project. Make certain the student does not have his name on the project.

The arrangement and display of the projects will again depend on the type of science fair that you sponsor. In the junior high grades with smaller numbers, they should be arranged and judged by grade level. With large numbers of junior high entries and in senior high situations, they should be arranged and judged in the several areas of science.

The judging of the projects must follow a definite procedure. I use a judge's evaluation sheet based on one-hundred points and which considers the following aspects of the projects: 1) creative ability 2) scientific thought 3) thoroughness 4) technical skill 5) clarity 6) dramatic value. In the junior high grades the judges should judge the project as it is presented with your advice. In the senior high situation this judging should also include a personal interview with the participant concerning the topic developed in the project. For psychological reasons it is best to make as many awards as possible. Try to have about one-third the total number of entries receiving awards. These can be placed as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, which receive ribbons and certificates, and others placed as Honorable Mention which receive certificates.

For those projects that have placed high in your School Science Fair, you now have opportunity to take them on to larger fairs. Here the competition is much more keen, but be assured that however they place in larger fairs, the experience they have will give validity to their entry. If possible, enter them in a regional fair and if they are worthy take them on the State Science Fair.

One final note has to do with a little extra dividend for your efforts. Make it a point to invite the lower grades to view the science projects. Possibly a Science Club member could give a little guided tour. You will be amazed at the things these children can learn there. So very important for you will be the fact that the younger students see that some day when they are in junior high they will have an opportunity to develop a project. You will find out that each year you sponsor a science fair the quality and competition of the projects will improve.

Summary

I hope that this article will encourage someone to sponsor a fair. Accept opportunities to serve as a judge for other science fairs, and visit other fairs, as this experience is very helpful. I'm convinced that some type of activity such as a science fair is necessary, and that this could well be part of our responsibility to the students with whom we have been entrusted.

Some possible sources of information are: Science Service of Science Clubs of America, The National Education Association, the American Petroleum Institute and the Future Scientists of America.

BIBLICAL ECOSYSTEMATICS

G. W. Blankespoor*

For quite a number of years now there have been confrontations and discussions between scientists and theologians, between Christians and non-Christians, between Christian scientists and other Christian scientists as to the correct interpretation of the first chapters of Genesis. Most of these arguments and discussions quite properly fall under the topic title *Genesis and Evolution.* In recent years another controversy has arisen regarding the relationship between Scripture and science. This time, however, the differences of opinion focus on Genesis and ecology.

Genesis Mandate Blamed for Ecological Crisis

It has become fashionable in the scientific world to promote the premise that the drive to exploit nature traces its origin to and derives its impetus from the Judaeo-Christian ethic. This notion finds expression, for example, in the often-quoted article by historian Lynn White Jr., entitled, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis."[1] The same point of view is presented eloquently and persistently by the landscape-architect-ecologist Ian McHarg. The following quotation is taken from his book DESIGN WITH NATURE: "On the subject of man-nature, however, the Biblical creation story of the first chapter of Genesis, the source of the most generally accepted description of man's role and powers, not only fails to correspond to reality as we observe it, but in its insistence upon dominion and subjugation of nature, encourages the most exploitative and destructive instincts in man rather than those that are deferential and creative."[2]

The verse of Scripture most often quoted in this context is Genesis 1:28, which reads as follows: "And God blessed them: and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the face of the earth."

Man's Dominion Correctly Interpreted

Now it has always been our confession that man is a special creation and that his rationality and his spirituality have elevated him to a position transcendent above that of the rest of nature. The Bible tells us that man has been created a little lower than the angels. It is also true that God gave man dominion over the rest of creation. This is clearly seen from Genesis 1:28 and is also very clear from Scripture verses like Psalms 8:6-8.

We do not object to the notion that man has been given dominion over the rest of God's creation but we should object to the notion that the Bible teaches that man has the God-given right to exploit his natural environment. Rather, I would judge the concept of dominion to have its most meaning when it it is interpreted in terms of stewardship. We *are* to have dominion over the earth and to subdue it in the sense that we are to take care of it and be responsible for it.

We read in the first chapter of Genesis that God concluded at the end of each day's creative activity that the work of His hands was good. Although it is true that after Adam's fall the creation was no longer perfect, it is inconceivable to think that God would give license to man to abuse and misuse that

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which he had made and that which he had once called "good". The Scriptures amply teach that God has a continuing concern for the natural world. For example, we read in Psalms 104:25-27 that: "Yonder is the sea, great and wide, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to play therein. These wait all for Thee, that Thou mayest give them their food in due season. Thou givest unto them, they gather; Thou openest Thy hand; they are satisfied with good." Or, we can recall the words of our Lord Jesus Christ when He said in Luke 12:6, "Are not five sparrows sold for two pence? And not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God." If God is concerned about the sparrow there should be enough of the childlike quality left in our Christian experience to lead us to believe that He is also concerned about the pelicans along our West Coast that are no longer able to reproduce because the DDT content of their bodies is too high. And it must grieve the Lord Jesus, who miraculously used two fish to feed five thousand people, to see thousands of fish turned belly up in some stream or river that has become toxic because of man's non-concern for what he dumps into that river or stream. Examples such as these could be given, *ad infinitum*, so extensive is the history of man's exploitation of his natural environment. I think it can be amply documented from Scripture that the divine injunctive to be dominant and to subdue carries with it the implication that man with his superior intellect is to use his environment wisely and that in no sense has he been given license to exploit and to misuse.

There is a related reason why man is enjoined by God to exert wise stewardship over the natural world He made. God has revealed Himself to man in basically two ways: (1) through His Word (divine revelation); and (2) through the natural world (natural revelation). John Calvin, speaking about the importance of the Book of Nature, puts it this way: ". . . whithersoever you turn your eyes, there is not an atom of the world in which you cannot behold some brilliant sparks at least of His glory. But you cannot at one view take a survey of this most ample and beautiful machine in all its vast extent, without being completely overwhelmed with its infinite splendor."[3] We read in Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity."

God's revelation of Himself through nature is important to the Christian because nature affords the Christian another glimpse of his God. Through nature he is able to gain a deeper appreciation of God's almighty power and absolute sovereignty. The Bible also teaches that God's natural revelation is important in leaving those who have not heard the Gospel without excuse and it will serve to further condemn those who have heard the Gospel but who have rejected it.

But you see, when the environment is polluted and the natural system is disrupted we no longer see the Lord clearly. Our concept of what He is becomes distorted. How is it possible for man to get an intuitive feeling for who the Lord is from the observation of a shoreline ecosystem every component of which is covered by an oily scum? How can the plants and animals of a roadside ditch resound to the glory of God when the only things that really strike one's eye are the endless items of litter? Or how can "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament show his handiwork" when the sun has a sickly, smog-caused halo surrounding it and the stars can only dimly be seen because the atmosphere is so filled with air-borne debris?

There is a third reason why the Bible cannot be interpreted to teach that man has the right to exploit nature with impunity. It is finally beginning to sink in that man is part of the natural system and that if he seriously disrupts the system, the damage will ultimately be brought down to bear on his own head. God chose to make man a little lower than the angels but he also chose to make man a biological being; man is of the earth, earthy.

An ordained minister in the United Presbyterian Church named Frederick Elder has published an interesting book entitled, CRISIS IN EDEN.[4] Elder's main thesis is an interesting one and a useful one. He speaks of inclusionists and exclusionists. He defines an exclusionist as one who "presents views that emphasize a sharp separation of man from his environment." On the other hand an inclusionist is one who maintains that man must be considered in light of the fact that he is part of and is dependent upon an ecological system. He suggests that the church would do well to gravitate away from the point of view of the exclusionist and gravitate towards the point of view of the inclusionist in its attempts to help solve the problems of the environment. In my opinion the same reversal of polarity is necessary if

the Christian proposes to suggest meaningful solutions to these same problems.

Man is very intimately dependent upon the ecological system of which he is a part. He is ultimately dependent upon the green plants in the system to supply his need for oxygen and his need for energy. He is dependent upon certain organisms called decomposers to recycle the vital chemical substances for which he has need. It is well-known that as certain non-biodegradable substances move through food chains, they tend to become more concentrated at each higher level; man is at the top of the food chains of which he is a part. How closely we are knit to the natural world becomes graphically clear when we muse for a moment on the possibility that some of the very atoms that comprise the elements and compounds of our physical bodies may at some time in the past have been part of the living stuff of a tree, or a frog, or a worm, or a rock. We must begin to recognize, as never before, that man is not only othe worldly but he is also this worldly. When man ravages and disrupts natural systems, he is, in effect, committing ecological suicide. By no stretch of the imagination or of exegesis can one imagine that God, in His Word, would *direct* man to engage in activities that reduce the chances for his own survival.

To summarize up to this point, the divine injunctive to be dominant and to subdue carries with it the connotation of stewardship and not of exploitation. I have pointed out three reasons why I think this is so: (1) God the Father has a continuing concern for His creation; (2) God intended His creation to reflect His divine person; (3) God made man a biological being and certainly did not give man license to destroy the ecological system of which he is a part.

Too Many Greedy People Today

Christians have often been as guilty of exploitation as non-Christians. But the fault lies not with the Bible but the fault lies with Christians who have either been guilty of misinterpretation or have failed to heed what the Bible has to say on this matter. E.S. Feenstra, responding to White's article, put it this way: "I would rather have White point to the disparity between behavior and the Biblical truth which should form the basis for the behavior of man."[5]

And now we're getting closer to the real source of man's innate drive to exploit. Wayne Friar in that same issue of the *Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation* cites irresponsibility as one of the causes of our present ecological crises. He says "Some people have acted with irresponsibility, preferring to ignore or disregard the balance of nature, the welfare of a species, and the interest of their fellowman for selfish reasons."[6]

I would tend to be less kind than Friar and I would replace the word irresponsibility with the word greed. The drive to exploit our ecological systems without regard to the short-term and long-term consequences of such behavior is nothing more or less than a manifestation of greed. And to be greedy is to be sinful.

We have now put our finger upon the root of the problem. The problem is not uniquely Christian at all; the problem is unique to the human organism. That is why Richard Wright in the August 1, 1970 issue of *BioScience* makes reference to the fact that exploitation of natural systems is also part of the warp and woof of non-Christian Eastern cultures.[7] Sinful, unsaved men and saved men who are sinful have always been greedy but it is only recently that their greed has had far-reaching consequences. Up to a few decades ago there had always been plenty of everything. There have always been greedy people but today there are simply *too many* greedy people.

Now, you may argue that human selfishness is not wholly responsible for our ecological crises. There is some validity, for example, to the idea that part of our problems can be attributed to our ignorance in the past of what the long-term consequences of some of our actions would be (sad to say, we still remain largely ignorant of such long-range consequences). One can also point to conservation practices, protection of endangered species, attempts to clean up polluted air, etc., as being illustrative of a corporate concern on the part of our citizenry. I thank God for these reversals of trend but I think a case can be made for the contention that such activities, to some degree, gain their impetus from motives that are selfish. It is also reassuring to note that there has been a general increase in awareness of the ecological crises we face. However, although thousands pay lip service to the idea of preserving our natural ecosystems, I'm afraid that in all too many cases there is not an accompanying heart commitment. We are not yet at the point where people in large numbers are modifying their daily behavior in ways that serve to promote the well-being of the ecosystem.

Continued on Page 25

MAKING POETRY LIVE

"That's it! That's exactly what I mean!"

Dorothy Westra*

Introduction

If someone were to write a lesson plan for me to teach my class, I would consider his action unsound pedagogy and a personal imposition. I do not wish to be guilty of doing the same thing. I offer the plan that follows merely as illustrative of an approach to the teaching of poetry that you might like to try with a poem of your choice. I did, and I had fun with it.

In this approach one studies the poem rather than biographical data of the poet or what others say about the poem. This approach is based on the premise that poetry makes an emotional impact on the reader that one can identify by asking the questions:

What is the poet doing in this poem?

How does he acomplish it?

What is the central thought of the poem?

Is the ordering of its parts essential to the wholeness and unity of the poem?

What looks like teacher talk in this plan is intended to suggest appropriate answers students might give. I hope, if you use such an approach, you will succeed in getting your students to react and that you will not answer your own questions. Let's give students time to think and respond without being embarrassed by silent moments.

Remember, too, that you can kill poetry for a class with a lesson of this kind if you are half-hearted about it or mechanical in your motivational reading and discussion of the poem. Don't attempt such a lesson unless you yourself know the feeling Sandburg portrays.

Sample Poetry Lesson on "Buffalo Dusk" by Carl Sandburg

"The buffaloes are gone.
And those who saw the buffaloes are gone.
Those who saw the buffaloes by thousands and how they pawed the prairie sod into dust with their hoofs, their great heads down pawing on in a great pageant of dusk,
Those who saw the buffaloes are gone.
And the buffaloes are gone."

I. Grade level: 6-9, depending on the maturity of your students

II. Teaching objectives

- A. To expose students to literature (a continuing process) so that they experience literature as the most persuasive way of saying things.
- B. To illustrate one difference between a prose statement and a poetic statement: the one is a statement of fact; the other is an expression that sets forth an emotion.
- C. To illustrate the unity of a poem.
- D. To provide opportunity for students to identify with the feeling the poet is expressing.

III. Behavioral objectives for the learners

In class discussion the students will

- A. Identify the emotion the poet conveys in the poem.
- B. Paraphrase the poem as a statement of fact and compare it with the original expression of emotion to determine the poet's intent.
- C. Point out specific words, kinds of sentences, ordering of parts, and other techniques the poet uses to create his effect.
- D. Identify the central thought that makes this poem a unit.

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E. Give examples from their experience of the feeling of loss that the poet expresses.
F. Interpret the poem by doing a choral reading of it as a class.

Iv. Procedure

A. Motivation

"Often we read and enjoy poetry because it says in an unusual way something we've thought or felt ourselves. Sometimes it tickles our funny bones—or sometimes it just makes us say, 'That's it! That's just exactly what I mean!'

"Today I have a poem to read for you, and I'm not going to tell you how the author felt. I wonder if you will know the feeling."

B. Development

1. The effect of the poetic statement

(Read poem. Let children look at copies they have in their hands.)

"What is Sandburg doing here? Notice, not what's he *saying,* but what's he doing? (Elicit answers leading to the conclusion that he's regretting the loss of the buffaloes.)

"What effect does he want to accomplish?

"What does he make you feel?"

(Appropriate answers—The tragedy of loss. Something irretrievable, something that can't be brought back, has been lost.)

"Do you agree that he sets forth an emotion, that he holds up his feeling for us to look at?"

"What could he have said if he had meant simply to make a statement of fact? Say in a sentence the fact he tells you." (The teacher may have to paraphrase: "The thousands of buffaloes that once lived on the prairies have been gone now for many years.")

"Am I being fair in paraphrasing in this way the facts that the author gives?" (Revise as group concensus dictates.)

"How do you respond to this statement of fact? How does that make you feel?" (Encourage students to voice their "so what?" reaction.)

2. The poet's technique

"I'm going to read the poem again. This time I'd like you to think about how Sandburg achieves his effect—the sense of tragedy at the loss of the buffaloes."

(Appropriate answers—short, stark first sentence.

—2nd sentence places event farther in past, increases feeling of tragedy.

—repetition of *are gone.*

—vivid description of buffalo in action, but with hint of their passing. "Where is it?"—pageant of dusk. "What is dusk?" —as day dies, so also the buffalo. [You may also like to think of *pageant* as a drama of something of the past.] "Notice the title."

—This picture of the buffalo is surrounded by the words *are gone.*)

"Why does he reverse order of the first two sentences? Is the point that the people are gone?"

3. The poem as a unit and as a whole

(Include as much of this as you feel is appropriate and meaningful to your class.)

"Did you notice that this poem is both a unit and a whole?

It is a unit—it has one central thought—the loss of the buffaloes.

It is a whole—it has a proper ordering of its parts. Is there any line we can take away? Or can we change the order of the lines without destroying the effect of the poem?"

(Read the poem again.)

C. Conclusion

"Do you know this feeling—a sense of sadness because something or some experience you've cherished is gone forever? Is there someone willing to share that experience with us?"

(If there is no quick response, encourage students by relating an experience of yours. This is one of my experiences that I have told—"I remember that when I was about three years older than you are now our family was moving away from the state of Washington with its beautiful mountains, and I felt as though I could never be as happy anywhere as I had been there. At noon when we stopped to eat our picnic lunch, I went off by myself to eat my sandwich while sitting on a log beside a

clear, babbling mountain stream. I was too sad to talk; I just wanted to let my ears and eyes take in the beauty of a favorite scene that I was sure I'd never see again. I think I felt then a little like Carl Sandburg did when he wrote this poem.
Did you ever have this kind of feeling?"
Encourage sharing of experiences—death of a pet, a brother's going to college, etc.)

"You know, I think both older people and young people can enjoy a poem like this because they all know the emotion Sandburg portrays. Listen once more to him."

(If your class has had some experience in choral reading, you might like to conclude the lesson with a choral reading of the peom using some such scheme:

Line 1 – first half of the girls
Line 2 – second half of the girls
Line 3 – all of the boys
Line 4 – second half of the girls
Line 5 – first half of the girls

Be sure that the final reading involves the students in an emotional experience of the poem.)

Don't Mind Me, I'm Just Jealous

Marie J. Post

The fifth grade teacher (new this year)
Has hair well-coifed and skin so clear.
She wears the palest, peach-glow smile.
Her wardrobe is the latest style.
Her mien is gentle, voice is sweet.
She shushes noisy mouths and feet,
Gets instant action with a glance,
Is staunch in every circumstance.
She trains my son and all his mates
In patience, love and other traits
And guides them down the treacherous path
Of the mysterious new math.
Besides, her scholarly (and "Wind-song") essence
Makes mothers smack of obsolescence!

BIBLICAL ECOSYSTEMATICS

Continued from Page 22

Solution

I now come to the basic point of my talk. The heart commitment that is so necessary can really only be expected to be a lasting one if it is based on a love and concern for our fellow man. And a true love and concern for our fellow man is possible only in the context of a changed heart. We recall Christ's summary of the second part of the law, ". . . and love your neighbor as yourself." Donald W. Munro makes the same point about the necessity of changed hearts when he says: "True Christianity is supposed to free a man from his natural self-centerdness and turn his mind toward the welfare of others."[8]

Teachers Responsibility

And now we have finally come to your classrooms in grade Kindergarten through six. You are dealing with covenant children and the assumption is that you are dealing with changed hearts. I might add, parenthetically, that as parents and teachers I feel that we sometimes make improper assumptions. Our children must be taught what God's Word means when it commands man to multiply and subdue the earth. Our children must be taught that as God's children they have a special responsibility towards the rest of His creation; they are to exert a wise stewardship over the natural world. As the hymn so beautifully puts it, this is their Father's world. This kind of training can never begin too early.

No, the Judaeo-Christian ethic cannot be blamed for our ecological crises. On the contrary, the Judaeo-Christian ethic, properly based upon God's Word offers the only real hope for lasting solutions to our problems.

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3 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion,* translated by John Allen (Philadelphia Board of Christian Education, 1936), I/V, p. 64.

4 Frederick Elder, *Crisis in Eden,* Abingdon Press, 1970, 172 p.

5 E. S. Feenstra, "The Spiritual Versus Material Heresy." *J. Amer. Sci. Affil.* 29: 44-46, 1969.

6 Wayne Friar, "Ignorance, Inertia, and Irresponsibility." *J. Amer. Sci. Affil.* 29: 43-45, 1969.

7 Richard T. Wright, "Responsibility for the Ecological Crisis," *BioScience* 20: 851-853, 1970.

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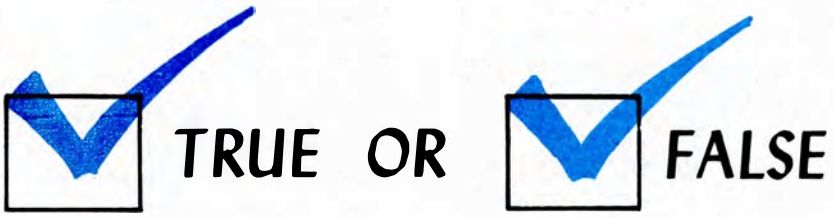

by Norman De Jong*

This article constitutes an infinitesimal addition to the mountains of literature available to twentieth century man. It will probably go unnoticed by most, but hopefully it will become armament in the ideological warfare going on at many schools. I say "ideological warfare" without hesitation, for such is the essential character of dynamic education, with the library being nothing less than prime arsenal.[1]

This ideological dispute is one of the main explanations for the continuing proliferation of literary material. Without dispute, disagreement, and the conviction that someone else's explanation is false, or at least inadequate, little if anything would be written and justification for publishers' existence would rapidly diminish.

Whenever there is a conflict of ideas or concepts, one thing is certain: not all of the ideas or concepts can be right and worthy of acceptance as truth. To illustrate, suppose that I were to argue that the current Vietnam War is a just and holy confrontation with Godless communism, thus deserving full American support. Immediately one could expect rebuttal from many sides. The counter-arguments would be numerous, but it is not our purpose to recite them here; it may give the enemy intelligence corps added ammunition. The point is this: not all sides can be right; some must be wrong, and there is a strong possiblity that all may be wrong. Some of the proponents must, of logical necessity, be speaking falsely. It is also possible, and even probable, that some be speaking truly. But who is to decide and how?

One of the poems that has recently fascinated me, but which regrettably has been falsely labelled as children's literature, is "The Blind Men and the Elephant" by John G. Saxe. Concerning the symbolic Elephant, these "six men of Indostan, to learning much inclined, . . . Disputed loud and long, Each in his own opinion Exceeding stiff and strong." Is it possible that they were all giving a true description? Saxe wisely concludes, ". all were in the wrong!" Each blind man thought he was describing the Elephant truly, but none of them were. The Fourth contended, "the Elephant is very like a tree," but he was very certainly mistaken. Could he, then, rightly have argued, "the Elephant's legs are like trees?" Again, no! At best he might have contended that one type of appendage of that organic unity called Elephant is

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like one part of that wholeness called tree. These six men, in spite of their much learning, were emphatically and definitely perpetrating falsehoods.

What was their weakness, their deficiency? They were blind; they couldn't comprehend the whole Elephant, and what they could grasp, that they subtly perverted. At best they could understand one part, one facet and that they absolutized. They absolutized one aspect and claimed that it explained the whole. They thought they knew the essence of elephantness when they only had a fumbling grasp of the tail.

Such is the situation in our world today, and especially in the world of education. Books, magazines and ideas abound in tidal quantities. "Education is vocational preparation." "No! Education is learning to adapt to an ever-changing culture." "Emphatically not! Education is the honing of the basic skills, the three R's." "On my word! Education is transmission of a cultural heritage from the older to the younger." "You're all wrong! Education is the experience of becoming democratic citizens." "Pardon my entrance, gentlemen, but education is whatever you, individually or collectively, determine it to be."

What Should One Believe?

Such is the rising crescendo of argument in pedagogical circles. "Whom and what do I believe?" is the dilemma of the questing student. "Can I believe everyone I read and hear? They can't all be true. Are they all false? Is each one totally wrong?"

Blindness to the truth is not novel to twentieth century man, and certainly not unique to America. School curriculums are, at least in part, a record of intellectual disagreement, of ideological confrontation. When such is the content of the school, and unavoidably it is, what is left for the student except either to be horribly confused and pulled mentally asunder, or to fight the good fight of faith?

I have often been intrigued by the reactions of my students to the ideas I present. What do they do with those statements? Do they accept them as true, or do they believe them to be false? Or don't they know what to believe? Does this new idea, just encountered, conflict with previous beliefs? What beliefs do they presently hold? By whom and through what media have they been influenced? What do their facial contortions and their body posture tell me by way of response?

Students don't come to school (or to church, for that matter) empty-headed and blank-sheeted. They come burgeoning with ideas and attitudes on sundry and unexpected topics. They derive these from every imaginable source – TV, radio, newspapers, parents, friends, siblings and family trips. Many times they are confused by this bombastic collection and little appreciate our contributions to their mental chaos. At other times they have their thoughts neatly sifted and wish for continued quiet. Then, confronted with our intrusion, their response is one of passive, yet effective, resistance.

The possibilities for conceptual dispute are innumerable. This teacher doesn't agree with that teacher. That teacher does not agree with the textbook author. The textbook author does not agree with yesterday's newspaper article. The newspaper article doesn't harmonize with the TV commentator. My father turned him off. And nobody agrees with me. There is so much static! Tune me out! But give me love and Peace.

That response should be no cause for surprise or shock. Not knowing what to believe is deeply disturbing and indecision is an excruciating, albeit temporary, psychological condition. Yet "tuning out" is not a desirable response and not long tolerated. Beliefs and ideas, including those presently held by the students, must be examined. We must stop practicing with meaningless facts and get on with the real battle. But is it conscionable for teachers to insist that false ideas be exposed for what they are and that true ideas be identified and accepted as such? Even if it requires sundry and persuasive proof by way of argument? Is the teachers' and the students' task truly that of pursuing, pinning down, and laying hold of the truth, all the while rejecting the lie?

True or False

The Christian community has long been asserting that "neutrality is a myth, an impossibility." Now I am in wholehearted agreement with that assertion, and I believe that we all ought to be, *but,* when are we going to get on with the obverse (the positive counterpart) of that statement? What is the obverse? Simply stated, it is this: *Every idea, concept or belief is either true or false.*

When I present that idea to my students, the variety of their reactions is frequently cause for amusement, yet their responses are almost universally negative. The professor has flipped,

seems to say the look in their eyes. But, if not apriori committed to rejection of such a postulate by the influence of other belief propagators, their questions soon lead to "Can that be proven?"

The answer is Yes. One can certainly find evidence for such an assertion in Scripture. Scripture brooks no neutrality: "He that is not with me is against Me. I am the truth."[2] Such statements, coupled with references to and extrapolations, from the Biblical theme of the antithesis, do not convince all students, however. Convinced that there is flaw in our interpretation or leap in our logic, they remain hesitant and skeptical. Although not daring to articulate it, the lack of acceptance is tacit expression of their belief that you have spoken falsely.

There is added evidence for such skeptics in simple logical terms. It can be succinctly stated in the following way:

1. *If* an idea or concept is *true, then* it is *true.*
2. *If* an idea or concept is *not true, then* it is *not true.*
3. *Not true equals false.*
4. *If* an idea is *neutral, then* it is *not true.* (If it were true, then it would be true.)
5. *If* that idea is *not true, then* it is *false.*

One could continue with such gymnastics, but the point should be clear. Neutrality, as orthodox Christians have always asserted, is an impossibility.

When we come to recognize the truth of the statement that every idea or concept is either true or false, we must also recognize the necessity of certain fundamental principles which will temper our judgments. Some of these principles are:

1. Truth or falsehood is *not dependent on our believing* it to be true or false. Even if every white person firmly believed the Negro to be innately inferior, all that belief would not change the truth of the matter. Truth and falsehood are not determined by majority vote.

2. To assert that every idea or concept is either true or false is not to assert that we know which to be true and which to be false. Many times we will simply have to admit that we don't know. In fact, we may have real difficulty in coming to a decision. When confronted with conflicting ideas where the choice is not easy, we are disturbed and slowed down. But decide we must, for prolonged skepticism is antithetical to man as believer. Our students often experience this even though we may be oblivious to their trauma. They may still be trying to decide a particular matter while we have traveled on, unconscious of the blank stare or the furrowed brow.

Truth, in all its ideological, personal, ethical and spiritual ramifications, is not a collection of independent elements, nor is it subject to flux and situational gyrations. On the contrary, it is fixed and yet always relational. If anything is to be true, it must be *true to God.*

3. We cannot intelligently and wisely decide if an idea is true or false until we understand what is meant by the words, phrases and symbols which convey that idea. Many times we should ask for clarification before we come to a personal decision. For example, the statement, "The Bible is not a textbook for science" has caused no little confict in some circles. Is that statement true? Or is it false? Before accord and peace can be reached, the meaning of at least two words ("textbook" and "science") should be articulated.

4. Much truth and falsehood are shared by regenerate and unregenerate alike. This is simply another way of saying that there are many truths on which men of differing faiths find agreement or common acceptance. That the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620 is not apt to cause a war of words, but neither does the common acceptance of that belief warrant the labelling of that idea as "neutral". Neither common acceptance of truth as truth nor even common acceptance of falsehood as truth can be construed to equal neutrality.

In the parlance of our Reformed denominations, this principle is nothing more than alternative phrasing of the doctrine of Common Grace or Providence.

5. Truth and falsehood, as discussed here or elsewhere, can not *merely* mean an accurate or inaccurate account of the actual or objective state of affairs. It is certainly that, but truth and falsehood must mean much more. If we do not recognize truth as more than accurate description, our ideological wars will not bring peace and victory; they will leave us collecting shrapnel for consolence. Falsehood, too, has expanded meaning and can best be understood as all the pervaricating work of the devil. Falsehood is perversion and distortion of the truth, whatever form truth takes.

What Is Truth?

The last principle that needs acceptance is the most important. Without it, the fight of faith cannot result in victory. Although it has been

rejected by numerous Christians and long been held captive by the enemies of God, its reclamation is imperative. Its most simple formulation is this: *All truth is relative.*

Before some take too hasty aim and assume combatative attitude, allow me to explain. To assert that "all truth is relative" is not to say that truth is in flux and subject to change. Truth does not change. It is fixed and firm, for it emanates from Christ Who is the very embodiment of and source of all truth, and Who, being God, changes not. Neither should this principle be construed to mean that truth is subjective, although that is what is meant by the truth-denier who has succeeded in perverting our understanding of the word relative. The meaning of relative can best be illustrated by reference to our own persons. We are all relatives, and we all have relatives, meaning simply that we stand not alone, but in organic relationship to other persons. With a certain measure of historical backtracking we are led to conclude that the whole human race is related through the historical Adam. This universal personal relationship, although frequently strained and often ignored, doesn't rule us. And neither should ideological relativity, for "all truth is relative" is merely a cogent way of stating that all truth must be seen in relationship.

The truths of American exploration and colonization, for example, cannot be apprehended apart from the historical realities of the Reformation and the Renaissance. Those historical truths must, in turn, be seen in the context of expanding nationalism and the breakup of medieval feudalism. To ignore such relationships would be a mark of poor scholarship, but merely to push the relationships in a reverse chronological direction is also inadequate.

All truth is related, but just as in our personal, physical relationships, it must be related *to* something or someone, *to* an absolute, *to* a fixed, unchanging, yet always contemporary reference point. And what is that focal point for all our ideas and concepts? For the Christian the answer is disarmingly simple: It is "Christ Himself . . . the Creator who made everything in heaven and earth, the things we can see and the things we can't; the spirit world with its kings and kingdoms, its rulers and authorities: all were made by Christ for His own use and glory. He was before all else began and it is His power that holds everything together" (Col. 1:16-17).

Truth, in all its ideological, personal, ethical and spiritual ramifications, is not a collection of independent elements, nor is it subject to flux and situational gyrations. On the contrary, it is fixed and yet always relational. If anything is to be true, it must be *true to God.* Truth does not change, even though our conception of it and our relationship to it may fluctuate wildly. But thanks be to God, those who are maturing in faith and becoming one with Christ no longer sway to and fro, as children, with every wind of doctrine.

Through careful, honest study and the inscripturated revelation, the infallible Word of God, and by floodlighting all our general revelational studies with that light, we can discern the truth or falsity of all the theories, ideals, and life visions that compete with us for the allegiance of our children. Thus educating, we can win the war in which we have been called to fight.

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1. *This ideological warfare is, ideally, not to be carried on between the members of a faculty, nor even between faculty and students. Rather, it is a contest for the allegiance of minds to the truth in opposition to the allurements of false philosophies, ideals and prophets. For elaboration on this theme, read* **Robert Ulich, Education in Western Culture,** *Chapters 1, 8 & 9;* **Eric Hoffer, The True Believer;** *and N. De Jong,* **Education in the Truth,** *pp. 84-87 & 167-178.*

2. *Consult such passages as II Cor. 1:17-20, Eph. 6:11-17, Col. 2:6-8, I Tim. 4:1-7, II Tim. 2, and Heb. 4:12.*

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL GROUP EXPERIENCES 15% GROWTH

Increases of fifteen per cent in both number of schools and pupil enrollment have been recorded for the third consecutive year by the National Association of Christian Schools. Sixty-two thousand pupils are enrolled in 345 elementary and secondary schools located in 40 states and 35 countries.

Dr. John Blanchard, Executive Director, observed, "As the only national non-sectarian association of its kind, the NACS attracts schools that are strongly committed to Biblical values and continuing educational improvement. Our schools emphasize spiritual impact and academic content and our efforts to deal with social, racial, political and denominational problems are developed with Biblical discernment. Many parents desire this balance of education for the benefit of both heart and mind."

The NACS office in Wheaton, Illinois serves as a clearing house and source of information in all phases of the educational process and school operation. By its promotion, placement and new school services the NACS strengthens this rapidly growing private school movement.

by Karen Dykstra*

Why don't we read about drug education in most education journals? Why do we hear very little about this topic in education circles? Are we like the ostrich, burying our heads in the sand in the hope that such an unpleasant problem will go away if we ignore it? Do we as teachers really believe that it is unnecessary to educate our students about the dangers of drugs in the elementary school? Is it realistic to say that only high school and college students are exposed to the danger of drugs? Can we honestly believe that it is?

I think not. As Christian teachers we have a special responsibility to face this problem. Our students are also being confronted with drugs. Even in small towns like Jenison the problem exists. Last year a known pusher was just eleven years old.

In 1967 in New York City alone, 79 teenagers died as a result of the misuse of heroin. In 1969 that figure rose to 224 deaths. Of that number, 20 were under the age of 15. The March 16, 1970 issue of the *Time* magazine tells of a twelve year old boy who was hospitalized as a result of hepatitis. Where did he get it? From a dirty needle he had used to mainline heroin.

Dr. Richard Brotman, Director of the Center for Studies in Substance Use at New York Medical College in New York City, says, "Many children are exposed to drugs when they're only eleven, twelve, or even younger. This doesn't mean necessarily that they use them. The crucial time is when a child is around fourteen." One thing on which experts do agree is that the age most seriously susceptible to the pull of drugs is adolescense. It is then that the child is beginning to find out who he is and where he is going. He is developing a value system, and in addition he is being faced with new tasks and ideas for him as a person. Of great consequence are the endocrine changes that go along with puberty and its extreme emotional turmoil.

Those who work with youngsters on drugs have noted one major similarity among them——some sort of family problem. Understanding this may help you in spotting and helping a child before he turns to drugs. What kinds of home situations are conducive to this situation? The child may come from a too permissive home. The parents want to be pals with and to be liked by their child, so they bend over backwards to avoid rules which the child might dislike. The youngster really wants someone to lay down the law. He needs to be told, "As long

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as you're in my house you'll to things my way." Then there is the other extreme. The parents are too strict and without any thought of being fair. It might be also that the parents use a double standard: the child must "toe the mark," but it's all right if the parent "goofs" a little.

Another poor home situation leading to drug experimentation is the home where father works all day and is too tired at night to play with the family. Mother is willing to drive the kids where ever they want to go but is too busy to listen when they talk about their problems. It isn't that they don't love their children, but they just don't talk to them and spend time growing closer as a family. And let us be realistic, these homes can be found in our Christian communities.

These three home situations represent a reason why I believe our schools must do something about educating our students about drugs. Drug education is another area where the home has abdicated its duty. Therefore, the school must take over the duty of the home. If a child's parents do not display concern about what happens to him in terms of drug education, where is he going to turn? A concerned teacher will have to be the one from whom the child gets his information.

I heard a former addict speak recently. There was one point he made that really touched me. He said, "No one ever told me about drugs. No one ever told me about addiction and how terrible it is. *No one ever cared.*" I don't want that to happen to any of my students.

If a Christian teacher is truly concerned about being prepared and "up" on the topic, there is enough material available and easily obtainable so that he can become well informed. There are also many teaching aids available to help the teacher present the "straight goods" to the students. (Many of these are listed at the end of this article.)

Speaking of the straight goods, the attitude of the teacher is important in talking with the students about drugs. I am not asking, "Should you or should you not teach attitudes and values on drugs?" I am not asking that because I am convinced that on an issue like this it is impossible to separate your feelings from the issues involved. If the teacher's personal attitude is that there is nothing wrong with experimenting with drugs, that teacher should, for the sake of the students, ask to be relieved of dealing with the topic, *but* the topic *must* be dealt with by someone.

If, on the other hand, a teacher personally feels so strongly against drugs that he preaches and moralizes to the class, this is also wrong. It is very difficult not to preach, but it must not be done, because as soon as the preaching begins the students turn the teacher off. Scare tactics won't work either. Don't feed them all the bad statistics available in the hopes of scaring them so badly they would dream of trying anything. They'll see through that immediately. This teacher, too, should ask to be relieved of dealing with the topic.

Be prepared to fail with those students that are already hooked. A New York teenager said, "When I was shooting up, I liked to read about other junkies in the papers. It fed my sickness. I liked to hear about the overdose cases and I'd think I was brave for taking it."

Be prepared to fail, but at the same time, stand ready to help. Know where kids can go in your community for help. Be a good listener. It is possible that "teacher" may be the only one who really listens to them today. Help them face their problems squarely, but don't moralize in the process.

Come on, teachers, get your heads out of the sand!

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Cathedral Films——"Drugs in Our Society" A series of six filmstrips with records on drugs, marjuana, LSD, alcohol, and tobacco.

Educational Progress Corporation———"The Choice is Yours" The tapes on drugs and addiction are made by actual users and former addicts.

Also———"Drug Identification Kit" It contains facsimiles of the drugs used by addicts and explains the dangers of each.

Narcotics Education
Box 4390
6830 Laurel Street N.W.
Washington D.C. 20012

Send your name and address and ask to be placed on their mailing list. This organization acts as a clearing house for all materials in the field of drug and health education. They will send you a catalog of all items they have available.

Magazines———Watch for magazine articles on drugs, drug users, drug penalties, and so forth. *Time, Look, Life, Sports Illustrated, and Reader's Digest* are good ones to watch, just to name a few.

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