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EDITORIAL

"This Classroom Has Been Declared a Disaster Area . . ."

A few months ago the school building in which I began my formal education disappeared. It was literally lifted off its foundation and strewn through southern Iowa cornfields, along with thirty tables, a hundred chairs, and other furnishings. A ruthless Midwestern tornado cut its path through that familiar landmark, making havoc of the orderly structure in which the beloved Miss Hook had early inspired me to read. Remnants of that classroom might even have landed in Wisconsin, it was reported. Iowa's Governor Branstad toured the community and declared it a disaster area.

How many teachers, without the governor's statement, could have their classrooms declared disaster areas? How many have secretly wished for a tornado as a legitimate excuse for the disorder that exists there? Is there an honest teacher in the profession who can claim total immunity to the problem of classroom mismanagement?

Even highly reputable, experienced teachers can recall a few classroom nightmares when control went awry. No education class can adequately prepare a student teacher for the reality of managing that first classroom effectively. I believe classroom management hinges, to some extent, on the course content, but more importantly it depends on the teacher's response to students, and that second factor is impossible to accurately predict.

Many educators are grappling with the difficulty of selecting a curriculum which best serves the student. For example, Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, believes that high schools should shape their priorities around a core curriculum comprising two thirds of the total units required for graduation. Mortimer Adler's *Paideia Proposal* advocates a thorough one track general/liberal education for all students. California's Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig has appointed committees in seven disciplines to develop stringent model curriculum standards as guidelines for all the state districts.

Christian school curricula differ as widely as those of public schools, ranging from very demanding to very lax. Many Christian educators suggest that heavy doses of heritage literature and skill-emphasis content will shape the students and challenge them to the extent that they will practically "manage" themselves because they are too involved in the material to disrupt a class. Whether or not we agree with this theory, we must remember that curriculum is only one of the agents that helps us avoid classroom disasters.

MUCH has been written, in this journal and elswhere, about teacher attitudes, competence, and confidence. Many times, however, such writings present the ideal and they tend to overlook the frustrations of the real classroom. What do we say to the teacher whose curriculum is well-planned, whose view of the child is wholesome, whose competency scores are superior, but whose classroom is chaotic?

To be realistic, we must also consider the nature of the person, which determines how teacher and students respond to each other. The quality of mutual teacher-student respect seems to have a direct influence on classroom management.

Students and teachers, in Christian schools especially, ought to consider themselves as members in community. Christians in community are called to serve one another. Therefore, teachers ought to provide the students with experiences that demonstrate people helping people as well as people developing individual responsibility. Some teachers demonstrate this idea tangibly by placing their students in group arrangements instead of in rows or at individual study carels. Of course, group arrangement adds responsibility because students can more easily distract other students during individual work. Regardless of physical arrangement, the teacher has the responsibility to control distractions. Each teacher needs to establish the idea that operating in community is a beneficial arrangement as long as members of the group also respect individual needs.

Teachers need to remember that students want order even though they do everything imaginable to disrupt order. I was surprised to overhear a number of my own students express relief that they were required to take assigned seats for lunch as a result of having left food and empty containers in the desks. I should not have been surprised, for I remember from my own school days several instances of relief when order was restored.

The quality of mutual teacher-student respect seems to have a direct influence on classroom management. Students and teachers ought to consider themselves as members in community.

How we restore and maintain order is crucial to continued classroom management. Although the age of the students somewhat determines how we talk with them, for every age level we need to convey that we teach because we love people and because we love to teach.

One of the best ways we can convey that message is by wise use of time. Recalling my early years of teaching, I think I spent too much time telling junior high students what I was planning to teach, how I would do so, and why. By that time, I had lost them. Now I try to whet their appetites a bit first by immediately presenting a motivational activity. Once the students are physically participating, I can involve them mentally as well.

Last school year was the first time in my teaching career that opening day consisted of a full day of classes rather than a half day. Thinking that we would spare our students the tedium of doing assignments the first day, my colleagues and I later discovered that we had all done too much talking about the courses we would teach and too little actual class work. By 3:00 p.m., the major student complaint was boredom: "All we did all day was listen to teachers talk. We didn't even get any books." How much wiser we would have been to use that first day to establish early the idea that we had important work to accomplish and that we would start promptly.

ANOTHER responsibility of the effective teacher is guiding students to think through their actions. I have noticed that some of the most dramatic behavior changes have occurred when students have had an opportunity to state their position about their behavior before the teacher metes out discipline measures. I have known for a long time that writing enables me to organize and clarify ideas. In recent years I have begun to ask students to write out in sentence form exactly what is their involvement in apparent misbehavior, how that behavior affects themselves and others, and how they might improve the situation. I have noticed several positive results: 1) the student feels she is being heard fairly, 2) the teacher's judgement is not affected as much by anger and frustration as by specific facts, 3) the student feels greater responsibility toward the group (or classroom "community"), 4) the student's anger is dissipated by channeling it into a productive activity, 5) the student tends to be more honest and thorough in assessing her involvement, and 6) some very creative essays have landed on my desk!

If the child is too young to organize an essay, a model paragraph (not a short sentence where individual words are copied under each other instead of whole thoughts recorded) may be given the child to copy several times. Although the effect is not quite as great, some of the same benefits can result.

As in society outside of the classroom, misbehavior in class may call for temporary isolation of a student when less stringent measures prove ineffective. Many teachers (and parents) have found a temporary time-out period effective, especially if they can get the child to realize that he is not a hopeless exasperation, but a person who is expected to learn how to work in community. That time-out period must be reasonable in length, however, to assure the child that he is wanted back in the "community" and that he can contribute to the good of the group.

The manner in which the child is asked to withdraw from the group must be one of firm, quiet control, not one of yelled frustration. The child needs to understand his responsibility for his own behavior. He, not the teacher, is the one who has caused his removal from the group. Therefore, he must do whatever is necessary to restore the communal harmony.

My colleagues and I have agonized over the appropriate use of the time-out concept when it comes to the point of extended time that a student is away from class. The procedure must be carefully structured so the student realizes its seriousness and its intent. We have found, on one occasion, that the gradually extended time-out had to stretch to a period of months that a student worked individually with a tutor off the school premises. That arrangement proved to serve both the student and his class to their advantage; yet when the student showed sufficient evidence of change, we also welcomed him back with his classmates so that we could reinforce his improved behavior and attitude.

On such occasions we have established the policy of informing fellow students why a student is separated from the group and how we feel they can encourage that student to make a comfortable return to the group. We answer openly any questions we believe helpful, not only to satisfy natural curiosity, but also to prevent inaccurate and inconsiderate remarks and to curb future occurrences. We pray for the absent student and ask the other students to do so as well. Thus we try to demonstrate the term "firm love."

The methods discussed in this issue by no means address every classroom management difficulty. However, various writers have attempted to show that teachers can cope much more calmly and wisely if they are mentally and spiritually prepared to accept the challenge as well as the responsibility of teaching energetic young people, always realizing that the Source of that kind of strength far outweighs the power of even the most devastating tornado.

LVG

READER RESPONSE

Wants References Cited

First, I'd like to express my appreciation for the recent changes that have taken place in both the appearance and content of the CEJ. The journal has a more professional "feel" to it than it used to.

One thing that I would like to see in the CEJ is a more formal and professional way of referencing citations. I know you do not wish the journal to appear too technical and arcane to its teacher readership but surely it would not be inappropriate for a teachers' journal to provide a concluding list of references to citations made in the body of articles.

I would like to track down some sources but can't do so on the available information. Writing the author seems a tedious option for such a simple matter. Why not append a reference list using a standard journal format.

My last question is about article selection. I note that you have gone to theme issues. Will you still consider articles that may not relate directly to a given theme?

Robert W. Bruinsma
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Although we intend to devote a portion of each issue to a specific theme, we will continue to publish articles not necessarily related to the theme of the issue.

Separation of Church and State?

I would like to respond to the two articles in the February — March, 1984, issue of CEJ, "Should Church and State Be Separated?", by Norman De Jong, and the reply by Gerald Van Spronsen. It seems that both men have overlooked key elements in the debate.

Dr. De Jong has ignored the legitimate institutional aspects of both church and state in reducing both to people. Yes, both are made up of people, and neither would exist without people. But in addition, there are organizational or institutional elements to both. The church has officers, rules of order, laws, forms of admission and exclusion, etc. The state also has officers, rules of order, laws, etc. In the context of the debate over church/state relations (not necessarily in other contexts), it confuses the issue to merely say that "the church is God's people," or that the state is merely every citizen of the state. This leads to Dr. De Jong's frightening diagram on p. 15, showing the church as a subset of the state. This is precisely what our current legislators and legal theorists desire — placing the church under the authority of the state. The first-century church soundly rejected this view (Acts 5:29). A common Roman oath of allegiance was to state, "There is no other name under heaven by which man must be saved than the name of Caesar." Contrast this with Acts 4:12; the apostles surely did not see the church as a subset of the state!

Now to Mr. Van Spronsen. He has ignored the radically religious nature of the state, as do most of those advocating the pluralistic model. To take one example: Mr. Van Spronsen says that the pluralism model allows for a "plurality of religions" and yet "a unity in collectively working toward national goals of peace and justice." How are we to define "peace" and "justice"? There is the "peace" of the graveyard, the "peace" of enforced uniformity as in the Soviet Union, "peace" as merely being "absence of war," or "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." There is "peace through strength," "peace through co-existence," or "peace through surrender." Or take justice. We may have redistributionist justice (forced equalization of wealth), justice of vengeance (Hatfields vs. McCoys), or justice as the faithful, impartial carrying out of God's law. A plurality of religious groups can never arrive at unity in working out "peace" and "justice" in the sphere of civil government. All law is "religion externalized." The pluralistic model would lead to our present-day chaotic pluralistic law — contradictory, incomprehensible law.

What is the answer? With Mr. Van Spronson, we must say that there are separate "spheres" for the institutional church and state. This is very clear from Scripture. Contrary to popular opinion, church and state were separate institutionally in the Old Testament (I Sam. 13:8-14; II Chron. 26:16-23). The institutional church has particular functions, including preaching the Word, administering the sacraments, exercising ecclesiastical discipline, and ordering the worship of the saints. The state also has its own functions, among them the power of the sword (execution — Romans 13) and, in general, the enforcing of God's laws for the civil realm. The state does not enforce all of God's law — it never has. For example, the state, under the Old Testament law, did not enforce the tenth commandment. But there were, and still are, valid areas of enforcement for the civil magistrate; these are defined by God's revelation.

Thus, there is an element of truth in Dr. De Jong's article. Both church and state are made up of people. And people are obligated to serve and obey God from the heart, the center of all of our behavior. People, as they function in the context of the institutional church, are obligated to obey God's Word as it applies to that particular situation. People functioning in the context of civil affairs are obligated to obey God's Word as it applies to that situation. This applies not only to the citizens of the state, but also to the rulers. Not only are citizens to serve God (by being in proper subjection to the "powers that be," for example), but rulers are to serve God in their particular station. They are to see to it that God's Law, as revealed in the whole Bible, is enforced in their particular realm. Remember, the civil magistrate does not enforce all of the Law, only that which God has given to the state to enforce.

Pluralism is doomed to fail, for it implicitly involved the rejection of God alone as Lord. Just as Eve thought she could know good and evil apart from submission to God's special revelation, pluralists think we can know good and evil — justice and injustice, peace and conflict — apart from submission to God's revelation in his inscripturated Word. Eve's approach led to death; pluralism will lead just as surely to the death of our society. There can be no peaceful co-existence between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. If we attempt "detente" with other religions, we are denying our Lord and his claims over all of life. Let us call all men, in every walk of life, to serve our King, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and bow in submission to him!

Rodney N. Kirby
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Appreciate Recent CEJ Issues

Your interesting issue featuring the LD child in the regular classroom marks a milestone in understanding. Thirty-five years ago I begged our Christian schools and Calvin College to make some provisions for meeting the needs of the handicapped and children with learning problems. I — and many parents — were rebuffed.

Today, most educators recognize the need, although the experience and skills to deal with these problems exist mainly in a few special education centers. We see the results of well-intentioned regular teachers and inexperienced special educators.

Your emphasis in this issue will certainly help the cause.

John Kamp
Superintendent
Elim Christian School
Palos Heights, Illinois

We just received the February-March, 1984, issue of *Christian Educators Journal* and I want to commend you for a challenging issue. I started skimming it and could not put it down. I am sharing it with several people here in the office.

Keep up the good work!

Virginia Beddow
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Standard Publishing
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Clarifies Mechanism Perspective

In the February 1984 issue of CEJ you printed my article "World Views in Science Teaching." The minor editorial changes were improvements except at one point where your editing of the original (awkward) wording changed the meaning. Please allow me to explain my intended meaning. The change comes where I am discussing mechanism as an unchristian perspective common in science teaching. Analysis of textbooks has shown that mechanism is the world view projected most often in some biology textbooks. Many phenomena such as heredity (DNA), digestion, and human thinking processes are explained in terms of discrete particles moving through space. Such mechanism is a legitimate explanation for these phenomena if it is limited — not total — and an interpretation — not the reality itself. Our explanations, mechanistic or otherwise, do reflect some layer of reality but are not the way it is.

Herman Proper
Principal
Calvin Christian School
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Robert W. Bruinsma

Children in the Christian School Sinners or Saints?

CHRISTIAN education, especially within the Reformed tradition, has often drawn its rationale from the well-known "Creation-Fall-Redemption" motif. That is, Christian schools have been founded by communities of believers who confess something like the following:

Creation: That humanity and the entire world find their origin, meaning, and purpose in God the Creator and Jesus Christ the Redeemer.

Sin: That humanity, by its original disobedience, broke its relationship with God and caused God's curse on creation.

Redemption: That Christ, the Word incarnate, is the Redeemer who restores the relationship between God and his creation and who renews life through his Holy Spirit.[1]

This confession that God is creator and, through Christ, redeemer of *all* of life is thus also applicable to the human enterprise of education. In fact, education as an aspect of the cultural mandate is seen as a human response to the "restored relationship between God and his creation."

The process of education is also seen by Christians as having a peculiarly *formative* character. It is a means of forming and leading children into obedient cultural responses to the Creator. Because of the formative character of education it becomes extremely important to know what it is that we are forming, i.e., who and what do we conceive the student to be? This question is of central importance because our answer to it will largely determine the nature of our curriculum, i.e., the nature of both the content of what is taught and the methods by which learning is made or allowed to take place.

This article will briefly consider some historical views of the child/student and how these views have shaped school curricula. The article will also point out that, as Christian educators, we may not subscribe to the commonly prevalent views because they are not in keeping with our confession about the nature of humans and God's dealings with them.

IT is, I believe, a fair generalization to state that within Western culture there have been two predominant views about the fundamental nature of human beings. One of these views has Judeo-Christian roots; the other has some root in Greek conceptions of the human person, although its present manifestation is more firmly rooted in the 18th century Enlightenment.

View #1: The Child as Inherently Evil

If we return for a moment to the previously quoted creed we see there this statement about sin:

> Sin: That humanity, by its original disobedience broke its relationship with God and caused God's curse on creation.

This statement reflects the strong stream in Protestant Christianity that has stressed the reality of sin in the human condition. The Belgic confession, for example, speaks of sin as a

> . . . corruption of the whole nature and a hereditary disease, wherewith even infants in their mother's womb are infected, and which (is) so vile and abominable in the sight of God that it is sufficient to condemn all mankind . . .
>
> (Article XV)

This concept of total depravity has been at the heart of much pedagogical activity and, it is fair to say that, in the long history of Western schooling, the frequent beating of schoolchildren was justified by the belief that Satan's evil designs were most clearly evident in the undisciplined lives of young children.

From the early medieval era right through to the 17th century, life was often short and harsh. It was marked by intermittent outbreaks of plague and unremitting political and religious warfare, of which the Thirty Year's War (1618-1648) in Germany can indeed be viewed as a culminating holocaust. Life certainly seemed to afford ample evidence of God's wrath on mankind. Education in this context was often viewed as the structuring of carefully built defenses against the exercise of a naturally destructive, ignorance-preferring human nature. It was also a means of warning, especially the young, about the fragility of human existence and the need for God's grace. So, for example, early American reading books called *primers* (because they contained primary moral teachings) used verses such as the following as subject matter for learning to read:

> I in the Burying Place may see
> Graves shorter there than I;
> From Death's Arrest no Age is free
> Young children too may die;
>
> My God, may such an awful Sight,
> Awakening be to me!
> Oh, that by early Grace I might
> For death prepared be.[2]

What effect does this view of human nature as depraved have on the school—both on its structural organization and its curriculum? Generally speaking, it results in a school which emphasizes *control.* This control exhibits itself in the structuring of institutional restraints which are seen as important defenses against students' natural inclinations to

evil. There will exist in the school a "law-and-order" orientation and a curricular emphasis on mastering facts and skills which society needs for its continuance. At the most extreme, humans are seen as evil creatures whose institutions, though incredibly frail, are the only structures holding in control the beastiality that threatens to overwhelm civilized life at every turn.

View #2: The Child as Inherently Good

The opposing view of human nature as essentially good has its roots primarily in the 18th century Enlightenment. During this period, the traditional reverence with which men approached the texts that represented the foundations of European civilization was seriously eroded (e.g., Bible, Aristotle), accompanied by increasing indifference to traditional religion. The new age dawning was one of optimism characterized by confidence in reason and natural law; by a faith that humanity was at last visibly freeing itself from the superstitions, prejudices, and blind cruelty of the past. Educated men gradually came to believe that they were entering upon what they described as a *siecle de lumieres*, an *Aufklarung*, or an "enlightened" era. Perhaps Jean Jacques Rousseau represents the culmination of this view as it applied to education. In his tremendously influential work, *Emile*, he describes his view of how a person should be educated from birth to adulthood. Rousseau's fundamental presupposition is that human nature is in itself basically good; it is only external experiences which can warp the child's inherent goodness. Ever since Rousseau there has existed in Western educational thought and practice, alongside the previously described pessimistic view, the optimistic view of the child. With regards to the curriculum, this presupposition leads to a range of positions that favour lack of constraint on children, and trust in their instincts. That is, if children will move *naturally* towards the good, then, if not prevented by some external condition, they will choose naturally to learn those things of most value to them.

Holding this presupposition leads one to feel no sense of risk or danger in removing constraints and providing greater freedom. Indeed, quite the reverse is true; change and innovation are favoured, almost regardless of the kind of changes, because they provide moments when the freedom for "good" human nature to express itself is at a maximum. Even innovations designed to provide greater freedom tend to become formalized and rigid, so it is the freedom involved between the breaking up of one structure and the closing in of another that is most highly valued. Thus, more or less constant change tends to be preferred. Rigid classroom formats, "traditional" teaching methods, structures and formalities of all kinds are thus seen as barriers preventing natural goodness from being exercised. "Free schools", "open education", even de-schooling will tend to be supported. Student-initiated inquiry and "open-ended" project work will be preferred to teacher domination and prescribed "closed-ended" tasks.

By way of summary, a table is presented which contrasts the two views of the child just presented along with the implications for schooling of these two views.

HUMAN NATURE	
Good	**Bad**
lack of restraint	institutional restraint
favour innovation	"tried and true"
freedom	restriction
change	permanence
emphasis on process	emphasis on product
learner centered	subject (discipline) centered
open-ended; divergent	focussed; convergent
"Open Education"	"Traditional"
e.g., A.S. Neil — Summerhill	e.g., Most schools; especially Fundamentalist Christian Schools

The school must be seen as a cultural instrument in furthering the redemptive work of Christ . . .

View #3: A Redemptionist View of the Child

I think it is fair to say that Christians generally feel more comfortable with the column on the right (Bad) than on the left (Good). I submit, however, that Christians ought to feel uncomfortable with both views because neither is biblically defensible when one regards Christians not as isolated individuals but as a corporate entity called to work in the world as a *redeemed community*. I'll explore this notion by returning to the previously cited creed where we see, following the confession about *Sin*, one about *Redemption*.

> Redemption: That Christ, the Word incarnate, is the Redeemer who *restores the relationship between God and his creation* and who *renews life* through the Holy Spirit.

What does this confession about redemption in Christ mean with reference to our view of the Christian child? First of all, it means that we don't see the child as an autonomous individual; rather he is part of the fellowship of restored humanity, part of a new covenant made between God and humankind. Thus, a fundamental Christian presupposition is that the child is redeemable and that some children have, in fact, been redeemed. Teachers and students in a Christian school are part of a redeemed community of humans. One cannot make individual judgements about the salvation of individual children, but, in a Christian School, one does assume the reality of redemption, and as such, one may not view the child as essentially an evil little sinner who must be the object of externally imposed restraint. The school must rather be seen as a cultural instrument in furthering the redemptive work of Christ and, as such, covenantal children must always be treated with the respect due to the *subjects* of their King.

I am not sure what the exact curricular implications of a redemptionist position on human nature are. At a conceptual level, I would suggest that the freedom-structure dichotomy established by the good vs. evil views of the child would dissolve into a *freedom-within-structure* curricular design. Although I am working at refining my ideas on this issue, I am not yet precisely clear how a Christian school curriculum would look if this redemptionist presupposition were worked out in practice. Judging by what I see happening in many Christian schools, I don't think others are clear on this matter either but I can think of little in Christian education that would be more worthwhile than working on the curricular and pedagogical implications of a redemptionist view of human nature. The unfortunate trend in Christian education today, however, is to confess with one's mouth redemption in Christ, but to practice in the classroom belief in total depravity. This is especially exemplified by an embracing of pedagogical techniques which fail to allow for the subjective responses of children (be they obedient or disobedient) but seek to *propel* them into obedient allegiance to Christ. A prime example of this is a program called Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.), which is described and critiqued by Brian Hill[3] much as follows: Accelerated Christian Education (A.C.E.) is based on the use of programmed learning, whereby the student responds promptly to short "packages" of information. If he answers correctly he receives reinforcement; if he answers incorrectly, he is guided to subprograms for remedial instruction. The psychological foundation for such methods is the radical behavioristic theory of B. F. Skinner. Skinner has no respect for the notion of internal motivation; he assumes that the human organism is totally determined by his environment and susceptible to behavioral conditioning. As such the ACE program cashes in on the improved manipulative techniques discovered by modern behavioral psychology, and denies the validity of personal responsibility in learning. The ACE student lives in a universe of authorities and right answers. The available options are boiled down to two: "One is the Christian way of life as laid down in God's Word and the other is the secular way of life that promotes humanistic ideas." This is true in one sense, but untrue given that many questions about the application of biblical truth are not black and white and also untrue in that it denies the reality of individual Christian liberty. Also, calling an educational policy "Christian" does not necessarily mean that it is right in all respects.

I can cite examples from Calvinistic Christian day-schools which demonstrate how comfortable Reformed Christians also tend to be with simplistic views of man that deny the reality of redemption and creational restoration in Christ. Much of the current back-to-the-basics movement, which, I regret to say, also has many staunch advocates in Reformed educational circles, buys into an epistemology that is radical behaviorist in orientation. I submit for perusal a chart which compares what I believe are some central differences between a behaviorist and a reformational Christian position. Readers can decide which model more closely fits their own educational beliefs and practices.

I suggested earlier that there can be nothing more worthwhile than working out the educational and curricular implications of a redemptionist view of human nature. It would not be fair or accurate to leave the reader with the impression that nothing concrete has been done in this regard. In fact, the Reformed tradition has had a real impact on developing learning models and materials in keeping with the complexities of a holistic view of the child as a member of a redeemed covenantal community. Space does not permit a review of these efforts here, but, in conclusion a few words should be said about training Christian teachers to develop a broadly based view of their task as redeemed culture formers.

The predominant secular training is based either on a behavioristic-manipulative model of learning or a child-centered humanistic model. From taking a cursory survey of teacher training at a variety of Christian institutions it appears to me that the model of learning assumed there is a strange blend of behaviorism and moralism. I think it to be imperative that Christian colleges must train teachers who do not underestimate the power of evil, but who view learning as the internalization of a complex web of normative precepts and behaviors[5]. Anything less than that will make a mockery of the confessions that have motivated the founding of Christian schools in the Reformed traditions.

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NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE	
Radical Behaviorist	**Reformational Christian**
Chain of learned behaviors	Complex web of internalized, normative percepts and behaviors
Covert processes are meaningless	Covert processes are very important
Behavior is learned through trial and error experiences contingently reinforced	Responsible action is appropriated through commitment and reflection reinforced by modeling
CURRICULAR IMPLICATIONS	
bits 'n' pieces, bottom-up organization of learning experiences	holistic-interactive organization
contingent reinforcement schedules ("discipline")	discipline and modeling reinforced by reasoning
emphasis on "skills" and product	emphasis on context
non-creative	creative
cognitive-memory level of thinking	divergent-evaluative level of thinking
Example from Reading Pedagogy	***Example from Reading Pedagogy***
"Synthetic phonics" approach	"Language experience" approach

REFERENCES

1. Taken from the Statement of Principles of the Educational Philosophy of The King's College 1984-85 *Calendar* p. 6.
2. From *The New England Primer* as cited in Nila Banton Smith, *American Reading Instruction*, International Reading Association, 1965, p. 24.
3. Brian V. Hill. *Faith at the Blackboard*, Eerdmans, 1982, pp.84-85
4. Much of the curriculum work done by Christian Schools International (CSI) is an attempt to flesh out the implications of the redemptionist view I have sketched. Two books of particular note are *Educating for Responsible Action* by N. Wolterstorff (CSI/Eerdmans, 1980) and *Shaping School Curriculum: A Biblical View* by G. J.Steensma and H. Van Brummelen, eds., (Signal Publishing, 1977).
5. See Wolterstorff, *Educating for Responsible Action* for a clear articulation of a redemptionist responsibility theory of Christian education.

Pen Point Discipline?

Ruth Broersma

RECENTLY a newspaper article sent to me by my ever-alert daughter (who is not a teacher but an ardent supporter of her mother's efforts in that regard) provided my colleagues and me with some food for thought. The piece, entitled "Teaching the Joy of Writing," called attention to the use of writing for punitive purposes and pointed out the dreadfulness of the practice. How, asked the writer, can teachers expect any enthusiasm about writing from students who have been made to write lines or essays for punishment?

Alas, we had offended grievously. Our junior high had a long-standing practice of assigning "white rooms" for minor infractions of school rules. "White room" meant a noon hour spent copying "The Gettysburg Address" or a sheet of aphorisms or some inspirational piece of literature. The point was, of course, not the copying, but the giving up of a noon hour when one could be playing intramural sports, studying in the library, or enjoying the fresh air outside.

Requiring lines or a page from the dictionary is probably one of the easiest ways for a teacher to monitor students who must be disciplined; we hadn't given much thought to the effect of those activities on student attitudes toward writing.

Fortunately, I work with teachers who are sensitive to the writing process and eager to do everything within their power to encourage it, whatever their particular area of expertise. After a brisk session we concluded that a change in our "white room" policy was in order. The writing process was simply too important to endanger in this way. No more lines or paragraphs to copy!

What would we do instead? Our students now wash chalkboards, pick up litter on the playgrounds, or do other housekeeping chores during "white room." This may not be the best developer of positive attitudes toward janitorial tasks, but we do have the cleanest chalkboards in town!

Ruth Broersma teaches eighth and ninth grade English at Creston-Mayfield Christian School in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Bryce Fopma

September Reflections

WALKING into almost any bookstore, one is confronted with a shelfful of "How to" books: *How to Macrame, How to Build a Birdhouse, How to Replace a Leaky Faucet* . . . Equipped with the right tools, one can do almost anything.

Twelve years ago when I first stepped into a junior high English position, I was prepared to mortgage my black '64 Ford and my treasured American Literature anthology in order to lay my hands on a *How to Teach* manual.

It didn't take more than a week or two for me to realize that a college diploma, a collection of fat teachers' manuals, and a red Bic do not create a teacher.

Ah, the painful memories of that first September: a classroom full of suntanned sixth graders with minds that were still afloat in the town pool or riding atop a flatbed piled high with sweet-smelling alfalfa. How could Charles Dickens, semicolons, and spelling rules appeal to a mind and heart full of a Minnesota summer?

My Educational Psychology class had never addressed such major situations as eleven-year-olds who didn't like cornbread for hotlunch, a deflated kickball that bore a two-inch gash, or a class pianist who made us all want to sit down while she struggled through "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus."

And somewhere in my college education courses, there should have been a class entitled "Teaching Tact." How did one tactfully tell Tommy that after feeding the Hampshires, he should not wear the same overshoes to school? What was the most courteous way to tell giggling Gayle that she looked like a circus clown with her abundance of makeup?

Finally, my trusty *Harpers' Handbook* had done a fine job of demonstrating the correct procedure to diagram an infinitive phrase and to recognize a misplaced modifier. But, nowhere within the book's 770 pages did I find an easy solution to Harvey's problem: a two-paged paragraph void of punctuation marks.

Surprisingly, I survived the first year, leaving emotional wounds on others, and attaining some myself. There were many Friday afternoons when my students questioned whether I had tuned my ears and life to the proper calling. I could hardly blame them. A screaming, fiery-eyed pedagogue with yellow chalkdust smudged on his sport coat does not generate a great amount of rapport.

But thanks to some colleagues, an understanding administrator, and the powerful support of the Great Teacher himself, I weathered the early storms. Perhaps by the grace of God, some of those youngsters even gained a tidbit of grammatical or literary knowledge that first year.

Twelve Septembers have come and gone. Granted, I still have my 2:00 a.m. nightmares after which I am startled awake as thirty pencil-wielding students pull off a successful mutiny. But my daytime classes are much more tranquil. My American Literature anthology and *Harpers' Handbook* sit serenely on the back shelf.

There are still the Tommys, the Gayles, and the Harveys. That is perhaps why we all still take up our teaching task each September — because we know that behind each marred desk sits a fresh challenge, a unique individual with hopes and dreams, abilities and deficiencies like none other; we know that within each sun-tanned frame is packed a life of both frustrations and joys.

This autumn I hope to enjoy God's children more than ever. Twelve years of experience in the classroom have equipped me with a few of the tools needed in learning how to teach. True, I am far from a perfect teacher; I still have much to learn. But I have grown in my commitment, my enthusiasm, and my love for teaching in a Christian school.

September is past. May October and November, and all the other months of this school year be ones of growth for us as teachers, students and citizens in God's kingdom.

Bryce Fopma teaches junior high language arts at Edgerton Christian School in Edgerton, Minnesota.

September Flame

The canna's flame on a high stalk,
like learning's torch, eager talk
of students, heighten September's sunlight.
Young, eager minds to delight
a teacher back from the holidays
will learn to study, learn to praise
God who created nature's beauty,
learn happiness through love and duty.

Dorothea Kewley

Rosalie B. Icenhower

Keys to Management Middle and Upper Elementary Grades

PROBABLY more fledgling teachers flounder in their chosen field because of classroom management problems than for any other reason. Academic preparation and sense of Christian calling to teach cannot make up the deficit of management skills. Even experience alone does not guarantee teacher competency in this vital area.

A Christian school classroom, properly managed, becomes a joy for teacher and students alike. "Management" is not synonymous with the stifling of creativity, but rather, proper management is a tool which frees the teacher and students to explore and expand their academic and creative horizons to see beyond classroom walls: to see the orderly arrangement of God's creation.

Successful classroom management takes effort and know-how. I would like to suggest five keys that can make the difference between bare survival and success.

The first is *thorough preparation.* The upper elementary teacher is often expected to teach from five to eight subjects each day in a self-contained classroom (Bible, math, social studies, language arts, science — and possibly music, physical education, and art). The teacher who is less than well-prepared will lose credibility with students, parents, and administrators within a short time. If the curriculum material is new to her, the teacher must take the time to read or work it through not once but several times to thoroughly understand the new concepts she will be teaching. Being "one step ahead of the students" is not ideal, but if unusual circumstances dictate such, the teacher must acquire such a firm grasp of the material that her students will never suspect she is but a chapter or two ahead of the class.

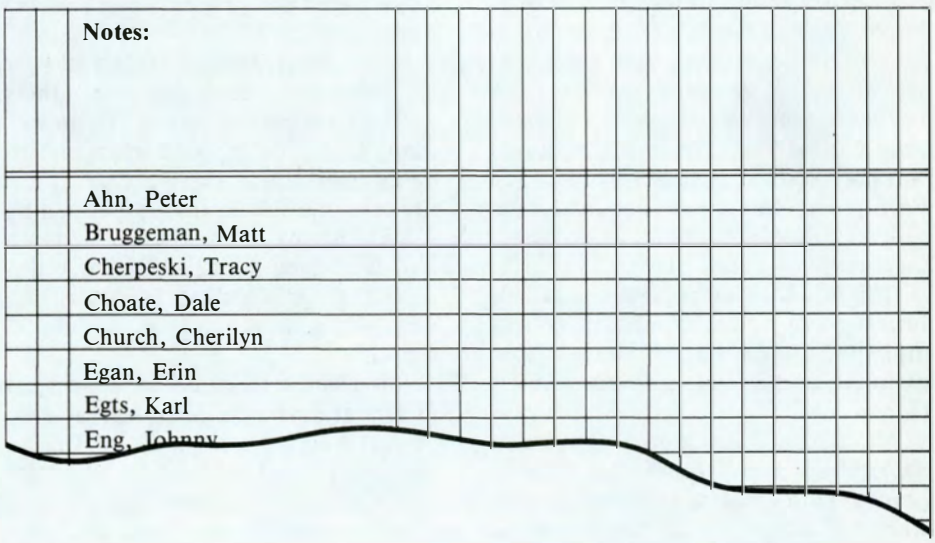

ILLUSTRATION 1

Careful planning is the second key. Not many experienced teachers — and certainly not any new teachers — can totally "wing it." Jotting down the lesson objectives as well as the materials needed to meet the objectives often helps the teacher to focus in on her methods of presentation. By Monday morning a teacher should have definite aims and objectives for every class period of the entire week written down. In addition, I would suggest working ahead on lesson plans for the following week a bit each day.

In many schools all first-year teachers are required to complete written plans, including objectives, one week in advance. This could be a good routine to follow, even if not required.

A third major key to successful classroom management is *organization.* A file cabinet can be a teacher's best friend! If the school doesn't provide a file for the teacher, she should consider it a personal priority to buy one herself. A cardboard box is better than nothing, but having a locking file cabinet has many advantages.

Every quiz, math paper, or hand-out planned for the entire week should be in the file by Monday morning at the latest. Teaching time is valuable and should not be wasted while the teacher frantically puts together a hand-out and fidgety students wait.

Classroom tasks done routinely are more easily accomplished if a teacher can make up her own specialized forms. For instance, I make up a ditto of my class roster with spaces for headings and check-off squares. (See Illustration 1.) I can use this form quickly and efficiently by labeling and checking off such items as "returned report card," "field trip permission slip," "spelling homework," etc. I can tell at a glance which students need a reminder without entering such items in my permanent record book. These same forms can double as grade sheets at the end of the quarter to make report card writing more efficient.

Another form I personally find indispensable is a make-up sheet for absentees. I divide a ditto sheet into subject area sections and break each into the most common assignment directions. (See Illustration 2.) Such a form simplifies the teacher's task of making sure the student is accurately informed of his make-up responsibilities.

TODAY'S WORK	**Student**	**Date**
BIBLE	**HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY**	
Workbook: Memory verse:	Read pages _____ _____ Do study sheets_____ Box_____ Page____ Maps_____ Study for test_____ Do test_____ Chapter_____	
SCIENCE	**LANGUAGE ARTS**	
Read pages: Terms: page_____ Questions: page_____ Worksheets Study for test _____ Do test_____ Other	Reading book: Language Workbook: Exercise(s)_____ Page(s) _____ Vocabulary: *Reader's Digest* Story:_____ Pages:_____ Ditto sheet_____ Creative Writing: Assignment: Penmanship: Spelling: Book Report Rough Draft due_____ Final due_____ # of pages_____	
MATH		**HOMEWORK**
Lesson #_____ Test #_____ Homework Lesson #_____		

ILLUSTRATION 2

Sometimes trial and error alone will tell a teacher which forms are right for her particular needs. What works for one teacher may not be of help to another. One need not be afraid to experiment, however, for the time saved by a form will quickly make up for the time expended in creating just the right one.

Organization in my classroom includes student participation. Every student has a job (book passer, errand boy or girl, class librarian, etc.), and these jobs are rotated every three or four weeks. This eliminates confusion, charges of favoritism, and cries of, "But it's my turn!" Building the students' sense of responsibility is another side benefit.

A fourth key to classroom management is *clearly defined student expectations.* I post ten simple rules in my classroom, beginning with the behavior-oriented statement, "In this classroom, we . . .," followed by such items as "sharpen our pencils before or after school or at recess."Each teacher's rules will be somewhat different depending upon grade level and structure level desired, but whatever they are must be clearly stated, easily understood, and worth firmly enforcing.

My students are issued a "behavior card," a small piece of tagboard divided into fifteen segments. An infraction of one of the classroom rules brings a word of warning, and then the student's name is put on the board for a second breach, with no arguing or haranguing. At the end of the day, those with good behavior (i.e., those whose names are not on the board) are rewarded with a stamp on the behavior card. At the end of the fifth good behavior day, the student receives a sticker. When the card is full (twelve stamps, three stickers), the student is invited to select a small prize from my "treasure box." Few students forfeit a stamp, sticker, or prize after the third week of school. The rewards are immediate enough and tangible enough to encourage the student to live up to the high expectations I have for him.

My fifth and final suggestion for successful classroom management is the *provision of meaningful activities* for students beyond the regular curriculum. Learning enrichment centers provide the additional stimulus for reluctant learners as well as gifted, if handled properly. Many excellent projects and formats are described in educational journals and resource books. Space, classroom arrangement, and number of students are determining factors that may lend consideration to how many and what kind of enrichment centers are used.

I have nine learning center activities plus a computer center for my fifth graders. I allow a half-hour block each day plus "spare time" for completion of the ten centers in five days. I schedule the computer time to prevent monopolization by a few, but the students may choose the other center activities in any sequence.

In summary, thorough preparation, careful planning, organization, clearly defined student expectations, and the provision of meaningful extra-curricular activities for students will earn accolades for even the brand-new teacher. Certainly these five keys or suggestions are not the only workable management ideas, but they may be enough to help thwart those early autumn moments of near-panic for newer teachers until they can become better oriented in this most satisfying profession to which God has called us.

Rosalie Icenhower teaches fifth grade at Heritage Christian School at Bothell, Washington.

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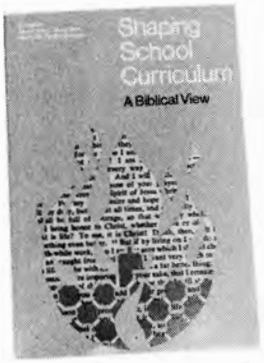

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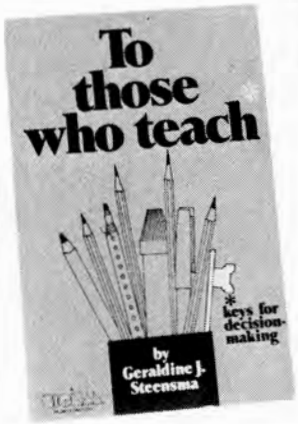

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Kenneth R. Steensma

Education's Structure
A Growing Source of Classroom Management Problems

"What can I do when Johnny acts as he does; his behavior baffles me!"

ADMINISTRATORS and social workers hear similar complaints from teachers and share their frustrations. As a school social worker, I would frequently grapple with teachers over two difficult but interrelated questions:

1. To what extent do we modify classroom structure and the learning process to "best" fit a student's developmental needs?

2. To what extent do we expect a student to modify his/her behavior to meet the needs of other students, to follow the learning process offered, or to conform to the classroom structure?

Often our analysis of a student's behavior problems involved some struggle with staffing and scheduling conflicts, narrowly prescribed learning materials, evaluation forms and group-paced learning needs conflicting with the student's learning style needs.

To focus on classroom management requires the selection of a basis for our decision-making. If we select the child as our basis for management decision-making, then we also need to begin with a biblical view of the child. Essentially, each child is a unique creation, having a unique set of abilities and learning style preferences. This uniqueness is God-given; its purpose is to serve the needs of the Body of Christ for the renewing of God's creation. The child's uniqueness and purpose challenge the educator to design the educational structure and nurturing programs to enhance each child's uniqueness, while supporting the child's growing commitment to serve the needs of the Body of Christ.

Matching nurturing programs to a child's uniqueness is not a new concern. However, historically we have focused primarily on the classroom without seriously questioning the structure of the educational organization. We are now rapidly encountering a changing environment which will transform the structure of education in parallel with similar transformation of other basic social institutions in our society.

THERE are some global trends making an impact on us. These trends are creating crisis situations in all areas of our culture. We will look at these trends in relation to schooling as we have known it. These trends are:

1. Changing from an industrial to an information-oriented society — shifting our focus from manufacturing products to managing information

2. Increasing participation in a global economy, creating intensifying pressure to control labor costs

3. Flattening the organization's structure through use of increasing spans of control and participative management, also enabled by more efficient information processing

4. Reducing dependence on professionals through development of "expert" software systems which approximate human decision-making in professional roles

5. Restructuring of work, careers, and life-long learning from vertical movement to multiple careers as "normal" career development over one's life span.

The interaction effect of these trends makes change inevitable. What can be more frightening is that the direction of change is less than fully predictable. What we can expect is an *increasing rate* and *complexity* of change.

In light of these trends, we also need to review educational structure from a historical perspective. If we use Naisbitt's construct of a "megashift,"[1] we can see that education's structure has always been changing in parallel with our other basic social institutions; (see Figure A). Two implications can be drawn from the transition information in Figure A:

1. *The need to see events and structures in "motion."* In the past we have experienced "slow motion," so slow sometimes that structures didn't seem to change. For the near future we can expect increasingly rapid, if not revolutionary-paced motion.

2. *The need to recognize how much we have normalized our current educational structures,* since they have been with us over one hundred years with little structural change. Ironically, even though we left an agriculturally-based society over one hundred years ago, we have continually resisted giving up the agricultural school calendar.

Even currently, when communities open new schools which are structured differently from those we experienced, we use terms such as: *alternative, demonstration* or *non-traditional* to describe them. In a recent visit to a sixth

Societal Base	Learning Focus	Skill Focus	Learning Structure
Agriculture (100 years)	Become Literate	Read, Write, Count	"One Room," Multi-grade Structure (Skill development groups by performance level in school)
Industry (20 years)	Become Employable & Efficient	Read, Write, Count, Think Deductively	"Assembly-Line" Structure — (Same age, same grade-skill groups by class/grade)
Information	Become Adaptive & Integrated	Intuition, Analysis, Ethics, Communication, Decision-making	"Individualized — Anywhere — ized" Structure — (Any age, any grade, any lesson, anywhere, anytime)

FIGURE A

grade special school program housed at our local zoo, I heard a student summarize his perspective of our current educational structure by saying: "Here I finally can live what I'm learning. Next year I'll have to go back to reading about this stuff in books."[2]

We are currently being challenged to re-think what "school" means. In a recent homework assignment, my daughter asked me if I knew when the first Christian school was started. I replied, "When Adam and Eve tried to raise Cain and Abel!" I was appropriately rebuked and asked when the first Christian school began *in a building.* I wonder if we are much different in our thinking about what a Christian school is.

Does "Christian school" mean brick and mortar, an organization, or a dynamic organism? This question is not unlike our struggle to redefine ourselves as a "church." We need not be surprised when phone companies become information systems, when furniture companies become office systems, and when mail order or retail companies become financial systems.

WHAT we are capable of doing is not everything we will choose to do. Changing for the sake of change is just as inappropriate as not changing when we find that we can still operate as we have done in the past. Transition planning can help to effectively transform our structures and ourselves. Some areas in which transition planning needs to take place are:

1. The **learning process,** or the way any individual goes about obtaining information and internalizing it. Learning styles can be as unique as the individual. Our transition planning must include more effort at observing children as they go about their learning. The person guiding that learning (teacher or someone else) needs to be prepared to suggest and supply the means whereby individuals can learn meaning-fully. Responses of children indicate that it is possible to provide learning settings where meaning is personally integrated, such as: (1) the child who said, "I'm living what I'm learning," or (2) an emotionally impaired student functioning in a "regular"class who said, "I'm too busy learning to act up!"[3] Providing meaningful processes is not to be equated with individualized packaging of content, though some of these can be useful for a period of time. Nor is it necessary to meet with children only on a one-to-one basis to effectively offer meaningful processes.

2. The **learning places,** or where children can gather information, acquire and practice skills, and meaningfully internalize their learning. Transition planning can offer a number of combinations, such as: (1) the local school in a building for full-time or part-time programs, with supervised community internships or self-directed study, (2) supervised self-study with local or national access to supervisors, (3) a nationally accredited K-12 "computer" school telecommunicating into the home. Let us also not assume that school is the *only* socialization place for children. Many schools currently utilize "Y" programs. In addition, educational software companies and TV would be quite excited to expand their "socialization" programming. Flexibility in learning settings and processes might restore some of the excitement we've lost in the structures we presently call "schools."

3. The **learning people** who can guide children through their learning processes need not be structured as one certified teacher per classroom. Transition planning can broaden the meaning of "certified." There can be a variety of "certified" people:

Certified Educators — who de-emphasize information proficiency, while guiding individual and group learning activities inside and beyond the school setting. (As a colleague commented, "No longer the sage on the stage, but now the guide on the side.")

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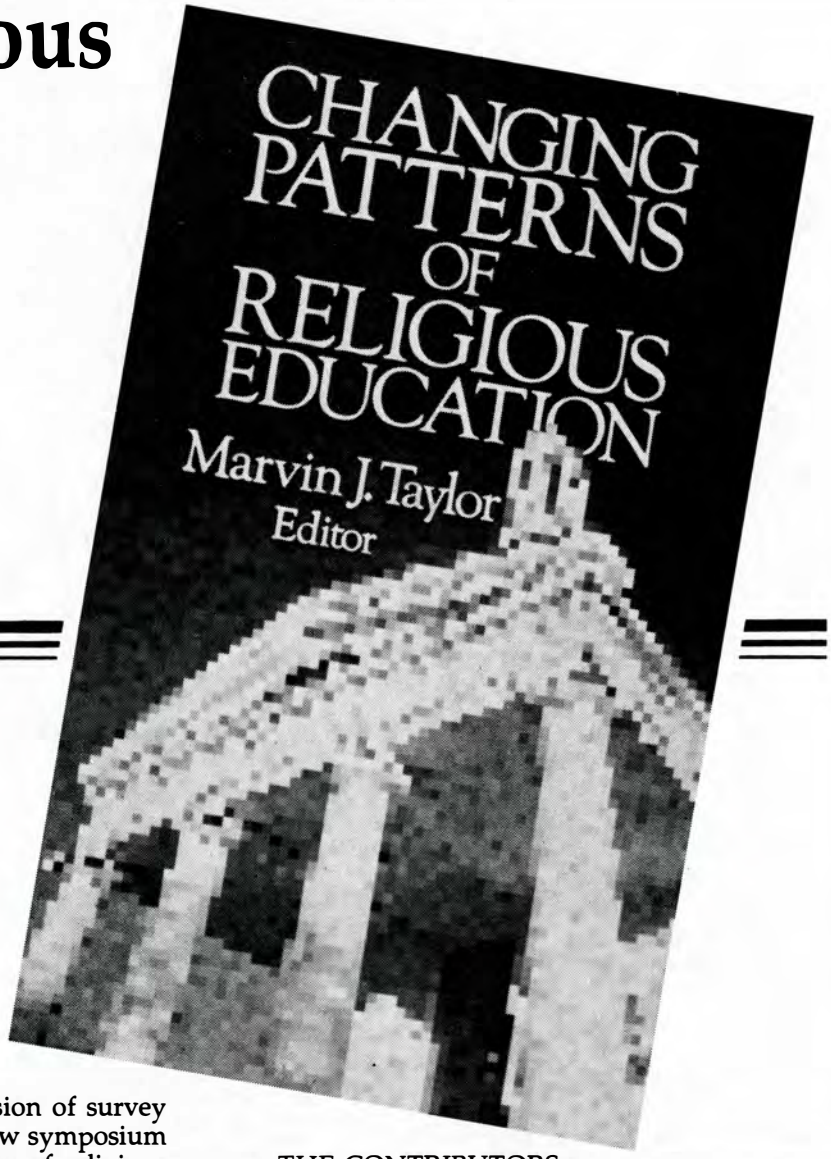

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4. The **learning organizations** — which diversify structural options to meet a rapidly changing learning environment:

Public/Private Parent-Controlled Schools (Non-Profit Corporations) — "schools" as we know them today.

Subsidiary Educational Businesses — where learning is guided from a profit-making base already in existence.

Nationally Accredited K-12 "Computer" Schools — software-based instruction for grades K-12, supervised by a certified educator based somewhere other than the student's setting (much of the software for such a school currently exists and no longer requires attendance in a "school").

Families Contract with Certified Educators to Guide Students' Learning — student and teacher need not necessarily be in the same place when learning.

Community Based Learning Centers — lifelong learning centers for children and adults — side-by-side or blended learning activities (perhaps a future role for current school buildings).

If this all seems a bit George Orwellian, we have only to look at the current restructuring of business and higher education organizations to see that the filtering process does not take long. Any decision which contributes to open-market competition at the K-12 level will simply speed up the process to a revolutionary change rate proportion. Passage of a voucher system or federal tax credits during the next administration, could easily trigger greater acceleration of the rate of change.

Let us not assume that with alternative funding sources, such as a voucher system or tax credits, parents would choose our current educational structures. Current new school openings seem to confirm a growing plurality of structures and a diversity of choices for parents.

Not at all surprising could be the decision by software or hardware companies to franchise a K-12 learning center using their own products. Is that really much different from the marketing strategy of current textbook publishers? Why do we see many existing publishers producing software versions of their publications, as well as diversifying their business activities beyond publishing-related activities?

SOME ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT. 1. **What is a "school"?** Let us recognize our historical roots of education as being a function that was originally "housed" in the family. We can look to Deut. 6:4-9 for a mandate God gave to families about their children's development. If education is to remain a separate but interdependent function, perhaps we may conceive of "school" as a "Center for Developing Christians" whose purpose is to equip Christians to manage a changing Creation.

2. **What is "classroom" management?** What will our classrooms be? Where will our schools be? "Classroom" management is an educator-guided process which provides the most appropriate *learning process* and *environment* to enhance *each* student's God-given uniqueness. It will enable growing student commitment to renew God's creation as praise to God for developing such enhanced responsibility and purpose.

Let us realize that with an expanding diversity of school and classroom structures, we also expand the opportunities to recognize each student's God-given uniqueness to "grow as he should go." The elements of the management process (curriculum, learning "tools," learning environment, interactions between/with students, etc.) will need to act in concert to meet individual student development needs; if they don't the student will increasingly question the validity of that learning process and environment and will let us know through his behavior what he thinks.

3. **Can we design our own educational future?** Three areas should be considered:

a. *Curriculum Content and Processes* — A local community can bring together educators, parents, consultants, and representatives of the (financially) supporting community to plan content and processes which are more meaningful for students than those offered just through textbook selection. Christian community members can study the use of curriculum models[4] which may give direction to their planning. Community members, educators, and parents can participate in workshops that offer more meaningful ways of strengthening skills than do instruction and practice that primarily utilize workbook content irrelevant to the students' context. Such study can also lead to more valid ways of reporting skill development to parents or to the next grade-level instructors.

b. *Structure of Schooling* — We need

to begin dialoguing on the meaning of "school" to prepare our constituent groups to adapt together through common understanding. Administrators may consider providing added support to teachers' attempts to develop integral learning processes and to those who want to use structures beyond the classroom, beyond the building. Also, organizational leaders will need to begin a strategic planning process — in which everyone participates — to design and implement the organization's transition. To survive as a viable social institution, education will need to accept open-market competition. How this develops is less than predictable; *that* this condition develops can be expected. Any organization's viability, at that time, depends significantly on the quality of its present decisions.

c. *Relational Support* — Let us recognize that our environmental change forces are already making an impact on all constituent groups, with increasing intensity. We need not be surprised that the stress on all groups spills over into the classroom. This stress only compounds the student's stress in fitting the educational structure and developmental needs together.

Increasingly important will be our willingness to affirm our diversity of personal strengths, and to use them to support effective management of stress and change. Also, let's equip students to support each other when they have absorbed family stress. The emotionally impaired child's statement provides evidence of the value of meaning-full learning in the classroom.

4. **Will we create transition or crisis?** Often teachers and I would wish we could change the structure of the educational system because such changes would benefit more than just Johnny. But organizational change is not a simple process. A colleague's comment is quite fitting: "Growth is not *always* painful, just usually!"

We need to ask ourselves if the pace of our organization's adaptation is surpassing the rate of change in the thinking of the community. If "yes", we will need to provide strong support systems to all constituent groups to effectively manage the stress involved. If "no", we need to recognize that we have allowed an ongoing net loss in adaptation. When the gap becomes great enough, we call the situation a "crisis."

IF we *do not* include consideration of our educational structure when planning classroom management decisions, we will be creating increasing pressure at the interface of student need with the learning process and the environment.

If we *do* consider changing our educational structure, we will begin a journey into an uncertain educational future. Our journey will be stressful; our outcome will be dependent on our willingness to develop a unity of purpose *through* utilizing a diversity of educational structures.

If we *do not* decide, we need to recognize that alternative educational structures will continue to proliferate. Their growing numbers and diversity will generate their own increased parental acceptance, as well as freedom of choice for children's participation. The yardstick for selection may well become an organization's ability to provide a learning process and environment which:

1. capitalizes on *each* student's unique interests and/or abilities,
2. provides experience in joint learning projects where students learn to complement each others' strengths through designing a learning product that neither would be capable of producing individually, thus experiencing Christian communal endeavor.

Philosophically we have long said that the student is a uniquely-created being. We have also said that our design of the learning process and environment needs to respect and encourage that uniqueness. Operationally, we can increasingly structure our learning process and environment to meet *each* student's needs. Perhaps Johnny has been leading us into the future for a long time.

Kenneth R. Steensma is president of Signal Publishing/Consulting Corporation and assistant dean for continuing education at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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2. John Ball Park Zoo School, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
3. For a model educational structure and learning process which integrates the spectrum of student needs visit Berkeley Christian School at Kensington, 1 Windsor Ave., Kensington, Ca. 94708.
4. See *Shaping School Curriculum* by Steensma & Van Brummelen, Signal Publishing/Consulting, Corp., 2730 Leonard NW., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 49504, and *Teaching With 'Joy'* by Jean Olthius, Curriculum Development Centre, 229 College Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4.

Joyce Anne Munn

I Corinthians 13
A Teacher's Paraphrase

If I could explain everything perfectly to my students but did not love each one of them, I might as well be talking to an empty room.

If I could find all the answers to the educational problems and did not have love, my efforts would be futile.

If I could buy every kind of educational aid, and sacrificed to do so, but did not have love for my students, it would be a complete waste.

LOVE is patient when it is necessary to repeat a concept over and over to a student who is having difficulty.

LOVE is kind when an irate parent accuses and berates other teachers or me.

LOVE is not jealous when the other teacher has an entire class of well-behaved and extremely intelligent children and mine are not so great.

LOVE is not proud and boastful when my students improve greatly and really want to come to my class.

LOVE is willing to yield my schedule and plans to fit in with the needs of others.

LOVE does not scream at my class when they misbehave, but seeks to help them understand the importance of self-discipline.

LOVE does not broadcast all of my students' problems and misdeeds to those in the lounge.

LOVE keeps trying even when it seems a student will never understand long division or the difference between an adverb and an adjective.

Teaching methods, bulletin boards, and textbooks will eventually be discarded, but love is everlasting.

These three things I have learned through teaching: endurance, patience, and love, but the greatest of these is love.

Larry Reynolds

A Beka Publications Philosophy and Theory of Instruction

THERE is a real hesitancy to write critically about the sincere work of fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I have no doubt that those involved in A Beka Book Publications are committed Christians sincerely trying to do the work of the Lord. I do, however, have serious problems with the conclusions they come to on what Christian education should be and their uncritical acceptance of the traditional American way of life as being one and the same as a biblical-Christian way of life. I believe their strong (and often very valid) reaction to contemporary public education has forced them to retreat to an older, more traditional philosophy of education that is basically as biblically off-base as the contemporary one they criticize.

What A Beka believes to be "Traditional Christian Education" has its roots, *not* in the Word of God, but in philosophical realism. Aristotle is the father of philosophical realism, and his contention that man's reason is the key to understanding what reality is all about has had a profound influence on Western civilization and Christians who are a product of that tradition. That includes most of us. What makes man unique, according to the philosophical realist, is his reason, his ability to think and logically figure things out. The philosophical realist believes that reality consists of orderly and rational laws that can be objectively understood through man's reason. There are certain facts and laws which all humankind can logically believe. Many Christians (Thomas Aquinas did the most thorough job) baptized Aristotle's ideas by adding a second story to his universe—a second story of spiritual truths that can only be known by the grace of God through the redemption of Christ. Man's reason and logic can provide the facts and laws of the first story and the Bible can provide the spiritual truths and moral laws for the second story. Some Christians (borrowing a little from Plato as well) even defined God in terms of reason and logic. God becomes the absolute logician and rationalist.

Philosophical realism does not do justice to God, to man as his image-bearer, or to God's creation. God is more than an absolute reflection of a dimension of his creation. He is the great "I AM" who upholds and rules his creation and is not ruled by it. Otherwise one could ask that if God is subject to the laws of logic could he create something so heavy he couldn't lift it. Man is totally an image- bearer of God and either reflects or mirrors back his uniqueness and his unique task in creation in loving obedience through Christ or in blind disobedience, which is the result of sin. It is not his logical ability that makes him an image- bearer, any more than his artistic, social, or linguistic ability. Sin affected all of man as well. His ability to logically understand the world in which he lives was distorted by sin as much as his moral ability to love his neighbor as himself. There are no objective facts that can be understood by all; they are either seen in the creation-fall-redemption context or in a distorted context.

A biblical understanding of knowledge precludes the idea of mastering certain objective truths so that one has a truthful knowledge of the world. Knowledge and truth in scripture always involve obedient action. Psalm 111:10 tells us "a good understanding have all they that *do* his commandments." The Israelite child of Jehovah didn't think in truth — he walked in truth. The reformed understanding of man, like Christ, functioning simultaneously as prophet, priest, and king adds to our understanding of a biblical view of knowledge. Man's insight into creation—his prophetic ability to proclaim "Thus saith the Lord—always must result in priestly and kingly action. As priests, we offer ourselves back to the Lord in loving service and seek to bring healing to a broken world, and as kings we exercise our authority (Psalm 8) to rule over and develop God's creation. The three roles are inseparable and Christian education must do justice to those three roles lest it force children to be "hearers of the word" only, instead of "doers of the word" (James 1:23).

Philosophical realism also fails to do justice to creation by reducing it to a static reality of fixed natural laws. The meaning and structure of creation is not revealed through man's reason but is revealed to man by the revelation of God in scripture and in creation. It is only when man confesses that all of reality is created by God and held together by Christ (Col. 1:17), that man can start to understand the meaning and structure of creation with his whole heart, soul, and mind. Man was given the exciting task of developing and unfolding creation. We must remember that creation exists in a historical context in which God *and* man as God's caretaker actively participate. In Christian schools there should be a sense of excitement for the student confronting this dynamic yet orderly unfolding of creation.

While philosophical realism may not seem as blatantly opposed to Christianity as the evils which A Beka attributes to modern education, it is far less than a biblical view of God, man, and crea-

tion. And while some of the historical and cultural developments in the United States reflect our Judiac-Christian heritage, our American way of life is far less than what is demanded in being a disciple of Christ. Our consumerism and materialism that have often been at the expense of others; our nationalism that has blinded us to the existence of citizens of the Kingdom of God who live in other nations, and our faith in technology and man's reason to solve the world's problems—these all demonstrate a kind of disobedience that has affected all of us to some degree. Christians have to be critics of their own culture and its historical roots as well as critics of other political and philosophical systems that exist in the world today. While A Beka's authors provide a penetrating critique of Communism, their pre-occupation with rooting out Communist tendencies wherever they may be found blinds them to a critical analysis of the American way of life and its historical roots. Only certain contemporary evils are confronted by A Beka, and many times even those evils are attributed to the influence of Marxism and/or Communism.

THE following quotes are from a chart [printed in *The Successful Christian School* by A. A. Baker (Pensacola, Florida: A Beka Publications, 1979) pp. 42-49]. The chart titled "Education for Liberty: Freedom vs. Oppression" by Laurel Hicks, Director of Textbook Development for A Beka Book Publications, contrasts "Traditional Christian Education" with "Progressive Education." (The italics are mine.)

1. Important for Traditional Christian Education is that "it has always taken its guidance from *common sense, philosophical thinking grounded in common sense, and (for Jews and Christians) the Bible*" (p. 43). Notice the two story universe: common sense reason for all plus the Bible for Christians.

2. Traditional Christian Education believes in a "God, who is an *orderly, reasonable personality*, created man and the universe and is the Author of order, reason, and reality" (p. 43). Our sovereign, triune God cannot be reduced to some of the dimensions of his own creation. He is not the (Platonic) absolute of rationality, logic, and mathematical precision.

3. "Traditional Christian Education is rooted in *objective reality*" (p. 43). "Objective" bothers me because it implies that there is a part of reality about which all rational people can know the truth. One's view is always shaped by his or her religious world and life view and in that sense is subjectively rooted in a total faith commitment.

4. Traditional Christian Education believes "man was made in the image of God and given . . . *thought and language*" (p. 44). This is a limited view of what is meant by man being created in the image of God. There is nothing in scripture that says only part of man is created in the image of God. He is totally an image-bearer so that in whatever way he functions he does so either for the glory of God or for the glory of some other god (I Cor. 10:31).

5. Traditional Christian Education believes "the methods that common sense and the scriptures call for are the age-old methods of lecture, reading, memorization, drill, recitation, and oral and written examination" (p. 45). There seems to be a leap in logic to assume that scripture dictates the above instructional methodology. What from scripture limits one's teaching to lecture, reading, memorization, drill, recitation, oral and written examination? Why are not role playing, creative dramatics, field trips, and class discussion just as important?

6. In Progressive Education *"cause and effect* are denied, as is *the need to go from the simple to the complex* and *from the concrete to the abstract*" (p. 46). Here we witness another leap in logic: to assume that cause and effect, simple to complex, and concrete to abstract are the only (Christian) ways we learn something. We are beautifully complex creatures who learn in a variety of ways.

7. Traditional Christian Education believes that "children need *discipline and self control. (From this comes moral freedom based on principles leading to liberation of the higher faculties to rule their passions*" (p. 46). Now the two story universe leads to a two story view of man. The first story is his body and body functions which include his drives and passions; the second story is his soul which is closely connected with the so-called "higher faculties," namely our rational minds. When Paul talks about the sins of the flesh he means the whole man, including the mind (Eph. 2:3). Moral freedom doesn't come from discipline and self control but from being redeemed by the blood of Christ. The process is reversed.

8. Traditional Christian Education believes that ". . . students must be taught to *sit up straight* . . . and to enjoy *healthy competition* (p. 48). Are they to sit up straight for good posture or for good learning? Deuteronomy 6:7 includes more than one posture for learning and while the instruction is for fathers teaching their sons, it is hard to conclude from anywhere else in scripture that sitting up straight is a prerequisite for learning. While scripture may use some competitive sport's analogies (for example, races), the competitor was not a fellow image-bearer or brother or sister in Christ. The competition was the challenge to serve the Lord faithfully. The only competitor you wanted to defeat was Satan and all powers of darkness. Competition may be the American way of life and the domination of competitive sports merely a logical extension of that belief in competition, but com-

Moral freedom doesn't come from discipline and self control but from being redeemed by the blood of Christ.

petition is most often based on losers and winners. Paul's description of the cooperate Christian community (I Corin. 12) is a radically different picture of what life is all about among fellow believers. Are schools to model the results of living in a sinful world or the redemptive alternative described by Paul? While not all competition is inherently sinful, scripture's emphasis on cooperation places definite limits on the role competition is to play in our lives and in school.

9. Progressive Education believes that "it must emphasize not the *details of knowledge (content)* but rather the *forms of knowledge (concepts)*" (p. 48). I am not quite sure about Laura Hick's contrast between content and concepts unless its a replay of her use of the terms "simple" versus "complex" and "concrete" versus "abstract." Many educators who have been influenced by John Dewey contrast "content" and "process." Influenced by philosophical pragmaticism, the educators argue that emphasizing "process" teaches children the process of solving questions so they can answer the new questions that society will confront them with when they are adults. The problem is not that these teachers haven't taught their students the right facts, but that they have not given their students a biblical basis for dealing with old or new problems that are faced in a sinful world. Obediently living before one's Creator-God is not a matter of being anchored in the right facts, but it is a matter of one's heart direction, a heart that has accepted the redemption of Christ as a new basis for living. It might be more scriptural to argue that without a *conceptual* framework of creation, fall, and redemption in which both *content* and *process* are contextually understood, it is impossible to experience the fullness of salvation in creation and in school as teacher and student.

A Beka Publications, while they are made up of sincere Bible-believing Christians trying to serve their Lord and Savior, often reflect a kind of philosophical realism and Americanism. We are all, to a certain extent, victims of some of the Greek philosophical roots of our Western culture. The reformed tradition has tried hard to extract itself from that Greek tradition that became Christianized with a two story conception of the universe (commonly labeled the nature/grace dichotomy) and has tried to articulate a more biblical view of God, creation, man, and man's task in creation. How sad and tragically ironic, if they would buy back into the perspective that infiltrates A Beka's philosophical position on Christian education.

Because Christian publishers out of a reformed-biblical perspective have not produced the comprehensive line of textbooks (K-12) that A Beka has to offer, A Beka seems to be an attractive alternative to secular publishing sources. Perhaps in many subject areas a better alternative would be to have Christian teachers design their own curriculum and learning activities and use textbooks as merely secondary sources to the primary source of their learning and investigation—God's creation and humankind's task in that creation. In that context A Beka books might make good secondary resources, and as secondary resources even secular publications might become less dangerous as teachers and students evaluate them together. Publishers who operate out of a reformed-biblical perspective would then not have to compete with the complete line of texts which A Beka has to offer but could turn their efforts to resource guides, units, and publications—as Christian Schools International has done in science and history.

But there are two prerequisites:

1. Teachers must make a commitment to become more involved in design.

2. Christian school boards must provide their teachers with the resources to be able to carry out this task. Teachers should not be bogged down in non-professional and/or extra-curricular activities, and they should not have to use the summer to supplement a less than adequate income.

May God's spirit move Christian teachers, administrators, and boards to take the task of Christian education that seriously.

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Clarence Walhout

Literature as Interpretation

At times we think of literature as something which gives us self-contained experiences to be enjoyed for their own sake. We regard literature as an "adventure" or an "experience" or a friendly "companion" on the road of life. In so doing we inadvertently put literature in the category of those entertaining diversions which take us momentarily out of the practical world and offer us some mental relief and refreshment.

But while the reading of literature is an entertaining experience, it is much more. It is one means we have as human beings for reflecting on our own lives and the lives of others. We enjoy reading about Huck Finn, for example, and part of our enjoyment lies in our imaginative escape into his "world." But part of it comes also from our empathy with Huck, and that means that we think about our own situations in the light of his. In fact, the empathetic reading favored by what we currently call "reader-response criticism" is the central reason why we read and study literature. We should abandon the notion, which some critics have tried to inculcate in us, that literature is important because it gives us purely aesthetic experiences.

The teaching of literature as emphathetic response, however, has its own problems, too. Is literature just an occasion for navel-gazing? An excuse for self-preoccupation? True empathy demands that we understand the *other* person and not just ourselves, that we deal with his or her situation and not simply focus on our own feelings and problems. Our concern then, is how to read and teach literature so that it serves us as a means for constructive reflection on our lives and not simply an excuse for the self-indulgent sharing of our own feelings.

I have three suggestions. First, we should not view literature simply as a "mirror of reality." If we do, we tend to see in literature a confirmation of what we already take to be the nature of life. If our response to literature is to say that "life is like that," we are in effect saying that writers are showing us what is typical of our own perceptions of life. We are beginning with our own understanding of life and then finding parallels to it in what we read.

All stories do, of course, grow out of and speak about a world in which all of us live. And that is why it is *possible* to hold to the "mirror of reality" view. But though we all live in the same world, we reflect on it and act in it in different ways. If literature is a means for reflecting *on* life—not just a means for *reflecting* life—then it is best seen as an interpretation of life rather than as a mirror. Literature interprets life, that is, it construes the significance of life as an author sees it. To read is to encounter various ways in which writers have interpreted the significance of human experience. We are only entrenching our biases if we use it to mirror and confirm our own pre-established views. When we see literature as a mirror not just of reality but of reality as we ourselves conceive of it, then we are doubly guilty of making empathy a wholly subjective experience. I would call this view of literature a self-indulgent view.

Secondly, we should try to discover the "big picture"—the overall design, the unifying pattern—in a literary work. The process of interpreting and understanding is always a process of seeing relationships among smaller and larger elements in an overarching design. To understand Huck Finn is not just to judge him out of context in the light of theories of adolescent psychology or of what we intuitively understand as typical adolescent behavior. If we look at Huck only in relation to our own sense of what maturing boys are like, we are being self-indulgent in our responses. We instead need to search out the thematic design of the novel as a whole. In order to respond to Huck in educationally constructive ways, we need to see him as one whose experiences are shaped by the values operative in the novel as a whole, and these values may in fact not be our own at all or only similar in part to our own. We respond constructively to Huck and the novel when we see how he is unlike us as well as in some ways like us.

This means that we will always be alert to the ever-expanding contexts of meaning in literature. Literary design is like a series of enveloping thematic circles; one circle of significance is related to the next larger and the next smaller circle. Ultimately our view of one kind of action is related to our view of other kinds of action: issues of personal behavior are related to those of social behavior, and those issues are related to political, economic, moral, and religious issues. Not every work of literature is concerned with all possible dimensions of life, but we need to "think big" when thinking about literature. We need to pursue significance to the broadest level by trying to see the encompassing design of a work. We shouldn't be fragmentary and partial, picking things out of context for our own self-indulgent purposes.

For example, it is possible to regard Huck Finn's struggle with the moral issue of what to do with Jim as an instance or model of moral decision-making that we must all face in our own way. Such response is not bad, but it is inadequate educationally. For if we examine Huck's decision in relation to all

the other elements in the novel as a whole, we can see that Huck's moral decision, while laudible in itself, is in Twain's framework of values a decision which grows out of a belief in the inner goodness of an untutored heart freed from the corrupting and deceitful influences of civilization and society. Twain's novel is a triumphant celebration of the pragmatic, individualistic, democratic free spirit of America. The book is truly a masterpiece. But its unifying vision—its large design—is far from a Christian one. To respond to the novel by pointing out that Huck's need to make moral choices is similar to our own need to make choices is fine as far as it goes, but it misses the full value of literary study. By seeing that moral choices are formed by and reveal the pattern of our beliefs about the nature of life and the larger values we hold, we can develop a more profound understanding of what is involved in moral choices. And also in the case of *Huckleberry Finn* we can gain insight into the perspectives which have shaped and continue to shape the pattern of our own national heritage. As much as possible we need to rise above the range of our limited self-determined responses and look for the "big picture." Through literature, students can grow by engaging themselves with other ways of interpreting the world; finding in literature a mirror and confirmation of their own feelings and attitudes has only practical and limited educational value.

THIRDLY, we should do our utmost to place literature historically. I do not mean that we should accumulate a lot of historical information about the author and the time at which the book was written. I mean, rather, that since various ways of seeing and interpreting the world have developed historically, they can be understood more fully if we are sensitive to the ways people in the past have interpreted life. These ways of seeing and interpreting are to be found *in the literature*: simply providing factual data about the historical setting does not do the job.

One of the sad consequences of the "mirror of reality" approach is that it tends to make literature of all periods a reflection of our own ways of perceiving the world. With this model students develop little awareness of how the changes in the history of literary expression and form reveal the diverse and developing ways in which human beings have interpreted the world. We don't want to teach history as progress, of course, but we do want to cultivate an awareness that authors have interpreted or construed life in enormously varied ways and that these ways are always shaped by the interaction of the author's own experiences with what has gone before. The self-indulgent approach to literary study is seen nowhere more clearly than in the paucity of historical consciousness. To look at past writers as mirrors in which we see ourselves reflected or to see "what this writer can say to us today" is often a way of wrenching literature out of its historical context and using it simply to clarify and reinforce our own predispositions. I realize that historical consciousness grows in students at certain stages in intellectual development, but wherever and whenever it is possible, we should strive to cultivate a sense of history.

If we would reinstate courses in the history of American literature, for example, rather than pursue the pseudo--appeal of a "works and us" approach, we would be able to see *Huckleberry Finn* as a novel which reveals Twain's effort to preserve the older Romantic version of the American dream amidst the changing social patterns of an expanding America. If we had some historical perspective, we could trace in a beginning way at least how the myth of American freedom and individualism is eroded or transformed in later 20th-century writers, how the Romantic privacy of Huck's moral decision is a step in the direction of the moral relativism of much 20th-century literature, how the move, for example, from the Puritans to Hawthorne, Thoreau, Twain, Crane, Fitzgerald, etc. is a way of gaining perspective on our own way of thinking about moral issues as modern Americans. This is a large task, but we can make a start. I suspect, in fact, that students find literature more interesting when they begin to see something of the historical contours of how people of various eras have dealt with the same problems and experiences that they are dealing with in contemporary circumstances. There is less value and less interest in simply seeing in literature the same things that we are thinking and feeling in our own way. Who needs simply to look in a mirror all the time?

THUS, in literary study we want to encourage empathetic response, but not in a self-indulgent way. To experience genuine empathy we need to "get inside another's way of experiencing and thinking" and not dwell on our own psyches. Perhaps this is what Keats meant by "negative capability." In order to do this, I am suggesting that it may help 1) to think of literature as a writer's means for interpreting rather than mirroring life, 2) to seek out the unifying design of a work as the most important factor in understanding literature as interpretation, and 3) to cultivate historical sensitivity as the best way to discriminate among and to evaluate the various interpretive visions which we encounter in literature. To engage ourselves in this way with literature may help us to empathize constructively and educationally with literature rather than self-indulgently.

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Leonard S. Stob

The Student Newspaper: Controlled or Controversial?

IT is true that a student newspaper is a very worthwhile instrument in teaching students to think, get the facts, practice interviewing, and present a story in as interesting a way as possible. There is an inherent dilemma, however, in the relationship of the administrator to the student newspaper. The administrator must be concerned and responsible for the entire school program; this includes public relations and the student newspaper. Yet, a student newspaper must be written to express student perspective, opinion, and interest. Can there be peace between the principal and the paper staff, each understanding, distinguishing, and appreciating the other's role?

Typically the student newspaper program may fall into one of two pitfalls depending on the degree of control taken by the journalism advisor and administrator. First, there is the paper which is allowed to be run by and left up to the students. It is the paper which tends to have as its purpose the venting of student negative observations and anger at a particular policy or procedure. At its worst, this paper is dominated by a small group of sophomoric students who wish to stress student rights and sensationalism. This is usually done in the name of freedom of the press.

The other pitfall into which student newspapers can fall is the one in which the newspaper is so controlled by the principal that it is a misnomer to think of it as a student newspaper. This paper can become a series of bland reports of silly stories, announcements, a list of calendar events, and reports on the sports scene. There may be some parent interest in this type of paper, but it is not really a student paper.

Is there a way out of making the principal either the powerful censor of all that is written, or of making him the one who must pick up the pieces when an article results in poor public relations? Must he be the one who deflects the ire and questions of society and board? Must he be the one who soothes the hurt feelings of the subject of an article? I'd like to suggest a perspective on the relationship of the administrator to the student newspaper that I think will work toward a sense of balance.

EVEN though the administrator is responsible for all aspects of the school program, the student paper should not be a tool of the administrator. Certainly student selection of topics and opinion must be guided. The point is that the newspaper is not the principal's. His part should be minimal. He should not restrict the publication merely because the topic may be controversial or because the opinion expressed is different from his own.

The student paper should not be the tool of irresponsible student opinion. The paper should not be the vehicle for expressing student gripes, or for attacking persons; nor should it provide the channel for expressing views that are primarily outrageous or offensive.

The paper does not "belong to the reader." The purpose of the student paper is not to sell copies. The paper does not have to provide the reader with gossip, exposés, or sensationalism. There is no need to intimidate or embarrass people for the sake of the reader's right to know.

We cannot give direction for the student newspaper only by recognizing excesses; we must also give focus to the specific task it should accomplish. What does it mean for the student paper to exercise responsible journalism?

All areas of the school must come under the lordship of Christ; this must include the student newspaper. The paper cannot claim autonomy. It cannot claim objective reporting outside of a philosophical base. The purpose of the paper is not to question whether the school should serve Christ and live according to the will of God. The philosophical base of the paper must conform to that defined by the school. The paper must stress the edification of the school community. It must be a voice calling for faithfulness to Jesus Christ.

The student newspaper is not the unrestricted possession of the students. Nor is it the private tool of the administrator. The student newspaper must be subservient to the lordship of Christ. It must help encourage the school community to be an operating example of living Christianity.

The practice of these principles will put the paper outside the grasp of personal manipulation. This will also provide an opportunity for students to explore Christian thinking and to make application of their conclusions to a community in which they have a stake and concern. The student newspaper, as well as all elements of the school program, must lead the Christian community to loving God above all and its neighbor as itself.

THERE are implications and conclusions to this approach.

The school's purpose and philosophical position should be written clearly defined. This document should provide the direction and purpose of all elements related to the school. The statement of philosophy should be studied and understood by the news staff. There may not be unity in every situation, but there must be unity of purpose and goal. This begins to provide the criteria for making decisions regarding appropriateness, balance, and tone of the topics selected. These criteria provide guidelines to keep the principal from manipulation while setting perimeters for the news staff.

It may be interesting to determine who is really the audience the paper is trying to reach. Is it the paper's desire to communicate some student observations about the plight of the students to the administration, board, or society? There are usually other channels provided for this. Rather, the paper's purpose may be to address the student body with information and analysis of the school community for the purpose of calling that community to greater levels of commitment and consistency to what we confess to believe.

The key is the journalism advisor. He must be in agreement with the school's philosophy. He must be willing to initiate and pursue goals for the paper which are consistent with the school's philosophy. He will be the one who will have to explain the theory of journalism to the students and to give the guidance for application in specific circumstances.

The paper should be building the students' Christian perspective on what is happening around the school and why. The writers can use criteria supported by the administration and general school society. The paper should encourage what is already admirable about the school as well as point out areas that need attention.

The main fare of the paper is to explain, in correct perspective, what is happening, and why. The news staff can have files of ideas for looking at the school community from various angles. Examples of such topics are perhaps obvious, but they can be done creatively and generally without controversy. Some ideas for topics may include: What is the procedure to be followed when establishing or rethinking a policy? How does the school's curriculum compare to other schools, or to state requirements? How do alumni view the school after 10 years? What individuals and groups make contributions to the school? What traditions does our school have? What traditions should our school have?

NOTICE that steering the student newspaper in this direction will not eliminate controversy. The controversy will be of a very different nature, however.

To be handled properly by the paper, a controversial topic must have the purpose of building the Christian perspective and community. This means that there should be more than merely the raising of an issue or creating of a splash which everyone can talk about. This would leave the principal and others with the task of suddenly dropping certain goals and programs already being worked on, to begin with new objectives and priorities. Timing is sometimes very important. Also there should be suggestions for followup, particularly ways in which students — if they are the primary audience — can make positive contributions. Appropriate topics which may produce lively discussion may include: What is the evidence of our sportsmanship? Do we have cliques at our school? What is the level of student spiritual maturity?

I'd like to conclude with a procedure for handling controversy. First, the journalism sponsor should have control over all the routine responsibilities. Secondly, if the staff of the paper thinks it necessary to print an article or raise a topic that is out of the routine and will cause significant controversy, the principal should be notified before publication. If an individual, committee, or organization is to be of special note in a negative or controversial way, Matthew 18:15-17 should apply. The staff should contact those involved. Perhaps changes can be made without people having to be embarrassed or cornered. There may still be a significant story, although not in line with dramatic journalism.

Thirdly, the sponsor and principal should discuss the topic, its timeliness and implications, in light of the philosophical goals previously written. If there cannot be agreement at this point, some form of appeal should be possible whether to the superintendent, board, or some other agent in the chain of command.

The student newspaper is not the tool of the administrator to accomplish public relations. It is not the agent for a group of students to sound off publically what should be said privately or be handled in another manner. The paper is not published to satiate reader curiosity for gossip. The student newspaper is under the lordship of Christ. It has the task of helping to build the kingdom of Christ in the school.

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H.K. Zoeklicht

A True Story

IT was seven-thirty this Monday morning, early in October. The few clouds hovering above Omni Christian High, tinged with red from the rising sun, were slowly beginning to drift westward. And the faculty, some in various stages of awakening, began slowly drifting into the teacher's lounge, having been summoned early this morning for pre-school devotions.

The coffee was perking, and Matt DeWit made his way toward the urn while growling, "I hope this brew will take my morning breath away." Rick Cole, temporary replacement for new mother Lucy Bright DenDenker and already dubbed by his colleagues as Mr. Bartlett for his endless supply of quotations, offered the rejoinder: "You should have quaffed the morning air, Matt; remember what Byron said? 'The morn is up again, the dewy morn, with breath all incense.'"

Matt groaned as Bob DenDenker, Omni's new principal, brought his staff to order by a quick tapping on the table. He looked at the faces of the teachers joining him around the table, waited for John Vroom who was digging into his bag for a donut hole to dip into his coffee, and then began.

"Good morning to all of you. Actually I'm a little uptight about this because I realize not all of you are fond of arriving a half hour earlier on a Monday morning. But I said at our retreat at the beginning of this semester that as principal I would dedicate myself to promoting excellence at Omni. You remember I applied that to the great commandment to love God with all our heart and mind and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We'll be exploring and talking all year, I'm sure, about what the implications of that are for us here at Omni as a Christian school community. For one thing, it seems to me to imply that as a staff we should sometimes just get together to focus on the Word and to pray together. We're starting that this morning, and I'd like to make that a regular feature on the first Monday morning of each month. That doesn't mean there might not be other special occasions as well when we'll feel the need for prayer and reflection together.

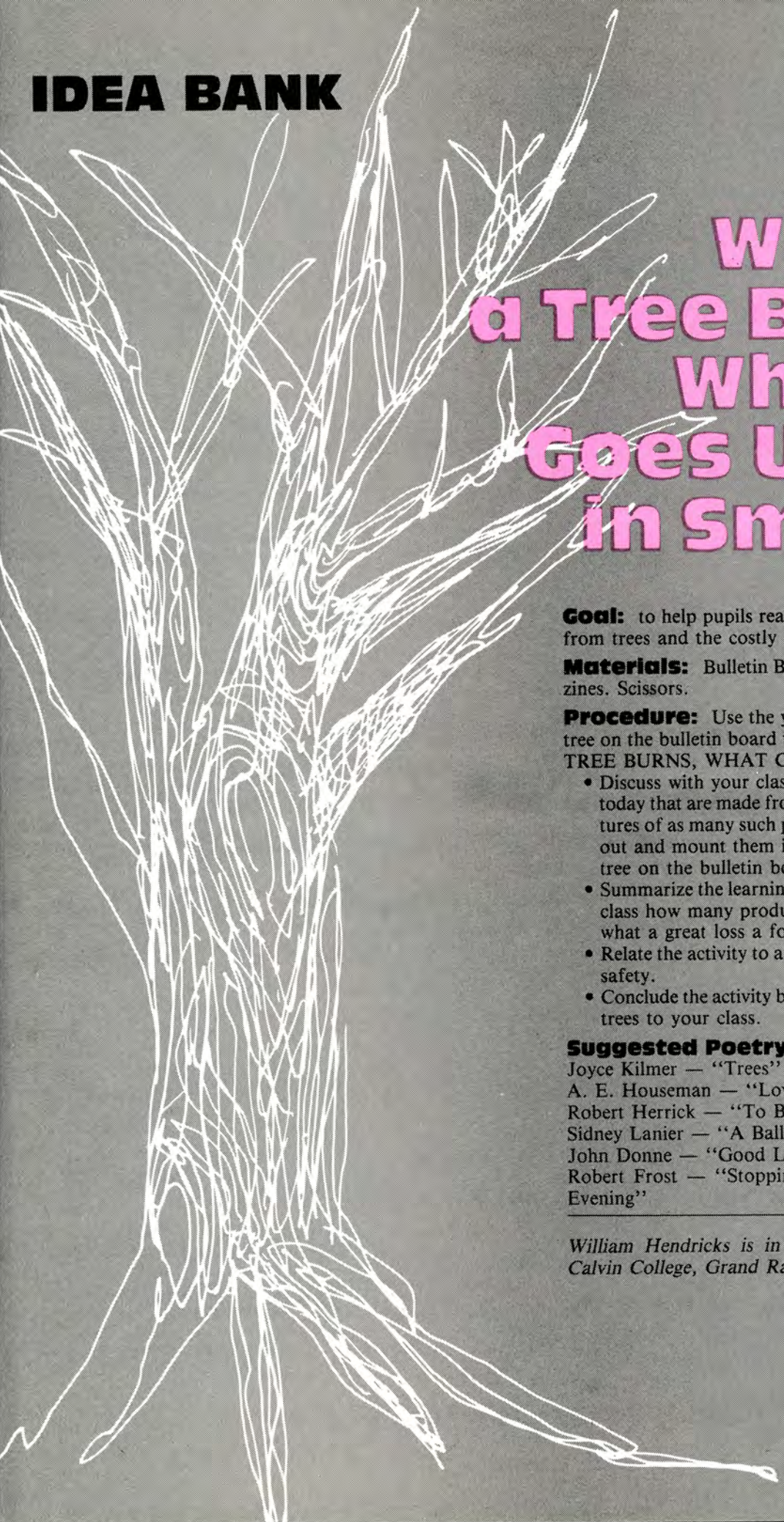
"I asked you Friday to read 1 John 2 for your private devotions this weekend as preparation for our time here this morning. I want to emphasize one verse from that chapter, verse 6, which says: 'Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Christ did.' Now I don't want to preach about that text, though it's a good text for a sermon. But you already had plenty of good preaching yesterday, I trust. What I want to do is to simply tell you a true story.

"It happened at our Christian teachers convention last year. I was having a late breakfast at a lunch counter in one of the hotel's restaurants when another teacher sat down next to me. I didn't know him, but I knew he was "one of us" because he too wore the convention badge. The waitress came humming cheerfully, wished him 'Good morning!' and gave him a menu. He did not return the greeting but looked at the menu and began hassling the waitress about the prices. She humored him and took his order. He made sure she understood that he wanted water instead of orange juice. While the waitress took care of his order, he began grumbling to me about the rip-off prices and the boring sectionals. Soon the waitress, still humming, came with Mr. Grumble's food, and added 'Enjoy your breakfast,' as she placed it before him. Again, he failed to acknowledge her courtesy; in fact, he never even looked at her. Instead, he critically checked out his order, then bowed his head for a four-second prayer. I heard the waitress mutter, 'Oh, now I get it.'

"My Christian colleague bolted down his food. Twice he asked the waitress for a water refill, rejecting the expensive cup of coffee as he had rejected the glass of orange juice. When the waitress brought the bill, she said, 'Have a good day.' My Christian brother again ignored her goodwill. He now critically inspected the bill, took out what was obviously the hotel room's ball point pen, and carefully refigured the bill. Then he wrapped in a napkin what was left in the bakery goods basket, including the left-over butter and jelly, and finally marched off to the cashier. There was no tip by his plate.

"That episode has haunted me. The cryptic response of the waitress, 'Oh, now I get it,' has haunted me. People know us, as the scripture says, by our works — people at Christian teachers' conventions too. People sitting in front of you in the classrooms too. People sitting here in what we call our asylum too. To all of us, God says through John: 'Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Christ did.' Will you join me in prayer?"

William Hendricks



When a Tree Burns What Goes Up in Smoke?

Goal: to help pupils realize the many products made from trees and the costly damage of forest fires.

Materials: Bulletin Board space. Yarn. Old magazines. Scissors.

Procedure: Use the yarn to make the outline of a tree on the bulletin board under the caption: WHEN A TREE BURNS, WHAT GOES UP IN SMOKE?

- Discuss with your class the kinds of products used today that are made from trees. Have pupils find pictures of as many such products as possible, cut them out and mount them inside the yarn outline of the tree on the bulletin board.
- Summarize the learning activity by noting with your class how many products are made from trees and what a great loss a forest fire causes.
- Relate the activity to a unit on camping and outdoor safety.
- Conclude the activity by reading several poems about trees to your class.

Suggested Poetry:

Joyce Kilmer — "Trees"
A. E. Houseman — "Loveliest of Trees"
Robert Herrick — "To Blossoms"
Sidney Lanier — "A Ballad of Trees and the Master"
John Donne — "Good Life, Long Life"
Robert Frost — "Stopping By Woods, On A Snowy Evening"

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May Christians Engage in Athletic Competition?

"Foundations of Physical Education & Sport" Class

COMPETITION is the driving force behind much of the achievement of many people in our society. It is usually seen as a struggle or rivalry for supremacy, but competition can be placed in the proper perspective as an aid to achievement and a matter of good sportsmanship. By replacing the overvalued desire to win at all costs with the intensity of the athletic experience itself, we may discover that athletic competition can provide an excellent path to personal enrichment and social involvement as Christians.

THERE are many factors involved in competition which can make it either a benefit or a detriment to a person. However, it is the individual's philosophy of play which determines the effect competition has on him. Anyone's perspective of competition can be governed by certain environmental influences. For one, the parents of the athlete may or may not have a positive effect on his view of competitive action. The parents set examples which they hope the child will follow. Therefore, if the parents encourage a detrimental competitive spirit, the child will probably strive to follow in their footsteps, unconsciously defining competition as a struggle for supremacy. But if the parents encourage and support competition in a positive way — stressing ideas of sportsmanship and fair play rather than supremacy — the child will have a better chance of developing a Christian attitude toward competition.

A second outside influence on the athlete is the spectators and supporters, whether they be friends, family, schoolmates, or other admirers. For example, if a game is close and an official makes a bad call, the fans may react by booing. This in turn may cause a player to view his opponents with anger and blame them for the mistaken decision. On the other hand, when the fans continually cheer the player, an athlete may

It is the individual's philosophy of play which determines the effect competition has on him.

"play to the crowd" and not participate in a sportsmanlike manner. One can see that the relationship between spectator and athlete may help shape the participant's attitude toward competition and affect his value system.

The coach is another person who plays a role in the competitive thinking of a player. The coach will give specific directions involving the strategy of the game, which the player is expected to follow. These directions are rooted in his own philosophy of competition; therefore, the athlete may likely become a product of this philosophy. Unfortunately, a coach may push unethical concepts in his instructions, causing his team to perform undesirable activities without a second thought to the ethics involved. The coach, whether right or wrong, will always be "right" due to his authoritative position. Because his philosophy of athletics directly affects the player's attitudes, it is essential that a true Christian foundation underlies his definition of competition.

The result of this play of environmental factors on the athlete will formulate his ideas of physical competition. If positive Christian influences have been at work, competition can be a real learning experience for the player and can produce many desirable qualities in him.

ONE of the qualities athletic competition can develop in an athlete is a sense of responsibility. Many times the road of a competitive athlete is hard and he may feel like giving it all up. The perseverence to continue forces the athlete to become a responsible being. This sense of responsibility will hopefully carry over to other areas of his life. Not only will he have developed a sense of accountability for his actions in the world but also, hopefully, in his relationship with Christ. One needs to persevere when it seems hard to be a Christian just as an athlete needs to keep pushing in order to finish his race. He is ultimately glorifying God by being a responsible Christian in competition and in his every day life.

An athlete can also benefit socially by competing in sports. One grows with teammates by going through the same things with them — walking back and forth to practice, being in the locker-room, and sharing pains and problems as well as expertise in certain aspects of the game. By competing together in a sport, teammates can hopefully walk away from the field or court with a mutual respect and understanding of each other. Through talking and sharing experiences throughout these situations, new friendships can begin, and old ones can be strengthened. If Christ is a part of the athletes' lives, they may also grow spiritually, and if only one athlete is a Christian, he may witness to the others and draw them to the Lord. These positive social benefits found in competition may strengthen relationships in all of life in years to come.

Another important benefit of Christian competition is the development of sportsmanship often promoted by the coaches. On the court it may be described as fair play and honesty and can be shown by helping an opponent up off the floor. This is not always done so easily due to our sinful nature. A player often finds himself yelling at an official because "it just wasn't a fair call." When he competes in sports, however, a player must learn to control his temper and emotions on and off the court. One of the fruits of the spirit, according to God's Word in Galations 5, is self control. Though difficult to achieve, it must be sought after and practiced not only outwardly but also in the heart. For example, a player may outwardly refrain from verbally abusing the official, but he must also believe in his heart that the official made the best decision possible. In order to be a witness to others, an athlete can learn how to control his actions and thus become a more Christ-like example.

As part of self-control the player needs to restrain the "self-glory" that often results from sports competition. Humility is necessary in competition in order for every player to function as one within a team. If one player is above the others there is dissention within the team whereas if all members are considered equal it strengthens the unity of the team. Philippians 2:3 says, "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourself."

What are the goals for success in the secular world? They are to be "Number 1" and to get to the top while dominating everyone else. But for the Christian these goals must be reformed. Winning isn't everything and should not receive primary emphasis. Rather, the goals should be deeply rooted in Christian ideals. Through competition a Christian should strive to set an example for others and draw closer to them rather than try to supersede them.

Trinity Christian College
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Paul Boonstra

Christian Mathematics Education How Reasonable Is Our Rationale?

THE article "A Christian Mathematics Education?" (February, 1983) is a challenge for us to consider why and how we teach mathematics in our Christian schools. I'm happy D. Van Der Klok wrote the article, for it's time the subject receives some attention in our journal. The article triggered some thoughts which I wish to present, but which I hope are not viewed as being totally negative. I present them only as an attempt to continue the dialogue.

The article distinguishes between a rationale and a reason — a rationale being the basic starting point.

Before presenting the rationale for teaching mathematics, the article presents three reasons for teaching mathematics which are then, one by one, dismissed as being inadequate. Interestingly, once the rationale is presented, all three reappear as appropriate with no further explanation than the rationale.

The first reason mentioned is logic — mathematics teaches logic. This is dismissed because, according to the article, students don't see logic in their classes or in their texts, and students are bored with logic. If indeed students don't see logic in classroom or text, this is not a fault of the discipline, but the fault of the teacher and/or the text. They *should* see logic in the classroom. I doubt that students find it boring. When a student asks why an operation is done a certain way, he is seeking a logical, reasoned response. Of course, the "reasoning" must be at his comprehension level. The arguments must be understandable to the student. He is bored aand turned off when the answer is *not* logical, when he is told simply to do it this way. Students often reflect the attitudes of their teacher. Boredom of students often results from unimaginative and dull teaching.

A second reason given is that mathematics is one of the major accomplishments of Western culture. This is dismissed because it does not receive emphasis in the classroom. But again, this is not a criticism of mathematics. Rather it is a criticism of the teaching of mathematics.

The third reason given is that mathematics is practical. This is dismissed because the "applications" given to students are not practical. I agree that many of the "problems" are only drills, and many of the "applications" are forced. But this is a criticism of the problems selected, not of the discipline.

I think each of the above reasons is a good reason for teaching mathematics. I think covenant childen should learn to think logically, should know about mathematics in Western culture, and should see the applications of mathematics. The arguments in Van Der Klok's article merely demonstrate how necessary it is that mathematics be taught by teachers who know and enjoy mathematics. Too often our Christian schools have been satisfied to have mathematics taught by teachers who are not qualified to teach it. Too often our colleges have been willing to certify people who have only a minimal exposure to mathematics.

AFTER dismissing the three reasons mentioned above, the article presents a rationale for teaching mathematics, namely, exploring and forming God's creation. What bothers me a bit is that the article claims that this focus is "outside the discipline of mathematics." Indeed the examples given to illustrate the rationale are all applications outside the discipline. This rationale, then, views mathematics as a tool, something to be used to gain an end. While there is this aspect to mathematics — applied mathematics is very popular today — this is not the whole story.

Man has been created in the image of God. One of the characteristics of man because he has been created in God's image is that he has the ability to "mathematize." He sees many cross sections of tree trunks and abstracts from these the concept of circle. But he does not stop there. He asks what are the properties of a circle? How is it like a square? How does it differ from a square? He asks these questions not only to be able to use a circle (the wheel) but also to know about circles.

He is faced with tasks requiring quantitive concepts and he develops ideas of number. But he does not stop there. He studies his number system and finds many interesting realtionships — prime numbers for example. He studies the rules for combining numbers and develops new systems by "changing the rules." He does this not only because it may have applications; he also does this to know more fully and completely what number is about. This activity, within the discipline itself, is also a way of exploring God's creation.

A Christian geologist may study rocks

and rock formations in order to locate new sources of energy, but he also is interested in knowing as much as he can about rocks because rocks are part of God's creation. So too a Christian mathematician may study mathematics with an eye to application, but he also studies mathematics to see more clearly the relationships in it and thereby gain a greater appreciation for the orderliness of God's creation.

Mathematics is beautiful. This does not only refer to its economy of symbols and logical conciseness. We tend to divide the subject into subdivisions — arithmetic and geometry, for example. But it is beautiful to see the interplay between the branches. A concept in one branch sheds light on and simplifies a concept in another. A student should be taught in such a way that he sees this interplay. He should see how geometry sheds light on algebraic problems and how algebra helps to understand geometry.

So, if the rationale for teaching mathematics is to be the exploring and forming of God's creation, it cannot be understood so narrowly that it excludes an internal study of the discipline itself.

BUT as I read the concluding parts of the article there is something else that bothers me. I started out by making an appeal that those who teach mathematics know mathematics. By the same token should not someone who is intent on leading classroom discussions about profits in business, capitalism, and ecology, know about these areas? It seems to me that the best a good mathematics teacher can do is point out how mathematics may be useful in exploring these issues, and leave all but the most obvious evaluations to those who are more expert in these matters. I would object to a political scientist making evaluations of capitalism if he knows little about political science.

Perhaps there is a possibility of having one statement of rationale for the teaching of mathematics in the Christian classroom, but at this point I think such a statment will be a compound sentence with many independent clauses.

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Field Trip

Eric looked in a big blue book
and read how leaves turn orange
before they fall in the autumn.
He thought of the bulletin board at school
where uniform leaves hung red and yellow.

He looked down the street
at the cold square buildings he knew—
shades of gray and black—
and thought of the book about trees
somewhere, that wore flame and color.

Eric read in a story book
about dryads and tree-nymphs and elves
who played among leaves in the wood.
He thought of flaming trees he'd never seen
except in books that were possibly true.

He went out one day
on a trip with his class
far from the gray streets of town.
He wondered at leaves hanging orange, alive,
and said, "Then the books were right."

Eric was not among the children
who came back to the school that day
content with travels and back to play.
He is still in his orange wood, magical, strange,
playing with dryads and tree-nymphs and elves.

Lori Kort

BOOK REVIEWS

Donald Oppewal, Editor

Yvonne VanEe, 5 DAYS OF WORLD HUNGER AWARENESS, Teacher Resource Unit #2. Christian Schools International, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1982, 112pp.
Reviewed by Susan Kort, Fruitland, Ontario.

5 Days of World Hunger Awareness is a teacher resource unit designed for use in grades 4-6. The unit extends over five teaching days and represents an integrated approach to teaching. Four lesson plans, complete with concept statements, objectives, material lists, content outlines, background information, teaching procedures, and ditto sheets which may be photocopied, are included for each of the five days. To use the unit, teachers need only to order and gather the materials, acquaint themselves with the lesson information and procedures, and do as much of the suggested additional reading as they think they should. Bible and nutrition lessons are included every day. The other two lessons involve mathematics, social studies, language arts, or art.

Integration and unity are achieved in the unit in three ways. First, all of the lessons examine some aspect of the world hunger problem to increase the students' awareness of the problem and of their involvement in it. Second, each lesson within a particular discipline area, such as Bible, nutrition, or mathematics, very consciously builds on the information and insights gained in the preceding lessons of that discipline. What is not always so obvious is how one lesson flows into the next within the course of a day. Often there seems to be very little transition from one lesson to the next. Third, all of the lessons lead the students to examine the problem of world hunger in the light of biblical principles. The students are encouraged to respond to the problem of world hunger in ways which will reflect loving obedience to God and service to others.

Most of the lessons in the unit involve whole class instruction, with some of the assignments calling for small group work. The activities described for the activity center allow for more small group work as well as individual work. The activities include games, project folders, and activity sheets, and they represent an interesting variety of activities at varying levels of difficulty. Complete instructions and game cards are included, making it necessary for anyone using the unit merely to gather a few materials, cut out the instructions, and paste the instructions onto folders or note cards.

The resource lists include teacher reference materials, student books, sources for the audio-visual materials, and sources for free catalogues and pamphlets on the topic of world hunger. A sample test and other suggestions for evaluation are included.

In conclusion *5 Days of World Hunger Awareness* encourages students in grades 4-6 to explore a relevant, current topic of interest through a variety of disciplines and activities while at the same time examining what should be their Christian response to the problem of world hunger. The lessons and activities are described in detail, making it possible for teachers to use the unit without re-researching the topic for themselves. Anyone who wishes to teach in an explicitly Christian perspective or who wishes to use the integrated approach to teaching will find it worthwhile to try this unit.

John A. Vander Ark, 22 LANDMARK YEARS, Christian Schools International, 1943-1965. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1983, 189pp., $9.95
Reviewed by Rev. B.J. Haan, Sioux Center, Iowa.

It may not be overdue but it is surely time that some kind of history or commentary be written about the Christian School movement, CSI, and that John Vander Ark be its author. Vander Ark, as Executive Director during most of the "landmark years" (1943-1965) of NUCS, now Christian Schools International, is eminently qualified to write such a book. The fact that Vander Ark was so closely identified with and was so directly involved in the life of CSI not only is apparent as one reads, but also lends authenticity and credibility to the work.

With a concise yet meaningfully informative prologue on the history of Christian education from Old Testament days to the present, the author sets the stage for the main purpose of the book. One senses from the opening chapter, "Forcing of Issues," that the book is going to be more than mere history. The history of CSI's landmark years is presented in terms of the principles, struggles, problems, and challenges which were so pronounced in that history. However, all that is of significance in CSI history is found in this volume — the critical teacher shortage in the earlier years, gradual attainment of more adequate teacher salaries and a good pension plan, expansion and promotion of the textbook program, the growth of Christian schools in Canada and problems arising from Canadian quarters, the battle over the creedal basis of CSI, matters involving government relations, etc. For those who, like Vander Ark, have been close to the situation throughout these landmark years, the book is interesting, enjoyable, and profitable reading. For others who want to be better informed on the history of Christian education, this work is highly recommended. It should be required reading for all Christian school teachers.

by Sheri Haan, et. al., WRITING RAINBOW. Christian Schools International, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1981, K-6, $16.50: guide, $2.50: student pad.
Reviewed by Pat Oostenink, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

For teachers who feel compelled to "do" writing, but simply do not know where to begin, *Writing Rainbow* curriculum will give the materials and ideas, and inspire the confidence needed to im-

plement a year-long program. Designed for K-6, it will help teachers equip budding young authors with the necessary skills to become proficient, able communicators of written language. The texts also seek to integrate all of the language arts (listening, speaking, reading, writing), although writing is the major focus.

The publishers not only claim a Christian philosophy, but support that claim by utilizing Christian principles and presenting activities which encourage growth of a child in all dimensions. CSI shows how the three dimensions (intellectual, creative, decisional) "are the broad strokes of the writing curriculum." Many discussion situations require students to make responsible Christian choices. Intellectual concerns are also evident since there is a mastery of skills and a body of knowledge to be gained and applied. And certainly children's imaginations and creativity come into play as ideas are generated and newly acquired skills are practiced in various ways.

The curriculum includes all the necessary elements of a complete writing program. The spiral arrangement of topics provides opportunity for continual growth through the grades. Beginning with the nurture of God's innate gift of language, *Writing Rainbow* leads students into genuine, meaningful experiences. Product is not ignored and is one of the obvious elements, but process is equally important as the student learns about use of symbols, vocabulary, sense of audience, and the necessary mechanics to improve the writing. The authors present not only punctuation concerns but also deal with structural content such as sentence combining and contracting, use of sentence variety, and paragraph construction.

Grammar and usage, often frustrating topics for teachers, are included. Presented in a purposeful context and related to the writing act, they make sense. Parts of speech, frequently taught in boring drills, play a more important role in this program. They provide the skeleton for ideas and sprinkle the writing with color, detail, and action. Children will see how their language is a living, even changing, vibrant tool for expression.

It should be stressed that although the topics are presented sequentially, all the skills involved in writing are ongoing and do not end at the conclusion of a given unit. For example, editing and proofreading will be necessary throughout the writing process for fluent writers who wish to share their work with a real audience, particularly outside their family and classroom community.

Teachers can easily follow the clearly written lesson plan format. Specific objectives provide immediate focus. During the introduction, concept, and conclusion steps, practical suggestions for teaching and concrete examples help guide the presentation. Evaluation is also part of the total teaching procedure. Included in the lesson guide is a list of materials required and stated time needed for implementing each plan. Many lessons also refer to the use of a student pad which may be purchased separately.

An impressive bibliography, included in the unit's introduction and at the conclusion of the guide, suggests alternative sources from which teachers can gain additional ideas to extend the concepts. More than supplying a list of good books and media, the authors present a brief synopsis of each selection. A separate treasury of resources also provides literature recommendations appropriate for children's use. Written on heavy paper and designed for file box use, these titles with accompanying descriptive statements will present excellent models for writing.

Another program, you say? If adopting another program does not appeal to teachers who feel overwhelmed with an overabundance of "musts" for their limited time schedules, *Writing Rainbow* guides could be purchased as a resource book for ideas and structure, or as a supplement to an already successful writing program. And as you do with any purchased guide, make instructional choices based on the individual needs of and developmental concerns for your young writers.

This timely writing curriculum is a must for every writing teacher's library (and every teacher is a writing teacher). Obviously, these few descriptive statements cannot present everything the program offers, but hopefully, your curiosity has been sparked enough to entice you into browsing through *Writing Rainbow*. This experience will enable you to make a wise choice.