



Christian Educators Journal

Volume 20, Number 2 December, 1980 / January, 1981



**HISTORY TEACHING:
AN EVALUATION
AND CHRISTIAN APPROACH**



What's Dat?

"What's dat?"

*Our two-year-old's never-ending question.
A pudgy finger jabs at the evening paper;
then, he spots a spider walking on the ceiling
and hears spring's first robin talking to herself.
His face bends upward,
again, "What's dat?"*

*Hour after hour, his question disrupts my weekend silence.
"Enough is enough," I say.*

"Quiet!"

*His blue eyes fill with tears
and he pads off to find his mother.*

Monday morning

23 thirteen-year-olds stare blankly at me.

"Let's discuss that short story today.

What was your reaction to . . . ?"

*The brooding silence,
the down-turned faces;
and I feel a pang of guilt,
and I wish right then to hear a small voice ask,
"What's dat?"*

Bryce Fopma

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The Christian Educators Journal (130630) is published quarterly by the Christian Educators Journal Association, 1500 Cornell Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506. Second class postage paid at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Christian Educators Journal invites its readers to submit reviews of books that are of interest to Christian teachers. Reviewers in all disciplines are encouraged to share their thoughts on vital books. Send your review to:

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ABOUT THE COVER

Calvin College History Department

Jagged, horizontal bands, representing both the rise and fall of civilizations and the four kingdoms as described in the Book of Daniel, move across vertical time lines, which also symbolize the dramatic influence of Christ on history.

Photo by Edwin de Jong



Christian Educators Journal

VOLUME 20

DECEMBER, 1980 / JANUARY, 1981

NUMBER 2

CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS JOURNAL A medium of expression for the Protestant Christian School movement in the United States and Canada.

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Manuscripts and correspondence concerning articles should be sent to the Managing Editor or Regional Editor. Book reviews should be sent to the Editor.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The *Christian Educators Journal Association*, composed of several members or sponsoring organizations, publishes the Journal as a channel of communication for all educators committed to the idea of evangelical 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 encourages those contributions that evaluate as well as describe existing trends and practices in North 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.

EDITORIAL

Sports and the Christian Educator

Wallace Bratt

Because the relationship of sports to Christian education is of deep concern to Christian educators, we appreciate Dr. Bratt's article, and it is being given the editorial position because it asks for such serious thought.

—Editor

It was just last month that the lead story on one of the local TV evening news programs told about the cutbacks which are being planned in a neighboring public school system due to the rejection of a millage proposal for the coming year. Some dozens of teachers are being laid off, said the reporter, while the system's costly interscholastic sports program is being continued. Only one member of the Board of Education responsible for this decision had the temerity to challenge, and even to vote against, this arrangement, suggesting publicly that the school system in question has its priorities radically misplaced. I rather suspect, however, that the action of the majority of the school board members more accurately reflects the sum of public opinion in the community involved—and in the great majority of American cities, towns, and rural areas as well—than did the lone dissenting voice which protested that action. For vast numbers of Americans a school's sports program simply is more significant than is the quality of its educational program. After all, sports is King!

Consequently, we have come to expect that football tyrannize Sunday (and Saturday) TV during the seemingly endless "fall" season, which now begins in mid-summer and extends well into the winter. We have come to expect that professional athletes (and they need not be unusually gifted) command salaries ludicrously disproportionate to the ultimate value of what they are doing. We have come to expect that our local newspapers will devote more space on any given day to a baseball game played by some mediocre professional team, or to a basketball game played by five adolescents, than to news stories about significant developments in nations overseas. We have come to expect that the President of the United States will send not diplo-

mats, but boxing champions abroad to convince African nations to join an olympics boycott which is essentially political in character. After all, sports is king, and when sports "heroes" speak, people listen.

What about us, as Christian educators? Have we in the face of this obsession with sports maintained our integrity and an appropriate sense of perspective, or have we, too, on both the college and high school level, tended to give way, to be swept along with the whole frenzied sports mania? No millage issue can threaten our athletic programs and thus force us in a direct way to choose between sports and academic concerns, but we are confronted almost daily with the question of priorities, whether we are aware of it or not. What implicit choices are we making? What really comes first — for both Christian school constituencies and for us as professional educators? Just what are we, if not by word, then by deed, communicating to our students as far as the relative significance of sports is concerned?

Each of us has been hired by an educational institution. Our schools traditionally have been called "Schools for Christian Education." That would seem to suggest that the educational enterprise is to be preeminent. I have to come to wonder, however, whether such is currently always the case. And because the athletic establishments in most of our schools, including the college in which I teach, have been expanding, not contracting, discussion of the issue ought not be delayed.

SPORTS: A FEW QUESTIONS

Quite obviously, there is no precise set of guidelines which one can use in any effort to determine whether or not the sports program in any given school has assumed unhealthy proportions. One can, however, ask a few simple questions. Honest answers to such questions may provide at least a beginning for anyone genuinely interested in probing the problem in his or her own school.

1.

The first question which comes to mind is the obvious one, but should, in any case, be asked. How many teams does a given school sponsor?

This question has become increasingly urgent in recent years, due to the burgeoning of women's interscholastic and intercollegiate sports programs. No fair-minded person, it seems to me, could object to equal athletic opportunity for men and women. At the same time, any increase in the number of women's teams clearly means an increase in the total number of teams fielded by any school. Furthermore, any such increase brings with it the potential for difficulty.

The most obvious area of such difficulty has to do with coaching. If one stays within the teaching staff and assigns coaching on a wholesale basis to regular professional educators, one runs the risk of finding oneself

Wallace Bratt is a professor of German at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and he has served on the Calvin College Athletics Committee.

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HISTORY TEACHING: An Evaluation and Christian Approach

Jack Boelema

History as a discipline has undergone several changes in past years. While traditional history teachers unraveled dates and battles and spouted the names of dead kings, others abandoned these "basics" in favor of more "meaningful" materials. Relevancy became the reaction to traditionalism as new methodologies strove to present a discipline with more appeal. Progressive instructors replaced lectures with discussions and workbooks with study manuals. Historical theories and concepts entered the curriculum when reports indicated that history ranked low in student popularity polls. Advocates of learning games boasted high motivation, communication, and understanding.

Traditional teaching was criticized. "Traditional teaching means boredom." "Kids don't remember all that stuff anyway!" "Why bother with it?" Progressivists were criticized, too. "They don't know Tom Jefferson from Ben Franklin, and they have never heard of Winston Churchill." "If they don't get the stuff now, they'll never get it later," An eagerness to teach theory and concept cost the instructor his time plan, and he did not quite get around to finishing his course. Games had their place but nearly cost some idealistic teachers their sanity.

The controversy was profitable, however, because the criticism forced (or should have) teachers to reevaluate

Jack Boelema teaches at the West Side Christian School in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



their teaching. Traditional teaching has faults that should be recognized. Educational studies indicate a heavy loss of factual data by the student. Plodding through books and supplemental materials can be a little dull. On the other hand, supporters of content teaching correctly perceived that some progressivists missed basic learning areas, so traditionalists were skeptical of change.

WHY STUDY HISTORY?

It is good to learn from disagreement and seek direction from it. Just why do we study history? History is important to mature intellectual growth, and one needs a basic knowledge of both facts and concepts. Imagine the horrible ignorance of a society which knew nothing of its past. It has been said that we "are pygmies standing on the shoulders of giants." How great an intellectual heresy it would be to abandon knowledge of all that has been experienced and learned by our predecessors. Humanity can derive a good deal from the knowledge of the past, because it provides a base from which society can advance. Perhaps this is why George Santayana said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." It is important to know why Rome fell because we can see parallels to the consequences of improper and inept government actions, or the benefits of wise statemanship, so that we ourselves may become

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HISTORY, continued from page 5.

wiser. We should know the good and bad in liberal and conservative trends in order that we may take an informed side on issues. We must recognize racism, bigotry, and other social sins so that we may seek justice wisely.

In *A Christian View of History*, Calvin College professor Dirk Jellema offers some important reasons why it is necessary to include history in the Christian school curriculum:

1. It widens our experience by helping us to understand other cultures.
2. History frees us from bonds of restrictiveness. That is, it helps us, and especially our young people, to see that our ideas and values are not the only way. We can profit from others' values systems.
3. The discipline teaches important moral lessons about man's pride, depravity, selfishness, and greed, which are necessary to understand about man's constitution.
4. History should promote some sense of thanks and wonder to God. The study is God's revelation, teaching us something very real about human nature and God's love and judgement upon mankind.
5. History is a story of how other people solved their problems. A careful scrutiny of their problems, faults, trends, and values can give us good direction.

METHODOLOGY FOR TODAY

The best methods to convey these ideas and others depend upon the teacher's industry and imagination. In most cases accountability does not determine the paycheck, but a certain professional conscience is incumbent upon all educators. A dull and continual plodding can kill the best student's excitement and natural curiosity to learn. It is sometimes no wonder that imaginations are stilted and 75-90 per cent of content materials are forgotten by the next year. Likewise, vague and pointless discussions that lack student interest or are beyond their conceptual level soon lead to learning breakdown and discipline problems. It is important that teachers define goals carefully, review objectives regularly, and utilize current learning tools and ideas when they apply.

There is a real place for both factual teaching and concept learning. It is important to be flexible, however, and students can give good direction here. They

are usually honest when it comes to the instructor's teaching. If they do not like what the teacher is doing they will tell him (telling varies from a spitball to "This stuff is really stupid!"). But if they like the style, they will tell the teacher that, too (this ranges from excited and smiling eyes to "Ya know what I think about that?"). Students interested in learning do not have time to create problems. Motivation has many sources, so teachers should try different ideas continually to see what works. Shape it, style it some, and try it again. A stimulating lecture can smack with academic brilliance and go far. Notes have their place. Dress up role-playing is exciting. Related issues are best handled with controlled and meaningful discussions, and some learning games are nothing short of terrific. Students should read some good books and be encouraged to make three to five minute oral reports when they tire of listening to the teacher. Music relating to a particular culture can be refreshing.

THE CHRISTIAN HISTORY TEACHER

Every Christian educator has a special assignment that is best expressed in Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) "Where there is no vision the people perish." Every Christian educator must aspire to something lofty, and this text gives the ideal.

Calvinism includes the doctrine of providence, and Calvinistic doctrine, simplistic or not, teaches that history is God's plan. Acceptance of this tenet requires its proponents to interpret intelligently God's hand in creation; and this interpretation must be carefully worked out by each teacher. That God is active in the events of men must be explained by the Christian history teacher. Scripture attests to divine providence directing the destiny of Jews, pagans, and Christians. Examples should be pointed out. That does not call for superficial "what God is doing here is . . .," but rather calls for substantial interpretations of basic events according to the Christian mind.

"Have in you the mind of Jesus Christ," directs Paul in Philippians 5:7. What is the Christian response, then, to revolutions, materialism, communism, or other government philosophies, racism, capitalism, and other concepts?

Christian history educators must show how Christian directives are related to conflicts and societal issues can promote a just society.



Are you moving this winter?

Send us your new address as soon as possible, please.

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Once upon a lunch hour draggy, all my spirits weak and saggy,
To the lounge I slowly wended to renew friendships of yore.
Earlier this same semester, some incipient, profane jester
Had suggested I sequester in my office up a floor,
That I cower eremite-like my office up a floor,
Sit and cower, nothing more.

Now those hours spent so sadly, I prepared to renounce gladly
As I quietly approached the teachers' workroom door.
Had I really so forgotten that the lounge had smelled so rotten
From those choking, misbegotten clouds the smokers so adore,
Forgot that cloudy, musty gloom that the smokers so adore?
Forgot again, ah, nevermore.

Deep into that dense fog peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Dreaming dreams no nonsmoker ever dared to dream before.
There within the shadows easing, I amidst the coughs and sneezing,
'Mid the heavy, ghastly wheezing saw our sainted teacher corps,
Saw those dedicated members of our sainted teacher corps.
Saw them smoke, forevermore.

Suddenly my lungs grew stronger, hesitating then no longer,
"Sirs," I cried, "and madams, truly your attention I implore.
Leave this filthy vice behind you, leave no ashes to remind you
Of the gloom in which I find you, shed the habit I abhor.
Shed that smelly, smoky habit surgeon generals abhor."
Coughed the teachers, "Nevermore."

Then at last reduced to pleading, said I, "Can you sit unheeding,
Can you every fact and figure, every evidence ignore?"
Responding to my gentle urging came a voice on sarcasm verging.
From that Stygian gloom emerging with the dreaded question I had waited for,
Came the deadly, dreaded question I had waited for.
Just a question, nothing more:

"Does the contract clearly quoted, upon which the school board voted.
Not preclude harassment by some administrative bore?
Leave no memo as a token of the breach thy tongue has spoken,
Leave our contractual rules unbroken, quit your standing by our door.
Take your sanctimony with you as you leave by yonder door.
You are welcome here no more."

Back into the hallway turning, all my lungs within me burning,
Silently I wandered through the quiet corridor.
Humbly had I retreated, gasping air I badly needed,
Cursing I had not succeeded in my tiny holy war.
Knowing I had failed forever in my tiny holy war.
Winless here, forevermore.

Then unto my office nearing, from the toadstools I saw peering,
Several guilty students staring at my office door.
I immediately upended their career plans and suspended
All those students who'd offended board of education lore,
All those students who'd offended district smoking lore,
High school students now no more.

Dare they with the loathsome scratches of their lighters and their matches
Interrupt our hallowed programs, all our sacred rules ignore?
From this place of goodness driven, castigated unforgiven,
Unrepentent and unshriven, virtue triumphing once more,
Virtue over smoking students triumphing once more.
They'll smoke here, ah, nevermore.


And the teachers, never moving, still are grooving, still are grooving
On those mighty puffs of vapor they so ardently adore.
And their breaths have all the seeming of a dragon that is dreaming,
And the smoke from out them streaming, casts its fallout on the floor.
And my nostrils from that fallout that lies fallen on the floor,
Shall be free, ah, nevermore.

ROBERT J. WELCH is associate principal, Shawnee Mission South High School, Shawnee Mission,
Kansas.

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LUNCH IN THE LOUNGE



Equal Opportunities for All: Teaching the Gifted

Bonnie Miedema

Education in the United States has taken an interesting and ironic twist. It has come a complete half circle, now standing directly opposed to what one of the founders of our country saw as its purpose.

Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, saw education as a way to pick out the most brilliant men for special service in the country. His plan would have guaranteed for boys (girls were not included) reading, writing, and arithmetic. After that, the brightest boy in each school would be sent free to boarding school. Every year the brightest students would continue and the others would go home. The best of the best would be educated six years and after graduation the top half would go on to college. These graduates, Jefferson assumed, would become leading citizens or become involved in government (Owen, Blount, and Moscow, *Educational Psychology: An Introduction*, 1978).

Jefferson saw education as a means of nurturing the gifted to make sure they reached their potential. (The bottom of the best he foresaw as becoming teachers). Jefferson's plan never caught on, but at least he realized that education must stimulate the best minds.

Bonnie Miedema is a senior teacher education student at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa.

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president, freed the slaves with his Emancipation Proclamation. Unfortunately, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. pointed out in his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1965, that piece of paper did not ensure justice and equal opportunities for Negroes. The educational system has stepped in and tried to bridge the gap between promises and reality by providing better education for Negroes so that they may have more chances to match the white model of success. The giant "leap for mankind" step was taken in 1954, with the landmark court case *Brown vs. Board of Education* in Topeka, Kansas. In that case, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that "separate but equal" was a contradiction in terms and reversed the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision which had legalized school segregation. As King reminded us, much progress remains to be seen, but a beginning has been made.

Even the right of women to education is now recognized. While Jefferson limited higher education to white males, today a more enlightened society recognizes the great potential both blacks and women have to offer in most fields and professions. Sex-segregated schools have been reduced. Even West Point now admits women.

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GIFTED, continued from page 9.

More recently, Public Law 94-142, known as the Mainstreaming Act, has taken education in yet another direction. The act states that all students must be educated in the least restrictive environment possible. In practical terms, this means nearly all educators can plan on having one or more students with various handicaps in their classrooms. Equal opportunity for the handicapped, the mainstreamers cry, and they are beginning to get it.

THE GIFTED

However, one group remains sorely discriminated against: the gifted. Unlike blacks, women, and the handicapped, the gifted have had no legislation enacted especially to aid them. As Thomas Jefferson was perceptive enough to realize, the gifted represent a precious natural resource (fortunately renewable, unlike natural

gas and uranium) which must be developed carefully to reach its full potential.

Too many of the gifted remain in the "diamond in the rough" stage. They need polishing and refinement to sparkle as they should. Diamonds are said to be a girl's best friend. Much more are the gifted our country's best friends in terms of what they can offer.

Why give special help to the gifted, pupils who are clearly capable of learning on their own? "... good teaching is being done when *every* child—gifted, average, or dull—is given a reasonable opportunity to develop his own unique abilities. This does not mean treating every child alike, *for the teacher has the right to expect from every child according to his ability, and she has the duty to give to each according to his need.* This means not the same chance for each child but an equal chance" (Laycock, *Gifted Children*, 1957).

GIFTED, continued on page 27.

The Remedial Program in the Christian School

Grace Koene

It is important to educate every child in such a way that he can develop his abilities completely and use those God-given talents to God's glory. Individualized instruction could meet the needs of different students at distinct levels of development. However, this is very difficult for the classroom teacher, who has perhaps thirty students with varying abilities and interests. She could possibly prepare some activities which would motivate the gifted child, but it is the slower learner who sometimes needs more time and attention than the teacher can afford.

It is essential that the Christian school meet the needs of the slow learner also. As Carol Brink (*CEJ*, May, 1975) states, .

It is time that we provide adequate education for our special students, not letting them struggle and experience unnecessary frustration until their parents in desperation pull them out of the Christian school and, often with feelings of guilt, place them in a public school that can provide an adequate education.

The public school might be better equipped to meet the academic needs of the child, but I question whether it is adequate in all respects.

Grace Koene is the remedial teacher for grades one to eight in the Fruitland John Knox Memorial Christian School in Ontario, Canada.

We teach the child as a whole being with physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects which cannot be separated. The child also must learn that everything he does is in relation and in response to God. "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6, NIV). This verse indicates the need for a program in the Christian school to meet the needs of these special children. Virginia B. Anderson (*CEJ*, May, 1975), says this verse, "does not specify a child with a certain set of abilities or I.Q. Rather, these words commend all children to Christian education."

Many schools have been developing special education or remedial programs. Remedial services in many of the elementary Christian schools in Ontario, Canada, are still quite new. The nature of the remedial classroom in different schools might depend on the availability of appropriate materials, the training of the teacher, and the needs of the student population.

Webster's New World Dictionary defines remediation as "the act or process of remedying or overcoming learning disabilities or problems." This definition of remediation is comparable to how Carl Rogers (*Helping Clients With Special Concerns*, 1979) perceives counseling. He views counseling as "... a matter of removing

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REMEDIAL, continued from page 10.

obstacles in the way of growth." The purpose of the remedial classroom in my school is to help the children who have problems keeping up with the rest of the class in the skill subjects (language arts and mathematics). Most of the students need reading help. A deficiency in this subject affects many other areas covered throughout the school day. The student might receive extra help with the materials covered in class or he might be on a program completely separate from the class. This is sometimes necessary because the child is several levels behind the class in a particular subject. He might receive help in one or several subjects, depending on where his problems lie. The amount of time the child spends in the remedial classroom depends on how severe his problems are.

already aware of his weaknesses on the basis of his performance in class. Many of the children I deal with see remedial as an opportunity to improve in the areas where they are weak. Some children even ask whether they can receive more help because the assistance they have received resulted in significant improvements. This positive attitude towards the remedial classroom is largely the result of the feeling parents and classroom teachers express concerning the help received.

Although the remedial teacher might deal mainly with academic problems, she cannot separate these from other concerns that might be troubling the child. The whole child comes in for help, and the teacher should be concerned for the whole person. The child might not be able to focus on the academic tasks until his other needs have been recognized. Here we see how impor-

Proverbs 22:6 does not specify a child with a certain set of abilities or I.Q. Rather, these words commend all children to Christian education.

Academic problems stem from a variety of different sources, such as physical defects, perceptual problems, speech and language problems, or a low I.Q. The child could be a slow maturer who is at a developmental level below most children his age. Environmental disadvantages can hinder progress. Absence or moving from one school to another can disrupt learning. Emotional problems can prevent a child's concentrating on school work. Lack of effort and interest can result in unacceptable behavior and poor study habits. A poor pupil-teacher relationship or inadequate teaching which does not meet the individual child's needs can also be detrimental. On the basis of daily work, classroom tests, or standardized achievement tests such as the Canadian Basic Skills Tests, the classroom teacher can recognize the children who need extra help.

The remedial classroom will not be able to meet all the needs of all the children. As Anderson (*CEJ*, May, 1975) states, "Granted, some children need tools we do not have: the emotionally disturbed, the ones with severe learning disabilities, the retarded." In such cases it is necessary to refer the parents with the child to a community agency where a more thorough assessment can be completed. This agency can assist the school in setting up a suitable program for the child. It is important that the parents, principal, classroom teacher, and remedial teacher communicate with a representative from this agency and work together on the recommendations made.

Some children might have problems with the stigma attached to the remedial classroom. In my experience this has not been a major problem. The student with difficulties knows that probably the whole class is

tant it is for the teacher to make use of attending skills and to be sensitive, empathetic, and authentic. If a child has feelings or needs he wishes to express and discuss, the teacher should be ready to listen. The remedial classroom encourages this freedom because the teacher has more time to listen, and there is more privacy than in the regular classroom. These conversations might reveal important information related to the classroom, school yard, or home. In this way the teacher will be able to understand the child better and be more equipped to help him.

It is very difficult to work with the child who is not interested in and does not see the importance of school work at all. It is necessary for this child's attitude to change and he should agree to cooperate before any success in academic work can be achieved. The teacher can challenge the child with *meaningful* material in which he can be *active* and *successful*. The teacher should also be very honest with this child. She should let him feel that he is accepted as a person but that at times his behavior is not acceptable. The child has to realize that he *can* improve, but he must recognize his own responsibility in order to succeed in the remedial program or in his own classroom. Sidonie Brooks (*CEJ*, May, 1975) says that,

As Christian teachers we must demand that our students strive to be the most that they can be. As they strive they will become responsive, contributing Christian persons, and that, after all, is what Christian education is all about.

The child may have to be confronted with his own behavior and the truths of the Bible as related to his

REMEDIAL, continued on page 11.

Although the remedial teacher might deal mainly with academic problems, she cannot separate these from other concerns that might be troubling the child.

REMEDIAL, continued from page 10.

conduct. A child can ultimately not be helped towards a successful solution of his problems until he sees his behavior in the light of God's Word. Jay E. Adams (*Christian Counselor's Manual*, p. 138) asserts that,

The very fact that children are not considered to be morally neutral in the sight of God means that they may be held responsible for making whatever righteous responses that it is possible for a child to make at any given age.

However, it is not the purpose of any confrontation to give the child guilt feelings about himself. The child should recognize the reality of his sins and his heavenly Father's resulting displeasure, but he should also have the assurance that his sins are forgiven in Christ.

There are also children who, as a result of failure, have a very low self-concept. These children depend to a large extent on reenforcement from significant others. A teacher can help a child like this. First of all it is very important to accept the child for what he is. As Anthony A. Hoekema (*CEJ*, Nov., 1976) states,

Children of varying abilities and personalities should be accepted as evidence of God's variety in creation. Children with unusual needs and problems should be viewed as a challenge rather than as an inconvenience.

It is also important to set realistic goals and reenforce the positive for the child with a low self-concept. For many of these children sufficient attention has been drawn to the negative in their past experiences. The teacher should find the child's strong points, and emphasize that the abilities he has are important in service to God. In I Corinthians 12:4-31, we see that God is the source of the gifts we have received, and that we all are important parts of the body of Christ. There is a place and task for all of us, including those who might have less ability.

Each child is an image-bearer of God, and the Christian school is responsible to God for every child entrusted to its charge. Therefore, it is essential that the school do its utmost to meet the varied needs of each student, including the slow learner. The remedial program is one avenue to help fulfill this responsibility.



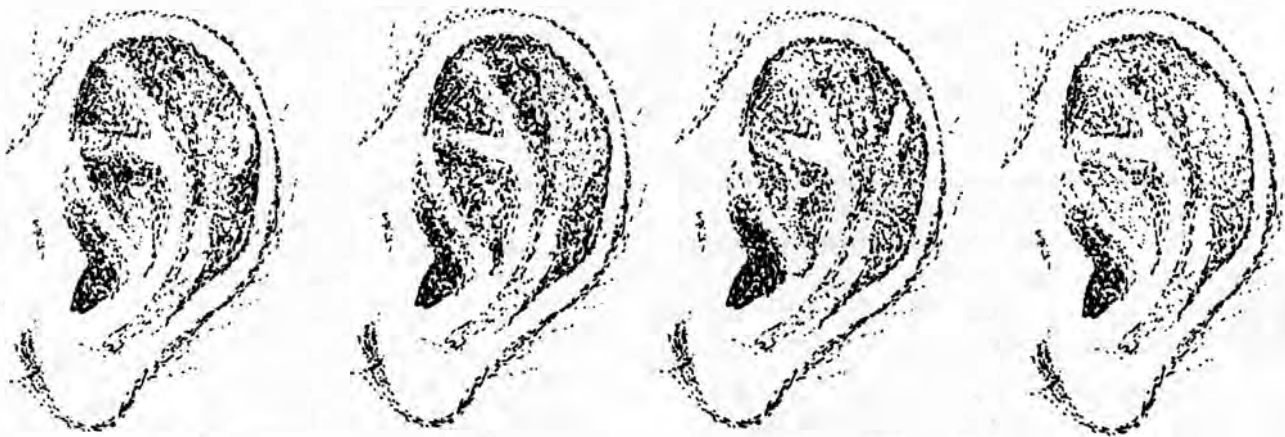
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Diagnosis, the Pupil, and Listening

Marlow Ediger

Good teachers must possess skills pertaining to diagnosing pupil deficiencies in learning. Only after proper diagnosis has been completed can the student be guided in the direction of remedying his problem.

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing represent four vocabularies which are developed in the language arts. Listening is the very first vocabulary developed by infants and it is an excellent way of learning during an individual's entire life span. It is important that the listening skills of students be developed continually during school years.

When learners enter the public schools, they already have had many opportunities to gain facts, concepts, and generalizations through listening. However, they may also have developed some negative listening habits. The learner may not have attained his best achievement at any age level due to his being a poor listener. The teacher, then, has an important responsibility to diagnose reasons for any pupil's limited ability to listen.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN DIAGNOSING POSSIBLE LISTENING PROBLEMS

A specific pupil usually listens poorly for several reasons. Looking at one cause is generally inadequate. Seeking multiple causes would be more realistic. The teacher must be knowledgeable of possible causes and be able to diagnose specific deficiencies in poor listeners before remediation is applicable.

Often a pupil's inability to listen is an external situation rather than a personal deficiency. What are possible causes for a lack of proficiency in listening skills?

1. The pupil may not have adequate background information to grasp the content presently being taught. It is impossible for him to be a good listener. It is imperative that he possess adequate background content if he is to benefit from an ongoing learning activity involving listening for new ideas.

2. Ongoing learning experiences involving listening may seem irrelevant to the learner. Unless a student feels that he is being asked to learn something important to his own life, he may be unable to concentrate on listening.

3. A student may not comprehend the meaning of certain learning experiences which involve listening. The speaker may be utilizing concepts and generalizations which the student finds too difficult to understand. To enable a student to listen well, the content presented should be on his level of understanding.

4. A student may not perceive any purpose in a particular learning experience. To listen well, the pupil must sense that reasons and good purpose do exist for the particular activity he is experiencing. Time spent in having a pupil develop a personal purpose for an ongoing learning activity is time well spent.

5. Individual differences must be provided for in all learning activities involving listening. Pupils must have ample opportunities to engage in a variety of listening experiences. Listening experiences, including use of slides, films, filmstrips, and similar techniques, followed by discussions, are important in providing for individual differences of students.

LISTENING, continued on page 13.

Marlow Ediger is a professor of education in Northeast Missouri State University, Kirksville, Missouri.

LISTENING, continued from page 12.

6. Diagnosing of the student's skill level in the area of word-attack skills involving listening is also important. Phonetic analysis, syllabication, and structural analysis are skills in which students must be or become competent. Following a diagnosis, pupils can be provided with selected learning experiences to help them develop their ability to learn.

7. The teacher must assess the quality of the learning environment in terms of meeting the student's physical needs. Ventilation, temperature, and general physical comfort are important in aiding the pupil to listen well. The psychological environment is equally important. A relaxed, supportive environment should be in evidence for learners.

8. The child's home environment may present problems which make listening to the teacher in the classroom difficult or perhaps impossible. He may not be

able to concentrate adequately on learning experiences which require listening.

9. It is important to diagnose selected pupils to determine any physical inability to hear content properly. What may appear to be poor listening on the part of the learner may actually be deficiency in hearing. Pupils with a hearing loss should be seated as closely as possible to the teacher. Of course, professional assistance then becomes a must.

SUMMARY

The teacher must consider all possible causes for deficiencies in the listening skills of pupils. Only then when the problem is pinpointed, can these deficiencies be remedied. Only then can interesting and meaningful learning experiences be provided to guide each pupil in achieving the realization of his maximum ability to listen.

MEMO to Business Office

Date: Almost every day
To: Business Office
From: Faculty
Re: Unauthorized Nuisances

Because of an increase of memos and other interruptions in the faculty offices, certain policies must be changed in order to keep unauthorized and uncalled-for memos and other nuisances out of our mailboxes. This will allow us and others (so far unnamed) to be better stewards of our space and time.

1. We have installed devices in our mailboxes which will detect unnecessary or poorly written memos, collect them, and send them to the Business Administration Department for cost analysis, or to the English Department to be graded.
2. We would like to ask that if your office needs to communicate with us that you send us, by campus mail, a request for a memo clearance, at least a week before the memo is to be sent. If your request is a significant one, we will send the authorization by return mail. If emergencies arise (and they should not), we will accept calls and will usually respond within a reasonable time.
3. Because of runaway inflation, it has become impossible for us to remain financially solvent beyond the 20th of each month. From now on, it will be necessary that we be paid our full monthly salaries every twenty days, rather than every month. If you find this difficult to do, please sell all of the equipment and personnel used for the manufacture, duplication, distribution, and enforcement of superfluous memos, and apply this rather enormous sum to the faculty endowment.

If you have any questions concerning one or all three of these changes, please contact

The Faculty Complex



Rendering based on an illustration by Pauline Baynes from C.S. Lewis' The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.

When Worlds Collide:

The Humanist-Religious Ethos in Children's Literature

Joseph D. Milner

In an editorial supporting the Right To Life movement, James Buckley recently referred to a California medical ethics bulletin whose defense of euthanasia and abortion dramatizes the battle lines which have been drawn between those who follow the Old Ethic rooted in Judeo-Christian belief and those who ascribe to the New Ethic anchored in man-centered humanism. Susan Sontag has pointed to this same split (though for opposing reasons) in *Against Interpretation*, and the schism has been the continuing concern of neo-orthodox theologians, philosophers of science, and popularizers like the secularist Jacob Bronoski. For these and other wide ranging minds, the struggle between the rational, ethical, man-centered style of the humanist and the mystical, supernatural, faith-centered life of the religious man has occupied center stage.

If, in looking at the field of children's literature, we take on this humanist-religious mind set, we become aware of the dichotomies that pervade all genres of literature.

One might have supposed that such Weltanschauung games would never have been played on the fresh turf of children's literature, but the contest is clearly underway. Sheila Schwartz, in an article in *The Humanist* (Jan., 1976), shows she has recognized the clash and has en-

tered it in championing the cause of the New Ethic in a polemic which celebrates the new adolescent novel for serving the "humanistic function" of making the world "more knowable to young people." And though her salvos have only been vaguely directed at those she refers to as the religious "crazies" from Kanaway County and North Dakota, her consciousness of the fray is apparent. Madelein L'Engle's editors must also be aware of the fracas, for they chose to include on the dust cover of *Circle of Quiet* the fact that she is a "practicing Christian."

If, in looking at the field of children's literature, we take on this humanist-religious mind set, we become aware of the dichotomies that pervade all genres of literature. We have two sorts of mysteries: the puzzle mystery (humanist), like *Encyclopedia Brown*, which always promises us a cognitive solution, and the true mystery (religious) like Boston's *Green Knowe* books with their confounding situations. In nature stories which center on a nostalgia for the land, we find very different world views: celebration of man's cohabiting with nature like Donovan's *Wild In the World* (humanist), and Peck's *A Day No Pigs Would Die*, which speaks of man's stewardship and domination of a divinely created world (religious). These same kinds of dichotomies can be found in fantasy, ethnic, realistic, science fiction, and other genres.

The opposite is expressed in two favorite pieces of children's literature—E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web* and C. S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. They not only clarify the differences among these contending ethos but also heighten our appreciation of these two powerful books. A careful look at them reveals the disparate sources from which their power is drawn. Three points of clear demarcation between two contrasting worlds are apparent:

1. Presentation of other worlds
2. Mode of characterization
3. Sense of death and transformation

Presentation of Other Worlds

Clear differences emerge readily in White's and Lewis' presentation of other worlds in *Charlotte's Web* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. The creation of these worlds, the manner in which they are entered, the separateness of the old world and the other world, and the attitude toward the departure and return to the old world are all remarkable and significant.

It is evident that White is clearly interested not only in the notion of the separate worlds, but also in their oneness. Spots of time exist in which Fern is wholly in the world of family and friends, even though these times are relatively rare in the course of the book. At other times she is so wholly immersed in the world of *Charlotte's web* that Wilbur and the barnyard exist without consciousness of Fern's being necessary. Never-

WORLDS, continued on page 29.

Joseph D. Milner is chairman of the Education Department of Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Shakespeare and Tomatoes, Apartheid and the PCA

Educating the "Global Soldier" for now and then.

Steven Vryhof



When I was in college a professor once asked our class, "What do you like most about Christianity?" I responded, "Warfare."

"Warfare?!" a young lady cried. "How can you say that? The benefits of Christianity are the peace, the joy, the love—not warfare." Of course she was right, and I was very embarrassed. But I tried to explain: I see life, the world, the whole universe as a huge struggle between good and evil, God and Satan, the powers of light and the powers of darkness—a struggle cosmic in nature, eternal in results. (I had been reading too much C.S. Lewis). In a sense, every word, every action, every program, every policy, every *thing* contributes to one side or the other. And by God's grace we have been called to fight on the side which is assured the Final Victory.

What I was trying to say in that college class was that I enjoy being a part of the battle. This "battle" is one of those exciting, yet severely misunderstood metaphors used throughout the Bible, but especially in Ephesians 6. Paul tells us clearly what we are battling:

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (RSV)

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He even tells us what the Christian soldier should wear:

Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace; besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints . . .

(RSV)

Paul, of course, is not using the soldier metaphor to imply that the Christian's battle is in any way violent or militaristic. It should not be used as evidence for a hysterical, Bible thumping, pedantic brand of Christianity. The battle is not fought in an angry, harsh, ill-conceived way. Just look at the weapons: truth! righteousness! salvation! Unconventional weapons to be sure.

The beauty of the soldier metaphor is its assumption that we must take this business called the Christian life with profound seriousness. A soldier takes his calling seriously. He readies his equipment, making sure everything is in superb condition (remember the equipment list?). He hones all his skills, constantly aware that his very life depends on them. His singleness of purpose assures that he always knows what he is about, and he re-

SHAKESPEARE, continued on page 17.

SHAKESPEARE, continued from page 16.

fuses to let himself be distracted or slide into a state of unpreparedness. Ideally, he sees the purpose of his struggle and he is ready to pay the cost with his life. Alert, highly-trained, unswervingly dedicated, the Christian soldier is ready, in Paul's words, "to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Never before has that skillfulness, that endurance, that obedience, that seriousness, been so necessary. We stand on the threshold of a new decade, a decade predicted to be a crucial one in many areas. It is not a time for the Christian soldier to sit back, content in a sophisticated indifference to it all. Rather, it is a time for firm discipline, renewed efforts, and intense prayer. Whether the concern is for saved souls, sound government, freedom from disease, food for the hungry, life for the unborn, a clean environment, society's morality, nuclear disarmament, or responsible business dealings—the Christian had better be at the front of the battle, wherever it is fought. Knowingly settling for less cheapens the cost of discipleship and reduces our witness to insipid tracts and pious platitudes.

The call is for Christian soldiers—serious, skilled, dedicated. But in the Eighties they have a further requirement—they must do battle on a global scale. This "global soldier" operates in a world from Oak Harbor, Washington, to Bombay, India, from South Holland, Illinois, to Santiago, Chile. Because he moves in a world of telecommunications and computers, of foreign policies and corporate law, his skills and knowledge have never before needed to be so complete, so advanced, so sophisticated.

The responsibility of equipping and training this Christian global soldier remains, as usual, on the shoulders of the Big Three: home, church, and (Christian) school. (Let's work to keep TV out of this.) The task is huge; the responsibility great. What specifically should

be done? Although not definitive or exhaustive, here is a list of some concerns:

1. *A more sophisticated knowledge of geography.* Christians should know about their world, not just names and areas on the globe, but ideologies, religion, social conditions, tempered with concern and sincerity, rather than the usual American condescension.

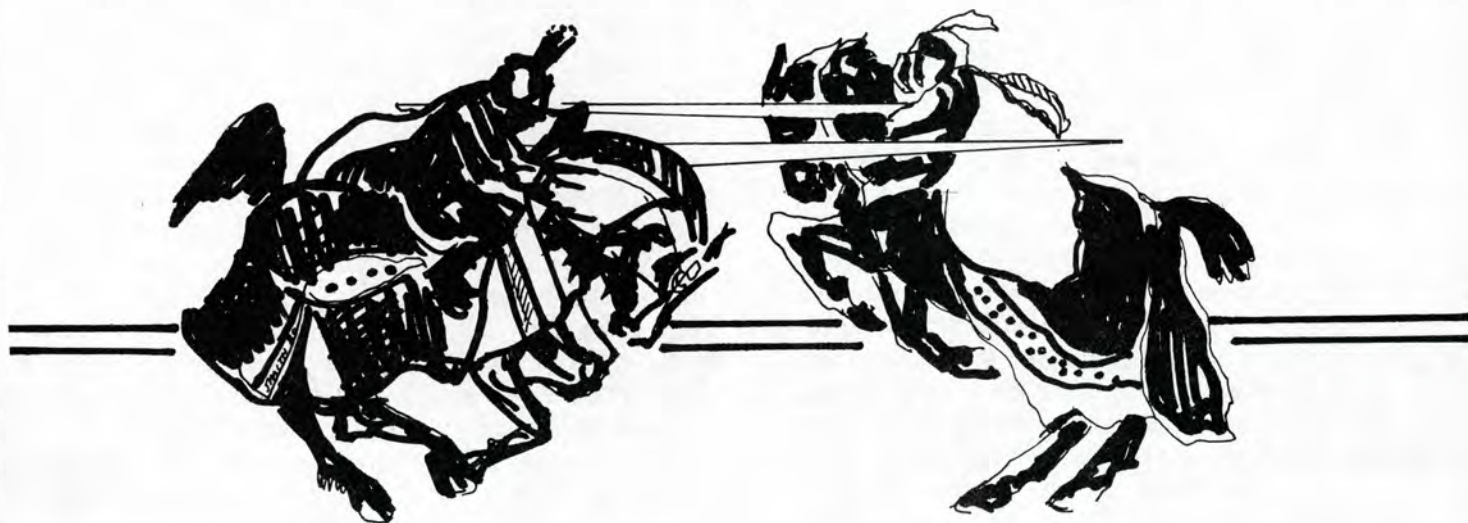
2. *Familiarity with quality news sources.* In a world super-saturated with news, we need the ability to sort out the important from the trivial, real news from pseudo-news. We need responsible objective reporting, not the entertaining schlock of *People* magazine or even the Nightly News. We should read *The Christian Science Monitor* before the *National Enquirer*, listen to "All Things Considered" (National Public Radio News) before viewing TV's hyped-up "SkyCam Report."

3. *A healthy skepticism toward mass media.* We have to defuse the enormous threat of media influence on our values and ideas. Television, radio, advertising, and pop music industries have an incredibly sophisticated and subtle hold on us and our children, especially in the shaping of our material and social/sexual expectations.

4. *A strong socio-political concern.* This is probably the most important, most neglected area of our Christian lives. Genuine Christian faith spawns Christian lifestyle. In our relationship with the poor and distressed, in our decisions about energy and the environment, in our dealings with nuclear arms on an international scale, in our choices of material goods and luxuries, we must follow Christ our example and understand fully the huge responsibility that involves.

5. *An aware, vital, sensitive faith in God.* This is where it all begins. Unless we have put our spiritual house in order, it will be impossible for us to effect any changes in our physical, social, and political houses. This is the foundation. This is the quiet center in a changing, often bewildering, often discouraging world.

SHAKESPEARE, continued on page 18.



SHAKESPEARE, continued from page 17.

I envision a Christian community of believers with a much broader base of involved "soldiers," and a much higher degree of involvement. I am not calling for a community of jet-setters, Think Tank inhabitants, or activists who tack on the name Christian. What I see is a Church of higher caliber Christians. The idea is to be balanced and complete, to be always gathering skills and developing talents. The farmer should read Shakespeare; the college professor should grow tomatoes. The housewife should complain to television networks; the business should denounce corporate corruption. Each life should have the balance between study and action, learning and exhorting, work and recreation, self and service.



SPORTS, continued from page 4.

with a faculty with excessive work loads and, very frequently, with divided loyalties. Sports, after all, are stern masters, and do not readily allow mere casual involvement by coaches. It is their natural tendency to infringe on more significant, academic matters. If, on the other hand, one goes outside of the faculty to recruit coaches, one runs the risk of breaking community and of compromising educational and religious integrity. Thus either solution to the problem brings its own set of difficulties. In short, it seems clear that any school which fields a disproportionate number of teams probably is fostering an unhealthy situation, a situation which cannot serve the best educational interests of either staff members or students. The sports program then has gotten out of hand.

2.

A second obvious question, but one which bears reinforcement nonetheless, has to do with the amount of time sports demands of both the student participant and teacher-coach. It goes without saying that the sun will not miraculously stand still merely because a student is involved in football, basketball, softball, or any other sport. His day remains twenty-four hours long. Any excessive regular time expenditures by students who are team members necessarily involves their slighting academic work—being unprepared for tests and not having done homework. The same kinds of problems pertain for faculty members who also serve as coaches, most of whom, if they are honest with themselves, find conscientious, informed, up-to-date teaching in itself to be tremendously demanding. This, then, would appear to be a second possible indicator of an unhealthy emphasis on sports: Any athletic program which infringes,

The Christian soldier is a *witness* to and *worker* for his Lord Jesus Christ. He affects, he changes, he influences. He writes letters. He shows up at environmental hearings, at City Council sessions, at stockholders' conferences, at PTA meetings. He has neither the time nor the desire to work only to meet the new car payments. He feels guilty watching prime time TV. He has seen the vision . . . of excellence, of quality, of what God intended. He wants to be on the cutting edge of God's Kingdom in this world.

Train with the seriousness and completeness of a soldier, a global soldier in Christ's Kingdom. And may it be said of you as it was said of a character in one of Lewis' novels: "When it comes down to the Final Battle, he is the best one to have on your side."

by virtue of the time it demands, on the central educational task of students and teachers alike, has assumed unhealthy proportions.

3.

Ultimately, however, a third question is probably even more critical than are the above two in determining the role athletics play in our schools and colleges. Any educator-coach or educational institution interested in self-analysis should examine, it seems to me, the choices which are made when the claims of sports and education visibly conflict. In one sense, this question has already been dealt with, for matters of time involvement necessarily include the establishment of priorities. Nevertheless, we do well to confront this issue separately and directly as well, for it is our response when the claims of athletics and academic work openly collide which probably reveals most clearly of all just where our priorities lie.

What happens when, on the college level, national tournaments are scheduled so as to require extended absence from school—or even from final examinations? Do we go or do we stay home? What happens when, in junior high schools or high schools, the best time for faculty meetings also is the best time for practice? Who or what gives way? What happens when a trip for an away game conflicts with teaching a class? Do we leave a bit later or do we cut class? When the best time for giving a test would be on the morning after a "big" game, do we give the test or don't we? When time strictures make it possible to read either only coaching journals or material in our academic disciplines, what do we read? Such questions, it seems to me, are both relevant and fair.

SPORTS, continued on page 19.

SPORTS, continued from page 18.

NEEDED: PERSPECTIVE AND DISCRIMINATION

I am not advocating the dismantling of all competitive athletic programs within Christian educational institutions. I do judge, however, that we ought to recognize sports for what they are, as *fun*, as a potentially healthy outlet for the energies of young people, and, when properly controlled, as good entertainment for those too old or too clumsy to participate themselves. They ought *not* be justified first of all because of their potential for either building the Kingdom or for the moral betterment of participants. Nor ought they, either wittingly or unwittingly, be placed on a par with the school's primary task, which is the education of young lives.

I am, of course, aware of the fact that participation in sports can bring about a widening of horizons. In this sense, it has a generally educational aspect. I would insist, however, that a broad spectrum of non-competitive activities can bring about such a broadening at least as effectively as can competitive sports, and probably without jeopardizing the kind of basic education which can take place *only* in schools.

My plea, then, is for perspective and discrimination, and a growing awareness of our function as Christian educators. I am troubled when a Christian high school coach encourages his or her athletes to attend a secular college first of all because of its presumably superior athletic program. I am troubled when athletes choose their college primarily because of its opportunities in competitive sports. I am troubled by college students who blithely cut two weeks of classes to participate in the "nationals." I am troubled by coaches angry with students who quit their team in order to devote more time to studies. I am troubled by coaches who keep pressing for longer seasons. I am also troubled by constituents who inform me that they are considering withholding contributions to the institution at which I teach because of their displeasure with one of its coaches. What are Christian schools anyway, and who are we as Christian educators? What finally really matters?

It would be grossly unfair to imply that all coaches in our Christian schools and colleges have lost perspective and that all athletes have lost sight of their primary calling as Christians. It has been my pleasure over the years to be associated with a number of coaches on both the high school and college levels who understand what comes first and who communicate that understanding to their team members. At the same time, however, I shall not soon forget the chagrined look on the face of the high school teacher to whom I talked some years ago during basketball tournament time. "It's important that we have this Christian school," he said to me. "Else the basketball team wouldn't have a name."

My concern, then, is for both the quality and integrity of education in our schools, and for an appropriate assessment of the value of athletics. Such concerns do not in any way downgrade the significance of coaches and

coaching. They may imply, however, that the coach's role change significantly, in that, in the midst of a society which has tended to lose perspective in regard to athletics and competitive athletics, he or she will continue to impress on young team members that sports constitute pleasant and challenging diversions, but have no rightful place in the center of one's life. In short, they will self-consciously cultivate perspective in both their own lives and the lives of the young Christians with whom they are privileged to work.

SPORTS: CHARACTER AND COMPETITION

The old justifications for competitive sports, particularly when they are conducted within the framework of an educational institution, have worn thin. Most observers have long ago been disabused of any notion that "athletics builds character."* It is true, of course, that one can learn a good deal about the need for discipline and cooperation from participating in any activity which requires teamwork. But athletics surely have no corner on teamwork, which leads one to wonder whether the values to be gained from participating in sports could not just as well be realized from organized, team activity intended to alleviate areas of human need and suffering. Perhaps the main problem is that neither you nor I might want to enthusiastically "coach" such a team.

We have also been told with some frequency that competitive sports prepare one for life, since life presumably is a big competitive game. I remain unconvinced that the Christian life ever was intended to be a competitive game. Its concerns are quite different. Human achievement, coming in "on top," is what competitive sports are all about, if we are honest with ourselves, whereas the Bible talks about grace. Gaining the ascendancy by proving oneself superior to others is what competitive athletics generally is about, whereas the Biblical dynamic is one of serving one's fellows. Let no one protest that winning is not "what it's all about." The old saw that what matters is not "whether you win or lose, but how you play the game," is quite out of date, as can be seen by the truncated coaching careers of the unsuccessful, also within Christian schools. No one believes such stuff any more. Vince Lombardi said it all with his (in)famous dictum that "winning isn't everything; it's the only thing."

Using the Scriptures themselves or the Christian faith to buttress one's involvement in competitive athletics can, moreover, be somewhat risky. Some years ago I saw in a gymnasium of a Southern high school a poster on which the crucified Christ was depicted. A small insert on the lower left-hand corner of the poster depicted a fourteen or fifteen-year-old in football gear, obviously bone-tired after practice and presumably mulling over

*Of interest in this regard is the article "Sport: If You Want to Build Character, Try Something Else", found in the October, 1971 issue of *Psychology Today*.

SPORTS, continued on page 20.

SPORTS, continued from page 19.

whether or not to quit the team. The caption on the poster read, "He (Christ) didn't quit."

Such use of the Christian faith is, at best, highly offensive. Christ never competed, in the first place. His was a life of total self-sacrifice, not of "winning." In addition, any suggestion that Christ's perseverance in giving Himself in death is somehow on a level with an athlete's persistence in training reveals a mind set which has not made appropriate distinctions between more important and less important human activities. Yet just the other day I heard an athlete proclaim over television that Christ Himself was "a winner" and that He "likes winners." I could not help but think of the New Testament statement that we gain our lives only by losing them. In that sense Christ was the greatest *loser* of all time.

Each time we choose for athletics, we are saying something to ourselves, our students, and our constituents about where our priorities actually lie. And they hear us. Just as they hear us when our obvious enthusiasm for our coaching is not at least matched by an equal measure of enthusiasm for our classroom teaching and for our academic disciplines. Just as they hear us when our frustration over poor play far exceeds our frustration over poor classroom performance. They also hear the message proclaimed by an office which looks more like a training room than like that of a professional teacher. And they get the message when coaches skip a series of classes on days both before and after the "big" game. They hear the message also when boards and administrations tolerate ineffective teaching far longer than they will put up with unsuccessful coaching. Practice teachers hear it too, when in their naive enthusiasm for the teaching profession they enter faculty rooms, only to come to realize that in some of them the only current topic of conversation may be sports. They have told me that they hear it.

And is this what we really want them to hear—all of them, students, colleagues, board members, and constituents? I hope not.

SPORTS: "FOR THE LORD"

Given the fact that we are striving to be Christian educators in a society which is largely uncritical of the monstrous abuses of "big-time" college athletics as well as its own radical overemphasis on professional sports, perhaps we should explore once again how the Christian ought to look at competitive athletics. Such exploration is perhaps overdue, particularly since we have in recent years and months been confronted with hosts of successful athletes who are either running, playing tennis, playing baseball, or whatever else, "for the Lord."

It is totally out of order to question the sincerity of any athlete who professes to be competing on behalf of the Lord. At the same time, I must confess that I am mildly puzzled as to what such statements mean.

It is true, of course, that we are admonished in the New Testament to do whatever we do as "unto the Lord." But to take the "whatever" in this statement to imply that all conceivable human activities which are not immoral are of equal value in the sight of the Lord is to fly in the face of what the Scriptures clearly say on the subject. Playing field hockey is not on a par with helping tornado victims in the deep South rebuild their homes. Nor is sacking an opposing quarterback on a level with helping beggars from the steamy streets of Calcutta die with dignity, even though both the defensive tackle involved and Mother Teresa may share a common commitment to Christ. There are qualitative differences between such activities, and the Christian above all others clearly is called to discriminate. Surely no one can dispute that in the divine ordering of things there are hosts of activities to be done for the Lord which far outweigh in ultimate value engaging in competitive athletics for Him.



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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: A PIAGETIAN PERSPECTIVE

Gretchen Kossler

In the United States, an educational trend has prevailed which maintains that if the proper method is used, a child of any age or stage of development can be taught any subject (Ginsburg & Oppen, 1969). The research findings of Jean Piaget tend to stress the contrary, and they have greatly influenced psychology and education in the twentieth century. Born on August 9, 1896, in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, Piaget originally devoted himself to the study of biology. His interests then turned him to the study of epistemology. His devotion to bridging the gap between the scientific approach of biology and the speculative approach of epistemology have resulted in views of learning which go against the grain of much of twentieth century educational theory and practice (Ginsburg & Oppen, 1969).

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Piaget describes four stages, or periods, of intellectual development: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational (Strommen, McKinney, & Fitzgerald, 1977). According to his findings, certain things cannot be taught before an individual has attained a high enough intellectual level, regardless of teaching method. Piaget maintains that children at any age may learn anything presented to them *at their level*, but unless it is presented at their level, they will learn only so much as their available intellectual structures will permit." (Strommen, 1977, pp. 50-51).

Piaget's findings could have grave implications if incorrectly applied to the area of religious education. Little research has been done regarding the application of thinking processes to religion. Goldman states that

PIAGETIAN, continued on page 22.

PIAGETIAN, continued from page 21.

much of the research done on the developmental stages of religious thinking has been based on "little or no experimental data" (1965, p. 23). He believes, nevertheless, that many of the problems in children's religious thinking are due to limits in their intellectual structures. According to Goldman, much of religious understanding presupposes the ability for propositional thinking, or formal operations. [As defined by Piaget, formal operations are cognitive abilities "which free human thinking from reliance on the concrete and allow him to deal with the abstract, the merely possible, the purely hypothetical and propositional" (White, 1978, p. 97)]. Goldman maintains that poor or premature religious teaching may cause confusion in the individual, delaying their attainment of the formal operational level (1965). He stresses the importance of "child-centered religious education" rather than "Bible-centered religious education" (1965, p. 230). It is the child, not the Bible which should be the main concern:

Where some parts of the Bible may answer his needs at a certain stage of his development these should be used. But if much of it is detrimental to his growth then much of the Bible must be introduced at a later date when he is capable of dealing with it in poetic rather than in literal terms. (1965, p. 230)

Goldman states that children hold two views of the world: theological and scientific. He sees as a major problem of religious education that of bringing these two worlds together "so that when the scientific view gains ascendancy the theological view is not invalidated in the child's experience" (1965, p. 27). He suggests that the attempt to synthesize these two views of the child (i.e., the attempt at religious education) should start at the end of elementary school or during the first two years of secondary school.

Piaget's findings could have grave implications if incorrectly applied to the area of religious education.

Howe also views religious understanding from a Piagetian perspective. He considers "idealized understanding"—formal operational thinking—as imperative in enabling the individual to grasp, use, and reformulate "idealizations which have peculiar significance as constitutive for religious communities and cults" (1978, p. 581). The development of this understanding, according to Howe, "makes possible the reception of any vision of the ideal whatever" (1978, p. 581).

The positions taken by Goldman and Howe regarding religious education become even more interesting when viewed in light of recent research which indicates that not everyone ultimately attains formal operational thinking (White, 1978; Duckworth, 1979). Even if everyone did attain formal operations, it is widely ac-

knowledge that Piaget's levels cannot be applied to specific ages (Goldman, 1968; Piaget, 1968; Strommen, 1977). Although they are sequential, they are attained by individuals at varying times, according to maturational level. Killian reports that "the percentage of college freshmen reasoning at a formal level ranges from [only] 25 to 44%" (1979, p. 347). Consequently, waiting for individuals to achieve formal operations before Bible training would be in some cases a very long wait, and in other cases truly useless.

Waiting for individuals to achieve formal operations before Bible training would be in some cases a very long wait, and in other cases utterly useless.

Christian education has been influenced by Piaget's theories on cognitive structures. Allison (1977), Beers (1975), and Wakefield (1975) stress the importance of knowing the child in order to teach the Bible effectively. They recommend teaching concrete concepts and teaching by experience. Beers presents a "Guide to Doctrine for Different Learning Levels" (1975, pp. 138-145). He maintains the importance of recognizing that the child is not just a "little adult" (p. 145), but rather, he has unique learning needs and capacities. Yet Beers does not recommend withholding Bible teaching from the child at any level. On the contrary, he states that although some Biblical concepts are beyond the grasp of the child, most can be simplified and taught in a way that a child can understand.

Although Christian educators must reject the postponing of Bible education on the grounds of Piaget's developmental theories, they must nonetheless realize the merits of his findings when they are taken in the proper perspective. Jesus himself instructed little children, and admonished his disciples not to hinder the children from coming to him (cf. Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16). He said that in order to receive the kingdom of God we must be as little children (cf. Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17). Yet the writer of Hebrews, addressing himself to certain believers, acknowledges their inability to learn beyond the basic salvation doctrines. Because of their carnality, they have failed to attain the level of understanding necessary to comprehend the deeper truths of the Word of God (cf. Hebrews 5:13). He further states to his audience that "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age" (Hebrews 5:14a).

Wakefield warns that "Christian educators should be careful not to limit what they think a child can do, because of research by behavioral scientists" (1975, p. 122). However, Piaget's developmental theories, when taken in the proper perspective, can be a tremendous asset to religious teaching. Many of his ideas can be supported scripturally, and thus may be used to increase teaching effectiveness in the areas of content selection and method. Properly applied, they may help Chris-

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tians to fulfill more successfully God's mandate to "Train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6a).

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GIFTED, continued from page 9.

THREE APPROACHES

A. Grouping

Three different approaches have been developed for gifted students, with varying degrees of success (Owen, Blount, and Moscow, *Educational Psychology*, 1978). One is grouping—separating students according to mental ability. There are several problems with such a system. First of all, teachers may be unfairly limiting the aspirations of some students, and may also be wrongly instilling a feeling of superiority in others.

Second, the exchange of ideas between all students is important. It is vital that slower students hear brighter students engage in what Gloria Stronks, assistant professor of education at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, calls "languaging." "Languaging" means verbalizing ideas, putting ideas into words. It is equally true that brighter students can benefit from hearing ideas from slower students.

Finally, identifying the gifted creates problems. Who makes the decision? Students, parents, teachers, or the administration? On what basis? Grouping is diametrically opposed to a personal goal (one which I hope all educators share) of individualizing education as much as possible within the classroom setting.

B. Acceleration

Another program for gifted students involves acceleration—skipping grades, combining two years' work in one, or taking summer courses. Acceleration overlooks the very real possibility and the probability that a student's emotional maturity may not equal his mental level. The student may not be ready to socialize with

older children as peers and will very likely resent being separated from his friends and classmates. Older classmates might not accept him either.

C. Enrichment

The third suggestion is enrichment—making special provisions for the intellectually gifted in regular classrooms. These provisions may include college-level courses taken in high school, advanced classes, seminars, and independent study. According to two educators, the objectives of enrichment are: to challenge the full use of abilities; to broaden the base of knowledge; to deepen understanding; to increase the level of skills; to develop a love of learning; to inculcate desirable methods of learning, thinking, and sharing; to encourage initiative; and to give play to creativity (Cutts and Moseley, *Teaching the Bright and Gifted*, 1957).

Wise enrichment can give the bright child opportunity to specialize in line with his particular interests and abilities. General activities which can lead to learning through enrichment include: use of the senses; reading; experimentation; building models—"the concrete expression of abstract thought"; creation—"the acme of the learning process"; and interviewing those actually doing the things in which the child is interested. Like Stronks, Cutts and Moseley emphasize the importance of languaging. Through talking, the gifted student "learns that a group is more than a sum of individuals and that a group working together has better ideas and makes fewer mistakes than even a gifted person working alone" (Cutts and Moseley, 1957).

Enrichment provides greater potential for students than grouping or acceleration because it keeps them in the regular classroom, while individualizing as much as

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possible. A gifted student, after all, is more like his average classmates than unlike them, in the same way that a handicapped student is more like normal students than he is different from them.

Unlike blacks, women, and the handicapped, the gifted have had no legislation enacted especially to aid them, and many schools make no special provisions for them.

But, like the handicapped, the gifted are special students who require special attention to make their education the most beneficial it can be. Unfortunately, gifted students may be bored by much of what goes on in the regular classroom and may need extra projects or assignments to keep them content—and quiet.

Teachers seem to worry about expecting too much from students; the result is that meaningless diplomas have been given to high school graduates who cannot read or write. Teachers have permitted the poorer students to set the standards in schools. This has resulted in mediocre education for everyone. Belatedly, some states (such as Florida) are reacting by requiring students to pass minimum competency tests before they graduate. Similarly, the back-to-the-basics movement is a delayed reaction to the 1960's almost-anything-goes attitude to education that unfortunately still persists in many schools.

ACTIVITIES

One good classroom technique to stretch the minds of gifted students is dramatics. Sandra Consentino, a teacher of the gifted (Fine, *Stretching Their Minds*, 1964), says, "Gifted children like to act, to perform, to be 'on stage.' Other youngsters are embarrassed and self-conscious when they must perform in front of a group. Gifted children like the impossible; average children are far more comfortable with the realistic. Gifted children can be ridiculously silly without embarrassment."

Good teaching is being done when every child—gifted, average, or dull—is given a reasonable opportunity to develop his own unique abilities.

Another way to keep gifted students interested is to study current events through newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Alan Wheelock (Fine, 1964), uses *The New York Times* as a daily textbook. Benjamin Fine, who worked for many years with the *Times*, calls the newspaper a "daily lesson in effective use of the English language."

Yet another means to stimulate the gifted is through "extra-class activities" such as clubs; field trips; hearing outside speakers on topics of interest (use community resources); utilizing special facilities, such as learning

centers; enrolling in extra electives; making contacts with other gifted people in the community; and in serving both school and community. "While all pupils in a school need the development of such extra-class activities, gifted pupils especially often find in them outlets for their creativeness and originality. They find, as well, the satisfaction of recognition and achievement" (Laycock, *Gifted Children*, 1957).

The question teachers must ask themselves with dealing with all students is not "What can I teach them?" but rather, "What can they learn, and how can I best help them learn it?" This approach follows both Benjamin S. Bloom and Jerome S. Bruner's theories of learning.

SUMMARY

To summarize, our goal for education of the gifted should be to help each student achieve his maximum potential, not to turn out a mass-production assembly line of automatons. In a certain sense I disagree with Jefferson, who, although he saw the benefits of special education for the gifted, still seemed to sublimate individual needs to the "larger" goal of serving society. Why give special help to the gifted when they seem so capable of independent learning? he would wonder. To help them learn to expect and to achieve their best, we must reply.

Enrichment provides greater potential for students than grouping or acceleration because it keeps them in the regular classroom while individualizing as much as possible.

What are the implications for the classroom teacher? "A teacher can never better distinguish himself in his work than by encouraging a clever pupil, for the true discoverers are among them, as comets amongst the stars." One of the world's great scientists and teachers, Carolus Linnaeus, said that over 200 years ago (Cutts and Moseley). Laycock (*Gifted Children*) says, "The teacher does mold the nation's future. Having a share in developing the potentialities of gifted children is the greatest reward that any teacher can hope to achieve. Hindering the flowering of a gifted child's genius is, on the other hand, the greatest possible evidence of failure for any teacher."

This means the giftedness of the student must be matched or bettered by the creativity of the teacher. Only a very few of the multitude of methods and activities which can be used for teaching gifted children are listed. What will be the result if the gifted student is not challenged? One tragic possibility will be that the student will become "bored with everything he has to do and with everyone with whom he comes in contact and he shows he's bored and that's that" (Cutts and Moseley, 1957).

Media Review



Frederick Nohl

The creative team of John and Mary Harrell have done it again. This time they've authored an exciting multimedia package devoted to reviving the art of storytelling in school and church.

Basic to the package, entitled *To Tell of Gideon*, is a 64-page paperback containing photo essays, a 7-inch LP with storytelling examples, and chapters headed as follows: The Lore of the Storyteller; The Storyteller's Treasury; The Shape of a Story; Preparing a Story; Telling the Story; Music, Poetry, and Psalms; Some Theological Reflections. An optional cassette tape is also available; included are 90 minutes of additional storytelling examples and a discussion about storytelling in education.

Whether your forte is Christian education or worship, whether you deal with children, youth, or adults—this package deserves your study. Order from the authors at Box 9006, Berkeley, CA 94709. The soundbook is \$8.00, the tape \$6.50; both postpaid in the United States.

A healthy view of death is offered in *The End Beginning*, an 8½x11-inch, 32-page paperback for primary children. Using a minimum of words, author Margaret Herder parallels the "death" of a tree in winter with the death of a human being, often at the end of a long life. Just as the tree rises to new life in the spring, so the dead person's soul rises to new life with God, there to grow and bloom "in the beauty of a spring that will never end."

The book is distinctively Christ-centered, noting both Jesus' Easter triumph and His promise to prepare a place for us. Adding much to the book's appeal are Sue Peebles' simple, colorful, and well-integrated illustrations.

Frederick Nohl is a senior editor of NURSING80, a monthly professional journal for nurses published by Intermed Communications, Inc., Horsham, Pennsylvania.

tions. To order copies for your classroom or a young friend, write Choristers Guild, P.O. Box 38188, Dallas, TX 75238. \$1.85 each.

One of television's more durable personalities has been Fred M. Rogers, host of the popular children's program, "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." Now, with the help of Judson Press (Valley Forge, PA 19481), Rogers has converted some of his many talents into an appealing, uplifting soundbook entitled *Many Ways to Say I Love You*.

Interestingly, the book is directed to Christian "people who care about children." This doesn't mean, however, that parents, teachers, and others will want to keep the book to themselves. Most will certainly want to share its songs and pictures, if not also its brief text, with the young children they love.

Rogers weaves his comments around seven of his songs, each of which confronts one or more childhood realities. Thus, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" speaks of reaching out for friendship, while "What Do You Do?" provides constructive alternatives for children who feel so mad they could bite. Freedom and truth are the big issues in "The Truth Will Make Me Free," which encourages children to admit when they're sad or angry.

A full music score for each song is included in this 32-page, 8½x11-inch paperback. Also included is a 7-inch record featuring Rogers singing the songs. The whole can be yours for \$3.95.

Except for very young children, I'd have real trouble teaching a religion class without maps. And not just maps of the Holy Land, either. For the church is everywhere, and who knows when we'll need to pinpoint its past or present actions in San Francisco . . . or Saskatchewan . . . or the South Pacific?

Such realities make maps a must in Christian education, especially for students from grades 3 or 4 through adult. And that includes not only detailed wall maps and globes, but also desk-

MEDIA, continued on page 26.

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MEDIA, continued from page 25.
size outline maps that can be slipped into overhead projectors or handed to students for special assignments.

Fortunately, these last maps are easy—and inexpensive—to come by. One good source is Hayes School Publishing Company, 321 Pennwood Ave., Wilksburg, PA 15221, which offers a worldwide variety in three different 7x10-inch formats: preprinted, spirit-duplicating, and transparency.

Preprinted maps, for example, are available for the world, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America, and 24 states ranging from Arkansas to Wisconsin. Each map is packaged in sets of 25, which list for \$1.00.

Also available are five separate books of outline maps showing the continents, the Western Hemisphere, Europe, Africa, and Asia. The books covering the continents and the Western Hemisphere come as spirit-duplicating masters only (\$2.50); the book covering Africa, either as masters only (\$2.50), or as masters plus transparencies (\$7.00). The same two forms are also

available for Europe and Asia, as is a third: transparencies only (\$5.50).

For more information, write Hayes and ask for their latest teaching aids catalog. Or, if you're in a hurry, call them at 412-371-2373 or 371-2374.

For a sure-fire discussion starter at your next parent education session, try Dan McLaughlin's animated color cartoon, *Claude*. Though only about three minutes long, this provocative little classic says more about the generation gap than most longer productions, film or otherwise.

Football-headed Claude lives in a fancy house with his parents, both of whom are convinced their son is a total failure. But Claude ignores them, having better things to do building a small black box. At film's end, the box is complete, and the way Claude puts it to use is, well, most discussable.

Many film libraries carry this reel, usually for a \$15.00 rental. You can also rent or purchase (\$100.00) it from the producer, Pyramid Films, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

Do you have a course on the Psalms coming up? One you'd like to teach with just a bit more than ordinary flair?

If so, a helpful resource will be Frank Hillebrand's stereo album, *Long Way Home: Songs of the Living Psalms*. Included are folk-style adaptations of Psalms 4, 23, 42, 43, 63, 72, 103, 121, 126, 127, 128, 131, 136, and 137. You could use the songs to introduce, summarize, or otherwise counterpoint your lessons.

The album is available for \$6.00 from Alba House Communications, Canfield, OH 44406. A cassette version is also available at the same price, as is a guitar-choir book (\$1.50).

Like it or not, any good hymnal is always in process. One that makes no pretense of being otherwise is *Sisters and Brothers, Sing!* Already in its second edition, it contains a Feedback Sheet which enables users to tell co-editors Sharon and Tom Neuffer Emswiler what might be done to prepare an improved third edition.

A special hymnal feature is the exclusive use of selections containing inclusive, *i.e.*, nonsexist, language. As the introduction states, the music "consciously recognizes the *whole* people of God—sisters and brothers together. It also refuses to allow us to box God into narrow sexual identifications. Instead, we are challenged to expand our consciousness of who God is and how we are called to relate and respond to God."

The hymnal's 130 songs are grouped into seven categories (e.g., Praise and Prayer, Confession and Assurance). Some of the songs are hand-printed originals, others are the work of established contemporary composers, such as Avery and Marsh, Joe Wise, and John Ylvisaker. Most songs have a folk flavor, though other styles are also represented.

Thirty-five pages of worship resources and guitar helps add to the hymnal's value.

Schools and churches may order copies from the Wesley Foundation, 211 N. School St., Normal, IL 61761. Price: single copy, \$3.50 plus \$.50 postage; ten copies, \$25.00 plus \$2.00 postage. Annual supplements to the hymnal are promised at \$2.50 each.

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A CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT FILM

*Author: Galen H. Meyer
Christian Schools International,
1979, 54 pp.*

*Reviewed by
Robert L. Otte
South Christian High School
Grand Rapids, Michigan*

"A lesson plan in a can."
"People go to movies just for fun."

"Film study is a Mickey Mouse course for students who can't hack college prep courses."

These are all common attitudes toward the film and film study. But these same attitudes are simply not realistic for two reasons. First, the film is a real part of present day culture, and, as such, exerts a great influence on people. Second, many high school students who lack critical standards see many films. Therefore, Galen Meyer's book, *A Christian Looks at Film*, is an important contribution for those wishing to include film study in the high school curriculum, but who often do not because they do not know how.

Meyer takes very seriously the recommendation of the Synod of his church, which said, "Christians should become sensitive to what is good and evil in movies. Christians must engage in constructive critiques of movies and learn how to evaluate them from a Christian point of view." (p. 27).

The book, which is designed to be a nine-week course, contains a series of lesson plans for the study of eight feature-length films. Some of these lesson plans are simple, like "show the second reel of . . .," but others are more complete, with full explanations for discussion. Anyone using the films Meyer suggests will find the notes useful and creative.

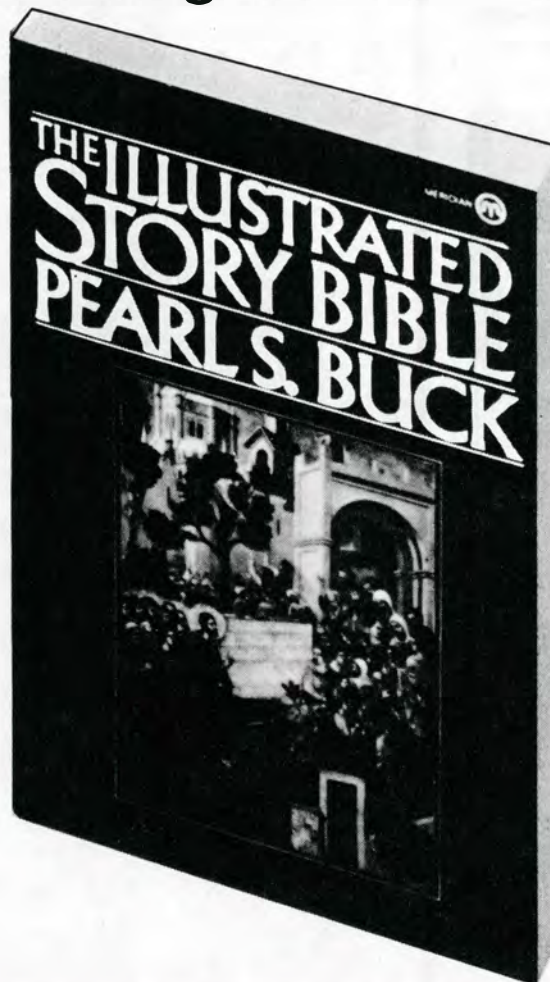
The appendix to Meyer's book contains three parts. The first part contains notes and questions on the textbook

which the students are instructed to read on their own, allowing class time to be reserved for viewing and discussing the films. The second part is a summary of the Christian Reformed Church

Synod's discussion concerning the film. The third part is a bibliography, which needs updating, the most recent book having been published in 1974.

BOOKS, continued on page 28.

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BOOKS, continued from page 27.

For those looking for direction on teaching film study in the high school, reading Meyer's book should provide a very solid educational experience. The course is extremely well organized, so tightly organized, in fact, that one wonders what the author would do in the event of a "snow day."

However, a couple of questions concerning this program do arise. First, isn't renting eight feature length films costly? Sometimes local libraries might have films, but will that be true everywhere? The author has not opted for shorter films which might be less expensive and easier to obtain. Second, Meyer places a heavy emphasis on writing, with the stress being on grammatically correct writing. One might question the necessity of that much writing in a course of film study.

However, Meyer's book is an excellent guide to a Christian perspective on film study. Film is part of culture, and the Christian ought to take it seriously.



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2. That Christian education seek to educate the student about the world that was, that is, and that ought to be; and that this education must be informed by competent scholarship and scripturally-directed thought.
3. That Christian education must depend on the entire Christian community for leadership, support, and involvement.
4. That Christian education nurture the student's growth as a physical, social, creative, intellectual, moral, and spiritual person.
5. That *The Christian Educators Journal* promote this vision of Christian education through both theoretical and practical editorials and articles.
6. That *The Christian Educators Journal* serve primarily those in Canada and the United States who are professionally interested in the continuing development of philosophical and pedagogical perspectives in Christian education.
7. That *The Christian Educators Journal* welcome contributions that will help define and refine our thinking and practice as Christian educators.

Approved June 3, 1978

theless, it is apparent that that other world takes shape only in her imagination and, without Fern's imaginations, exists only as fat rats, uneven webs, and loud geese.

Thus we see that though the birth of Charlotte's children and Wilbur's stay of execution have made a perpetuation of the story possible, it must end because Fern, like Puff the Magic Dragon's creator, Jackie, has entered the world of Henry Fussy's Ferris Wheel. Such a barnyard world is sparkling and bright as long as the childlike imagination can nurture it, but it becomes insubstantial without such human generative power. This power of course is exactly what White is hoping to kindle or keep alive in his readers, so that they may raise the curtain on more numerous fantasy shows of their own.

Through the wardrobe the children enter the land which is a permanent fixture although it is sometimes open to them and at other moments barred from their vision. Accessibility and existence are clearly different matters. The land of Narnia is neither of Luch's making nor is it a vision shared by the four children. It has, in Lewis' perspective, a substance which endures and which is impervious to time's onslaughts.

Secondly, the matter of entrance is a point of differentiation; although in *Charlotte's Web* the access to this world lies in Fern's hands, this is not true of Lewis' world. Because the transformed barnyard world is the product of Fern's imagination, willing suspension of disbelief is necessarily the result of inner environment. Thus, though Fern has some power over her stay in the world of noble animal gestures, Lewis' children have none. At times the passageway is open and inviting; at other times the firm wooden back of the wardrobe is solid and immovable. The children grope and stumble their way into the magic kingdom when access is permitted. Entrance is not, as it is in Fern's case, a result of the children's attitudes. Although Edmund, skeptical and rational, thinks Lucy's account of Narnia is "all nonsense," while Lucy is more open and accepting, both are given passage to this new world.

The separateness or division between the two worlds is the third significant point of differentiation. Fern and the reader become entangled in the world of Charlotte's terrific web, but the animal talk and the life-saving spinning are always superimposed on the fabric of everyday barnyard smells and sounds. The imagination always transforms the reality to new heights, but the dreams are made of the soft earth. And though Fern can become almost wholly absorbed in that world she does answer familial calls from the old world. In contrast, the Narnia world is separate and unrecognized in the world on the near side of the wardrobe. Though Lucy is persecuted by Edmund for holding fast to that "nonsense," both of them, for distinctly different reasons, remain believers during their stay at the professor's house with

Peter and Susan. Once in that other kingdom for a lengthy period, they forget the world left behind. Only by "chance" do they ever venture out of Narnia; nothing in their own dispositions led them to the decision to return.

Of final significance is the attitude directly expressed or implied toward the departure from these other worlds. In Fern's case we sense the wisdom of her mother who suggests that some day an end will come to the barnyard reveries. We seem to be told that this is a part of the natural process, that growth and development demand Fern's putting aside childish ways. Henry Fussy has come for her as inevitably as did Emily Dickinson's caller in "Because I Could Not Stop for Death." There is neither wailing nor lament, nor is there prospect for her return to this golden age. Fern has matured in this respect just as Wilbur has changed from self-centeredness to compassion. When the once-royal quartet tumbles out of the wardrobe, they, the wise professor, and the reader know they will be in that realm many times more.

So in all four aspects of this major difference between White's and Lewis' visions, it is clear that a serious philosophical difference separates and distinguishes their dramatizations. The humanist world feels that imagination is the "necessary angel" which has had to hold the ground left by faltering religion in a world of science. From this perspective the creation of other worlds is wholly human, dependent on nothing outside of man. Lewis' religious perspective is in every respect different. It argues for the solidity of this other world, one which is in no way dependent on man for its existence. It is, moreover, a world that (in orthodox Christian theology) we are bid into rather than one entered into through the sheer force of will. Once entered, this other world becomes *the* world and, even if left for a time, continues to exist in a compelling way for its former visitors.

Mode of Characterization

White's and Lewis' mode of characterization is heavily influenced by their clearly different perspectives on man. White fills Zuckermann's barnyard with a full spectrum of characters. Idiosyncrasies and foibles are mixed with virtues and graces so that characters do not give the impression of being on the side of either evil or righteousness. Templeton is a pretty bad sort, worse than the rest, but with the proper incentives, he can work for the good cause. Charlotte seems almost too airy to be mortal, yet she has her officious and pretentious side. All of them are accepted for what they are. If one had to stretch them out from bad to good they would scatter evenly across a spectrum rather than bunching up at one end or the other. (This could be said as well of the "real" people in White's book.) If they did bunch anywhere, it would be at the center.

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Lewis' Narnia folk are not so arranged. The goats and the sheep are clearly separated. The workers of evil are under full control of the White Witch and cannot help but serve her hellish ends. The good folk are just as clearly good, even under threat of her spiteful power. In the face of the awful power and sacrifice of King Aslan, the evil ones revile him, spring on his helpless, bound form and pummel him to death. The Beavers stand on the side of good, though they are fully aware that their home and their lives are endangered. Even the four children are set apart as good and bad, with Edmund's state being clearly marked by the separation from the other three and the followers of Aslan.

In definition of character clear differences also emerge. For White's characters there is a humanistic sense of growth or development as in Wilbur's movement from an egocentric, whining young shoat to an empathetic, mature pig whose noble gesture gives Charlotte new life in the barnyard. This steady growth is clearly the product of his own striving and the even more significant tutoring of his wise mentor Charlotte, and a little help from his friends. Wilbur's plodding slowly toward his pig potential has White's total affirmation. It is a model of what man in community can achieve.

Lewis develops characters fully but does not celebrate gradual change and growth and the power of human change agents as does White. Pauline conversions and superordinate interventions are the rule in the kingdom of Narnia. Though he has been brought into the camp of Aslan, Edmund retains his basic personality when he becomes King Edmund. Most of the other figures do not move at all, but grow older within the character mold already portrayed in the early moments of the tale. They stride the stage much more like morality play figures than members of a contemporary psychological drama.

The lead characters in the two stories offer an exaggerated extension of this same contrast. Appropriately, Wilbur is more like the modern anti-hero in that he is not asked wholly to transcend his personality in his noble gesture at the fair, and he does not grow to enormous heroic proportions in the book. A touch of self-satisfaction is demonstrated in his desire to bring Charlotte's progeny back to the barnyard, for they would perpetuate his beloved friend wherever they spring forth. Aslan and his gift of self are of another magnitude or dimension. He is beyond heroics; he gives *all* for the needy but undeserving. A measure of the difference is found in the fact that a reader can identify with Wilbur and his care, while he is only able to respond to Aslan in astonishment and awe.

An adjunct of this same point of contrast is the terrible burden of responsibility for self definition and meaning making which is placed on Wilbur and his friends and which Lewis' four children and their cohorts

do not bear. For Wilbur it is a happy burden in which he is daily forestalling death, but there is no essence or overarching construct of which he is conscious or to which he is committed. Lewis' quartet in contrast are, like Moses, not up to the assigned task. They cannot rely on their own maturation or on any help that their friends might give. Though Mr. Tumnus and the Beavers come to the children's aid in a most admirable way, their efforts are wholly futile and would end in utter failure but for the intervention of Aslan. Only his gifts offer the children sufficient strength for the mighty foray with the forces of evil.

In a broad view of the two writers' use of character then, we see in White the humanistic tendency to see life as an array of forces and folk neither wholly malevolent nor beneficent, but spotty mixes of a very mortal kind. Even his heroes are just plain folk occasionally able to rise to the noble gesture. Lewis presents life as a painful struggle between good and evil. Ironically though, his good folk are not self-sustaining or self-directed, but must look to higher sources for strength to endure against the satanic forces.

Sense of Death and Transformation

The final ground of difference is perhaps the most significant: Death and Transformation. What death represents to the peoples of White's and Lewis' worlds and how that knowledge moves them sets these authors in two distinct camps. Death is a finality with which White's characters must grapple. Charlotte seems to have a good understanding of the cycle of nature, and sensing her death, prepares for it. She constructs her egg sac and even spins one last life-preserving web for Wilbur, knowing that those life-giving acts are depleting her own strength. Wilbur is much less able to cope with the dominion of death through the early months of his existence. He crumples under the withering news from the sheep that his fattening period has an all-too-dreadful purpose. The mechanism which makes the whole tale proceed is in fact the desire to forestall Wilbur's fate. Lewis' characters do not have this same consciousness or dread of death. They seem to quail at the evil of the White Witch rather than at the death blow her wand can land. They seem to take comfort that death shall have no dominion because of the assurance that Aslan is coming. The reader, too, admires the courage of Mr. Tumnus and the Beavers but knows that they *must* work for good and so has no real fear for their ultimate fate. Lewis makes the frozen, statuary death of the White Witch's victims seem less than permanent; what is frozen can always be thawed.

Transformations and perpetuations are the stuff of White's world while thaws and reconstitutions are the core of Lewis' way. Here lies the most telling distinction between the two writers. Wilbur and the reader are offered solace in the ongoing essence of Charlotte in the

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five hundred odd newborns that Wilbur awaits so longingly and greets so lovingly. Wilbur himself is a part of Charlotte's eternal life in that he carries her memory and, even more essentially, replicates, in his loving gesture, the most basic character of their relationship. This very human perpetuation, and the prospect that Charlotte is, in the decay of death, returning to a more fundamental relationship with the eternal quality of Nature, are the best hopes White offers for a life beyond life. Lewis offers something else. Aslan gives himself up to a very real and grisly death and yet as the essential Aslan overcomes those bonds of nature. After his reconstitution, the full new life which was hinted at by the thawing snow is given to all of his followers. Life stands against death; evil is sundered. Tumnus lives to fight again and the other unfrozen lion stands by Aslan's side exuberant to be one of "Us Lions."

So the two books stand as mighty opposites in philosophical or theological perspective. Both are truly fine children's books, but each can be made the more powerful when harnessed in tandem with the other. For whether children or any other readers consciously articulate the fundamental differences presented in these two tales or merely intuit them, they will grasp their reality all the more fully when they can perceive them in the way Niels Bohr saw the complementarity of the subatomic world which underlies the reality in which both books reside (Walter Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science*). Those readers who apprehend reality wholly as does White need also to comprehend that reality which Lewis presents so beautifully, and those who are clearly satisfied with the transcendence of Aslan's kingdom need to be pulled back into the sweet smelling dung of Wilbur's world.

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