Koinonia

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From Ordinary to Extraordinary

EPIC Leadership

Diversity in Evangelical Higher Education

Thinking Theologically: Considering Community

Sophomore Community Groups

Snapshots from ACSD 2005
It seems as though it was just yesterday that I was visiting with many of you at our annual conference on the beautiful campus of George Fox University (GFU). What a lovely venue it was for our meetings, and the hospitality afforded to us by the GFU staff was outstanding. Once again, our host college provided us with an atmosphere for enrichment, encouragement, and fellowship. Thank you, GFU Student Life Staff!

As I reflect on our annual meeting at GFU, there were some significant things that transpired. First, we had a transition in leadership from Skip Trudeau to me. I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to thank Skip for his excellent leadership. Skip has a contagious passion for ACSD, and he has provided significant leadership, bringing us to the point at which we find ourselves today. I was honored to serve with him and take the helm with the organization strong and poised to do some great things. Skip, on behalf of the membership of ACSD, I would like thank you for your leadership and faithful service.

As a result of the good financial situation in which we currently find ourselves, the executive committee is embarking on a number of initiatives aimed to enhance services and build our organization. First, the ACSD website is undergoing a major overhaul. It is our hope that the new and improved site will be functional very soon. We will keep you informed of the progress.

A second initiative is to create three task forces to consider the areas of cultural diversity, best practices in student affairs, and members at non-Christian institutions. Funds will be used to pull together individuals for each of these task forces during the year with the aim of discussing these issues and developing strategies for improving ACSD. It is our goal to have a report on the progress made by each of these groups at the annual meeting at Indiana Wesleyan University.

Finally, we want to continue to encourage research in the field of student affairs. We believe that our membership has a great deal to offer the profession as it relates to our work in students affairs. Even though this is not a completely new initiative, it is our hope to be able to provide more grants for those working on significant projects. We have created a grant proposal application that can be found on the website. It provides interested members with all the necessary application information. I would encourage those of you who are participating in research, or interested in doing so, to avail yourselves of this possibility.

At the annual meeting we outlined our current fiscal situation, but I would like to review it once again so that everyone is aware of how we are designating our resources and how these initiatives I mentioned will be funded. Currently, we have a cash balance of approximately $171,000. Executive committees in the past have resolved to protect our operating budget by developing an emergency reserve fund. The current approved operating budget for 2005-2006 is $53,750. Therefore, we have established a reserve fund of $107,000 that would support our operating budget for two years in the event of some financial crisis. There are also other monies that have accumulated, primarily from conference revenues, which are above and beyond our yearly budget. These are the dollars that will be used to fund the mentioned initiatives. Approximately $10,000 has been designated toward these current initiatives. Having money to spend strategically is new territory for ACSD; therefore, the executive committee will move carefully as we allocate these funds.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve our great organization as president. What makes this such a great pleasure is serving alongside the other executive committee members you have elected. The current committee is comprised of Jane Higa, Westmont College, President-Elect; Pam Jones, Belhaven College, Vice President; Paul Blezien, William Jessup University, Treasurer; Edee Schulze, Wheaton College, Secretary; Doug Wilcoxson, LeTourneau University, Membership Chair; and Mike Hayes, Lee University, Editor. Would you please pray for us as we conduct the business of the organization? We need the Lord’s guidance and wisdom throughout the days ahead.

All of us have facilitated leadership retreats, welcomed new students and parents on campus, and completed several weeks of classes. And you, like me, probably asked yourself, “Where did the summer go?” But, if you are like me, having students on campus, so that I can impact their lives for Christ and His Kingdom, is what I live for. Remembering this goal is what keeps me going when times get tough, and I trust that it is the same for you. We have a high calling!

I am looking forward to great things this year through ACSD.

Godspeed,

Tim Arens

ACSD President
Dean of Students
Moody Bible Institute
Chicago, Illinois
Carbon Paper

I grew up in a small town in west-central Ohio. My mom’s family and three other families migrated north from southern Kentucky after the coal mining business went kaput in their tiny mining town in the 1950s. The four families found the work they desperately needed and decided to settle into a church together. The church went through a great deal of change over the years, but the four families stayed involved until their matriarchs began to die.

A couple of weeks ago I received word that a third matriarch had died. It was Sister Gibson. Our church was one where all of the adults had the same first names. If you were a man, your name was Brother, and if a woman, Sister. You used real first names at your own peril!

Sister Gibson was a jewel. She had a profound impact on so many lives, mine included. When I heard the news, the flashbacks brought a grin and a tear. I remembered when I would come home from college, and she would slip me $20. Sometimes she would give my family a ride to church. I ate peanut butter sandwiches at her house. She sang bass in the church choir when there were not enough men to do so. But most of all, she taught the second- and third-grade boys Sunday School class when I was a kid.

Every Sunday she served. She was a flannelgraph master. She even let us have flannelgraph wrestling matches with Jesus and the disciples. What more could a boy ask for? Most of all, though, she cared; and we knew it. One of the things she did every Sunday was to bring pads of 8.5” by 5.5” yellowish paper with sheets of carbon paper. After she asked about the offering and the number of Bible chapters we had read the previous week, she would pick one lucky boy to do the most coveted job of all. She would give him about seven sheets of that paper with six sheets of carbon paper placed neatly between them. He had been commissioned to copy down a few verses of Paul’s epistles. She gave the same instructions every time: “Here are the verses, and press down hard.” We even had to use a pen!

The class would continue while the chosen one worked on his holy writ. He would finish in just a few minutes and join the rest of the class in the simple lesson. At the end of the class Sister Gibson came to inspect the work. Regardless of the penmanship, she regarded it as a masterpiece. She would distribute the copies among us, ask us to roll the papers into a scroll, and put them in the coffee cans she had furnished months earlier. When the cans were full, we took them home.

The days of using carbon paper are gone. Thank God! But the carbon paper and those little scrolls have served as a simple reminder of how her life pressed indelible lessons onto my life. Through the little Sunday School class and in many other ways throughout the years, this godly woman left a mark of consistency, care, compassion, and generosity on my life and so many others.

I cannot find those little scrolls anywhere, but I have been reflecting on her life a good bit. How should I respond to a legacy like this? The only legitimate response is to pass it on in the spirit and character in which it was given in the first place. Since hearing the news of Sister Gibson’s passing, I have reflected on the impressions I am leaving on the lives of the students God has placed in my life. We do not use carbon paper anymore, but our work most assuredly leaves indelible impressions on others.

Most of us take the time periodically to reflect on the impressions we are leaving on our students’ lives. For me, the timing of this contemplation comes at a good time as the fall semester plods on. As we move further into this academic year, let us take the time to ask the question perhaps a little more deeply. Our students will not have little scrolls in coffee cans by which to remember us in a few years, but they will know whether we cared by the legacy we leave them. Perhaps Sister Gibson’s advice resonates with us today: “Here are the verses, and press down hard.”

Mike Hayes, Koinonia Editor Director of Student Development and the Leonard Center Lee University, Cleveland, TN
From Ordinary to Extraordinary

By Dr. John C. Maxwell

When you hear the word “ordinary”—in reference to a person, a restaurant, an athlete, an actor, or anything else—what comes to mind? If you’re anything like me, you automatically think of words such as “average,” “plain,” “common,” and “everyday.” You’re probably not thinking in specifics; ordinary people and places simply aren’t that memorable.

Now switch mental gears and ponder what you think of when you hear the word “extraordinary.” Are words such as “amazing,” “outstanding,” “brilliant,” and “exceptional” coming to mind? I expect so. You might even be thinking of a particular individual who fits this description—an incredible football player, a captivating public speaker, a Nobel Prize-winning poet, or a gifted pianist.

This little exercise might seem to indicate that there is a huge gap between being ordinary and being extraordinary. It might lead you to believe that if you’re an ordinary person with an ordinary job, you have no hope of ever achieving success or doing something that really makes a difference.

This is a commonly held belief, but I’m here to tell you, it’s not valid.

Think of it in terms of professional baseball. If a player on your favorite team had a lifetime batting average of .340, you would consider him to be an extraordinary hitter, definite Hall of Fame material. At the same time, if another player on the same team consistently averaged around .240, you would probably think he was just okay, if you even knew who he was at all.

There would be worlds of difference between these two players when it came to fan recognition, playing time, and, of course, salary. But think about it: what do their batting averages really say about these players? For every ten visits to the batter’s box, the first player gets a hit 3.4 times, compared with 2.4 times for the second player.

Percentage-wise, that’s not a great difference, and that’s my point. In baseball, as in other areas of life, there’s not much difference between ordinary and extraordinary. But that little bit makes a huge difference in four key areas. Extraordinary individuals:

1. Garner more respect.
2. Add more value to other people.
3. Make much more money.
4. Are perceived differently by the people around them.

Look closely at the two words we’ve been discussing: ordinary and extraordinary. What’s the difference between the two? Five little letters that make up the word extra. That’s it. Just put “extra” in front of ordinary, and you get extraordinary.

So what does it take to move from ordinary to extraordinary? Think about it in terms of the topics we’ve covered in recent issues of “Leadership Wired.” If you want to go from ordinary to extraordinary in your role as a leader or in any other area of life, give a little extra effort. Spend a little extra time. Seek a little extra help. Possess a little extra realism. Make a little extra change. That’s all it takes—a little extra.

Let me add two more areas where a little extra will help you make the leap to the next level.

1. A little extra attitude

Motivation determines what you do; ability determines what you’re capable of doing; and attitude determines how well you do it. When I see a person operating with excellence, I know it’s because he or she has a good attitude. In writing about the Olympics, the late sports columnist Jim Murray commented that, in the history of the Games, the difference between gold medalists and silver medalists in all the timed events was less than one-tenth of a second. “That’s not ability,” he said. “That’s attitude.”

2. A little extra planning

Robert Eliot, a cardiology professor at the University of Nebraska, has some great advice: “It’s important to run not on the fast track, but on your track. Pretend you have only six months to live, and make three lists: the things you have to do, want to do, and neither have to do nor want to do. Then, for the rest of your life, forget everything on the third list.” What does it take to come up with such lists? A little extra planning.

You might think of yourself as pretty ordinary right now, but what would happen if you moved your life up just one notch? What would happen if you added a little extra in any of these areas? Remember—the distance between ordinary and extraordinary is not that great, but the resulting difference in your life when you make that leap could be far greater than you could even imagine.

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Dr. John C. Maxwell is the founder of the leadership development organization EQUIP. Dr. Maxwell has authored numerous influential leadership books including The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, Becoming a Person of Influence, and Developing the Leaders Around You.
People love to visit the maternity ward, but few line up to visit a boarding school.

I made a discovery five years ago: 87% of the college campuses we worked with in our organization sponsored a training event in August for their student leaders. Interestingly, only 17% of those campuses offered ongoing support for those leaders throughout the semester. In other words, for most schools leadership development was an "event" not a "process" throughout the year.

The more I look around me these days, the more I see this happening. Regardless of what we say, we act as though "leader training" is about a sage on the stage; it's an event where we verbally instruct students in leadership, but leave them to fend for themselves the rest of the semester. I believe this explains the burnout and dropout rates we see so often from our RAs, SGA, or campus ministers. We must begin nurturing a culture of leadership on our campuses that will affect students positively all year long, so that leadership development becomes organic, like a contagious "virus." A virus is caught more than taught. Similarly, leadership culture is an environment of shared values, behaviors, systems, and experiences that contiguously encourages students to think and act like servant-leaders.

We Decided to Try It Out

So, how do we create this culture of leadership? I believe it is through the intentional use of images, experiences, and relationships. For example, at Growing Leaders we began hosting a leadership experience called "Converge Atlanta" each May. During Converge Atlanta we host a group of several dozen student leaders from all over the world; over the course of two weeks, we furnish them with a contagious environment of leadership. The students take field trips to places such as the World of Coca-Cola, Chick-Fil-A headquarters, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. After the trips, we unpack what each of these places teach us about strategy, servant-leadership, and vision. Students read two books during the two weeks. They experience adventure learning on low and high ropes courses as well as white water rafting. They interview key leaders in Atlanta, such as Dr. John Maxwell, Pastor Andy Stanley, Louie Giglio, Joel Manby (former CEO of Saab Automobiles), and David Salvers (VP of Marketing at Chick-Fil-A). They discuss video clips and learn leadership principles via images (or metaphors) that we call "Habitudes." They take assessments on their personalities, leadership styles, and spiritual gifts. They serve at Safehouse Outreach, an urban ministry to the homeless. And, they participate in "process groups" each night to debrief what God has said to them during that day. Needless to say, it is a contagious environment. They learn leadership truths far beyond what we attempted to teach!

Even though I love teaching on a platform, we had to take leader development beyond mere instruction. Students today are EPIC: Experiential, Participatory, Image-rich, and Connected. (Leonard Sweet did a great job doing an exegesis of Starbucks, where he reminded us of this truth at our ACSD conference). Consequently, we must put more creativity and time into our training. We must set organic goals, not just programmatic goals. Programmatic goals usually involve numbers: we need twenty more leaders next year, so let's find twenty students to sign up. Organic goals involve creating an environment similar to a gardener cultivating the soil. The culture then affects every student; each one catches the "virus" and begins thinking more like a servant-leader.

Changing Your Culture

If God is going to use you to transform culture on your campus into a leadership culture, I believe you must ask yourself some crucial questions along the way.
**Question One: What Moves You?**

All cultures embrace certain values that make them love and fight. You will find distinct values in various cultures such as Kenya, Singapore, or Poland that are unique to each culture. Such values have emerged over time and now influence the way people act or react in certain ways.

This reality has everything to do with leadership. Let me illustrate. If one were to list the factors that make a strong, healthy leader, what would go on that list? Likely, the list would include qualities like vision, strategic planning, people skills, and teamwork. These are good concepts, but they're not primary. Most people would leave the first and most important ingredient off the list: a holy discontent. Leaders who transform culture are moved by more than a job description; they possess an inner firestorm that compels them to act. They are moved by a burden that won't leave them alone; it keeps them awake at night; it makes them pray; it causes them to write notes to themselves in the middle of the night on how to resolve the issue on their heart. Consider biblical leaders who impacted a culture: Moses and the Egyptians; Nehemiah and the broken wall around Jerusalem; David and the Philistines; Esther and a Persian enemy Haman, who wanted to slaughter the Jews. Each leader identified the firestorm inside—that holy discontent—that led to action when there was no job description. In short, transformational leaders feel compelled to act.

For eleven years I worked with college students in San Diego. I was moved by so much untapped potential that I spend 60% of my week doing leader development with students. It was untapped potential in those young adults that grabbed my heart and wouldn't let me go; this was my “firestorm.”

**Questions for further consideration: What disgusts you? Do others share this disgust? What are you moved to do?**

**Question Two: How Will You Act?**

When we visit other counties on short-term mission trips, it can be easy to laugh at behavioral differences in that new culture. Likewise, the people living there probably fight that same temptation when looking at us. One of my friends, Jim, worked as a missionary overseas for two years. The people he ministered to had no interest in his Gospel message. After some time, however, a tribal chief asked if his elders could meet to ask him a question. Jim was elated that someone finally had a question for him, and he showed up prepared to answer the deepest theological question they could muster. When they met, the chief simply asked: “Why do you keep that stuff?” Jim had no clue what he was talking about, so he inquired. Again, the chief asked the same question. When Jim appeared confused, the chief clarified: “We see you reach into your pocket, pull out a white cloth and blow your nose into it. Then, you look at it, and put it back into your pocket. We just want to know—why do you keep it?”

It's a good question, and it took a person foreign to our culture to question the funny American practice of keeping a dirty hankerchief. Staff leaders must question behaviors on their campus as well. Why do we do what we do? What could we do that would change the culture measurably and accelerate the growth of student and staff leaders? 150 years ago, a biologist named Justus Von Liebig discovered there are four nutrients necessary for the growth of a plant: nitrogen, lime, phosphoric acid, and potash. As long as all four minerals are present in sufficient amounts in the soil, growth occurs automatically. Development stops when one or more ingredients are missing.

In the same way, your culture on campus must include some fundamental nutrients for growth:

1. Authentic Community (Life change happens best in small groups.)
2. Shared Vision (Teams grow best when they share an important goal.)
3. Complimentary Gifts (Members capitalize on their diverse strengths.)
4. Common Language and Principles (Teams must adopt a language for their culture.)

Next, we must recognize that students will go through stages of development as they become people of influence on the campus. Generally, these stages can be identified this way:

**ATTRACTION LEVEL.**

We must host activities that help a student connect with the campus and feel at home.

**INVolVEMENT LEVEL.**

Next, students need activities to help them build relationships and buy into the campus vision.

**SERVICE LEVEL.**

Next, we must help a student go from mere discussion to serving on the campus and using their gifts.

**LEADERSHIP LEVEL.**

Eventually, students should recognize their influence and desire to lead in some way on campus.

**MULTIPLICATION LEVEL.**

Finally, upperclassmen may reach the level of leading leaders, and carriers of the vision multiply.

**Question for further consideration: Which of your activities enable students to consider leadership and grow through stages to become a better leader?**

**Question Three: What Is Your Step Function?**

Cultures experience specific events that change them. For instance, Hurricane Mitch caused 150 inches of rain to fall on Haiti in one week in 1998, instead of in three years. This disaster changed their maps in a short amount of time. Similarly, the tsunami in December 2004 changed the lives of millions of people in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Thailand immediately. These natural events, although negative, were “step functions.” They were sudden events in the evolution of the culture that transformed the paradigm of the people there. September 11, 2001 was a step function for us, in the U.S. It provoked a new way of seeing the world, a paradigm shift.

I believe you can plan for positive “step functions” on your campus, which will work like fertilizer as you grow leaders there. These are catalytic events that can forever change the way students and staff view leadership and their roles on campus, as they prepare to enter the world.
Typical Growth and Change vs. Step Function

You can see from the diagram above that an event gives students a new level of understanding and passion regarding leadership. They peak in their hunger to become people of influence in their world. Then, although the passion does eventually decline, it doesn’t return to the low level it once was. Students remain at a higher level than before the event occurred, because a “process” following the event enables them to continue growing. Event follow-up may include small mentoring communities where students can sign up to continue discussion and appreciation of the leadership principles learned from the event. This enables the “event” to become a “process” and eventually a culture on the campus. Consider the contribution of both “events” and “process” in the culture:

If you are to nurture a leadership culture, you can encourage it by creating a language of leadership that students can come to understand and value. The concepts or words you use may be unique to you, but they will catch on and help cultivate the soil of leadership on your campus.

This is why we created “Habitudes.” Habitudes are images that form leadership habits and attitudes. They are a language of leadership. Our research and focus groups told us we needed to devise a way to communicate leadership truths that were fun, memorable, and transferable. By leveraging the power of pictures, we now have a way to teach leadership quickly and furnish concepts that stay with the students all year round. Each focus group reported that in May they still remembered the images they discussed and applied in August. The pictures make the principles memorable. Further, the pictures provide a language that any student can teach. Each “Habitude” includes a picture, a discussion point, an assessment, and an exercise.

They can be discussed each week, taking five minutes or fifty minutes for each Habitude. They equip students with the tools to be effective Christ-followers, and he would identify sharp students who were planning on entering the ministry. He would invite them to join him on Sundays for his “supper clubs.” Some fifteen to twenty young men would gather around his big dining room table for even deeper discussions and preparation in leadership.

Finally, Simeon would hand-pick three to four graduating seniors and mentor them. He would prepare this “inner circle” for the rigors of church leadership, and eventually turn them loose to take their own congregations.

Because the wealthy controlled who filled their pulpits, Charles Simeon took a risk. He began raising money, so that he could outbid others and place his young, trained “mentees” in places where they could most benefit the Anglican movement. In a quiet and steady manner, Charles Simeon continued in this way for fifty-four years, until he died. By that time, one third of all the Anglican churches were filled with his trained leaders, and this changed the complexion of the church during his day. Little by little, he changed the culture by developing young leaders.

It can be done again today if we choose to cultivate EPIC leadership and change the culture of our campuses. I believe the students are waiting for it. It’s our move.

Dr. Tim Elmore is the founder and President of Growing Leaders. Tim can be reached Tim.Elmore@iEquip.org.
Diversity in Evangelical Higher Education:
An Interview with Will Kratt

By Glen Kinoshita

Will Kratt served as a student affairs professional at a leading university for twelve years, until recently accepting his call into the ministry. Kratt recently completed his doctoral dissertation at Claremont Graduate University with a focus on diversity in Evangelical Christian Higher Education. He received a B.S. in business administration from Cal Poly Pomona, an M.S. in counseling from Cal State Long Beach, and a Ph.D. in education at Claremont Graduate University.

Glen Kinoshita: Tell us a little of your background as it relates to diversity in Higher Education.

Will Kratt: I have had twelve years of experience working in Student Affairs and addressing diversity issues in Higher Education at Cal Poly Pomona. I spent my first three years in University Housing Services and the past nine years in the Office of Student Life and Cultural Centers. In addition to my work at Cal Poly Pomona I have served as a volunteer and consultant with the Anti-Defamation League and the National Conference for Community and Justice. Just recently I have relocated to the Atlanta area, where God has led me to plant Trinity International Bible Church.

An incident at Cal Poly Pomona in the early nineties when I was an Assistant Residence Coordinator got me started in diversity work. One night after quiet hours about 20 African American students were having a social gathering outside of one of the student apartment buildings; they were making some noise so I went to see what was going on. When I got there I told them to cease the racket and go inside. They were having beverages in red plastic cups which I assumed to contain alcohol; and so I also said to them, “You need to throw those away.” This caused a reaction with the students since they were having Coke and Sprite. The students felt I had made an inaccurate assumption based on racial stereotypes. Despite attempts to resolve the situation that night, several issues of the campus newspaper detailed the incident, resulting in a series of meetings with the Black Student Union and the Vice President of Student Affairs. The students demanded a new awareness and reforms related to diversity in the on-campus housing program. They also insisted that I resign from my position. The whole incident thrust me into a process of discovering my own identity as a white male, and my eyes were opened to issues of diversity that I previously had given very little thought.

GK: Can you give us a brief synopsis of what you were looking for in your research? How did you collect your data?

WK: Despite Biblical passages that would suggest that Christians emphasize love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, and unity, the Christian church and Evangelical colleges and universities appear to be far behind secular institutions in addressing diversity issues, multiculturalism, and many of the injustices that exist in society, including racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination. The purpose of my study was to identify the factors that support or inhibit diversity at predominately white, Evangelical, and Christian colleges and universities.

My study examined several questions: How is diversity understood at these institutions? Are diversity efforts of these institutions enhanced or hindered by the Evangelical mission of the institution? Are there motivating factors that compel these institutions to support diversity? What are these institutions currently doing that supports diversity? What inhibits progress toward diversity among these institutions? What perceptions do students, faculty, staff, and administrators have of their institution’s commitment level to diversity?

My methodology essentially was to do a case study analysis, using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Interviews, focus groups, direct observation, and document analysis from two Evangelical Christian colleges and universities were used for in-depth analysis of several dimensions of diversity issues that literature suggests should be addressed in higher education.

GK: Being that you are a Christian but have served in secular institutions, what are some of the vivid contrasts you see in regards to dealing with diversity in secular and Christian higher education?

WK: Diversity is defined very differently in secular and Christian institutions. Diversity is understood in Christian circles from a Biblical perspective, and there is much interest in learning more about diversity. However, it seems that not all biblical principles related to diversity are being given the same level of attention (I’ll reflect more on that later). There is some effort and a sincere desire to see an increase in diversity, but based on my research there still seems to be more talk than action in Christian institutions. In regards to secular institutions that I am familiar with, the approach to diversity seems to be much more comprehensive, and they “walk the talk” more. It is clear that secular institutions have been working in this area a lot longer.

GK: Did anything surprise you?

WK: I think Christian institutions tend to focus on Biblical principles such as unity and reconciliation, but the issue of justice seems to get less attention. This may be because it takes considerable effort and resources to act with a sense of integrity and justice. Priorities compete for resources and funding at such institutions, and so adequately addressing the issue of justice is a major challenge.
I often heard an emphasis on being one in Christ among respondents at both Evangelical institutions. However, there seemed to be a lack of willingness to address some of the obstacles that hinder being one in Christ, such as the serious inequities in our society. The Bible calls us to address injustices that interfere with oneness. We seem to be willing to discuss unity, and there is some discussion about reconciliation in Christian higher education. But again, there is less discussion and certainly less action about biblical justice. The word justice is used 142 times in the New Testament, and I agree, that unity without justice is unlikely to occur and is even hypocritical. We need all of these components to be genuinely one in Christ.

**GK: What are some of the strong points in Christian higher education and what are some of the weaknesses?**

**WK:** The strongest thing I found with Christian institutions was the current effort to address this issue. I found that many senior administrators who hold power were willing to concentrate on diversity issues. There is an interest and growing number of individuals who want to change. The two institutions I studied reflected some top-down support from the administration to address diversity, but this did not automatically translate into action. For example, one college seemed to have taken more steps at top levels of the institution to promote diversity, but student and faculty data suggested that these steps amounted to more talk than action. Results suggested that more intentionality about the recruitment and hiring of faculty of color is needed, and financial assistance to students of color and other underrepresented groups is lacking. Though a desire and intention to address diversity is present, an increase in the allocation of financial and human resources is necessary. Research on secular higher education suggests that diversity needs to be at the heart of the institution’s mission, teaching, and scholarship, as well as its efforts to improve campus climate, intergroup relations, and its recruitment and retention programs.

With respect to campus climate and intergroup relations, again the Biblical principle of being “one in Christ” has been misinterpreted. Either overly or covertly this misinterpretation has been utilized to pressure students of color to assimilate to the dominant culture, rather than allowing students from all racial and ethnic backgrounds the opportunity to freely express their cultural uniqueness.

**We seem to be willing to discuss unity, and there is some discussion about reconciliation in Christian higher education.**

**But again, there is less discussion and certainly less action about biblical justice.**

Missions trips and weekly chapel services are a strength, and a unique opportunity for the Evangelical mission at Christian colleges and universities. They could be used to explore biblical principles related to diversity in greater scope and detail. These schools possess great potential for applying diversity training techniques used in the secular arena while maintaining biblical principles of love, compassion, justice, unity, and reconciliation.

**GK: What are some of the recommendations that you have for Christian institutions?**

**WK:** Power and privilege related to whiteness is one of the difficult issues that seems to be “the elephant in the middle of the room” related to true reconciliation and justice in the body of Christ and Christian institutions of higher education. This includes the difficulty people of color have in a campus culture that is rooted in white Evangelical cultural norms. These are very difficult topics that need to be addressed more openly and honestly at these institutions. While some scholars, educators, trainers, and activists are addressing the issue, whiteness is still not receiving the attention it demands. Far too often, the impact of whiteness and white privilege gets lost in conversations about racism, and solutions become either to ‘celebrate our differences’ or to decide that ‘we are all one in Christ.’ Both of these concepts are valid to some degree, but they do not really eliminate the underlying problems and attitudes that sustain racism in America and continue to be one of the greatest challenges within the Body of Christ. We need more research and better practices related to diversity that focus on how to encourage white Christians to respond biblically with a sense of justice, reconciliation, and personal responsibility, rather than that sense of entitlement, guilt, and anger. Those of us who are white Christians should neither deny that there are injustices related to diversity nor cover them over with the biblical principle that Christians are all “one in Christ.”

Perhaps the greatest challenge in diversity work in Christian higher education is identifying how we should move forward to effect positive change. Paraphrasing the book of James, it is my hope that in our work to promote biblical principles of unity, justice, and reconciliation in the Body of Christ and specifically in Evangelical Christians colleges and universities, we will continue to strive to be “not just hearers of the Word, but doers also.”

**Reference**


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Martha Smith, Boender Award Recipient, & André Brouard, Bamford Award Recipient

Mt. Hood

Dan Allender, Keynote Speaker

Shaun Groves

Snack Break Sponsored by Indiana Wesleyan University

Multnomah Falls
Beyond the Edges

ACSD 2005

ACSD Panel: Judy Mostom, Tim Herrmann, Don Opitz, & Eileen Hulme

Len Sweet, Keynote Speaker
As I began my work in the residence life area of student affairs, I heard many discussions about the lack of male leadership on Christian college campuses. From Wheaton College to George Fox University, everyone was lamenting the lack of men in positions such as RAs, student government, and campus ministry positions. I began to pray and ask the Lord what I could possibly do to help with this problem.

While working at George Fox University, I oversaw the building of two residence halls, one of which was my home. One of the projects was “suite-style” facilities which became known as the “dead area” of residential life. The Dean of Students, who previously had been an area coordinator, told me that the first-year hall would be a place of vitality, and that the suites would always be a challenge.

Throughout the spring semester, I discovered that two half-floors in two of the suite buildings had no “life” in them at all. Each of them had no RA and eight transfer students lived there. The half-floor consisted of a living room/lobby area, a kitchen, a storage room, a study room, a small hallway leading to two suites. Each suite had a study room full of desks, a bedroom, and a bathroom. Eight students could live in each of these half-floors, and the current residents detested them.

After realizing the situation, I than began to rearrange the building in my head. I developed a proposal to switch some men’s floors with women’s floors so that the half-floors now housed men. The men would have an RA that lived above them on the next level up. I appointed community leaders of each group to act as a pseudo-RA. The leaders would be accountable to the area coordinator, and each group resident would be held accountable for their actions. Due to the honor of living in these areas, these young men would be held to a higher standard than normal residents. They were told that if any transgression occurred, the consequences would be doubled. However, a handful of noise violations early in the evening were the only issues to arise.

I then brought my proposal to my supervisor and colleagues, and they approved it. My next step was to find two leaders for these groups. I found them in my first-year building and asked them to go and find seven men to join them and fill out an individual application. Each group then had to come up with a name. This all happened very quickly, and soon I had the “Beebe Hall Brethren” and the “Wilcutts Hall Wildcards.”

The following year, these groups decorated their areas like I had never seen a men’s area do before. Their energy began to carry over into the rest of the suites area. One group invented a new game known as “SuiteBall,” which was a combination of baseball, cricket, and dodgeball that they played in the green courtyard in the middle of the three suite buildings. Scores of students would cram into their lobbies for game nights, chats, and ice cream socials. The groups also served the community by helping the homeless or cleaning up and raking at elderly citizens’ homes. They also supported our residence life staff by sending encouraging notes and praying for staff members. They held prayer meetings every night and encouraged others in their spiritual journeys.

At the end of the year, eighty percent of the men in these two areas moved into leadership roles on campus as RAs, student government officers, or ministry positions. They all agreed how incredible the group experience had been and how much they had grown while living together. Their work and shared vision transformed the suites into one of the hottest places to live on campus, and the groups’ efforts instilled a new sense of identity to this area.

In the end, this project only required reserving a few rooms for each group and utilizing some of the funds from the residence area budget to start these groups. Mentoring the leaders of each group was fun, and it helped the suites become better connected, even though the suite-style sometimes makes it difficult for residents to form strong relationships. The experience revolutionized the students who had lived in these groups and those that they had affected in their ministry throughout the year.

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The fall has always been my favorite time of the year. Beyond the reprieve from the summer’s heat, creation abounds with colors which point to a progression of time that can only be of divine origin. However, I am not sure its beauty is the primarily instigator of my favor for the fall. By contrast, the return of the populations which call our campuses home may be the origin of my delight. The first few weeks of summer are always nice. Various tasks left undone as a result of the pace of the final weeks of the spring semester are now completed. The campus is quiet, and I begin to be able to dictate the pace of my schedule instead of having it dictated to me. However, the novelty of such a change in pace eventually wears off. I find myself longing to participate in the conversations which happen in a fully populated educational community. Over the summer, I become acutely aware that my creative capacities demand the critical assessment of not only fellow administrators and faculty members but also our students. Perhaps the eagerness with which my attention turns to the fall and the start of the school year is driven by my need, as an educator, to consider once again the value of community.

Considerations of community are certainly in no short supply. Intuitively, we know that the fabric of our society is frayed in some capacity. Empirically, sociologists tell us that we lack both the common language and the common practices necessary to create and sustain true community. As a result, we have become fond of talking about community as if it exists as the ideal just beyond the reach of our furthest grasp. It becomes something to which we aspire, but in the end we find solace knowing that nothing can be perfect. Such assessments are sufficient if we are talking about our identity as part of a political or social organism. However, as Christians, such assessments are insufficient when it comes to the community in which we find our identity. In essence, the Church is the communal reality in which we should live. For any number of reasons, we choose to live in a realm that is less than real. As I admitted above, at times my most acute appreciation of the academic community comes in its absence and not its presence.

Fortunately, the reality which I describe is not a reality of its own making. The imprint of that which is real comes in what we see all around us—not simply the turning leaves of autumn but also the imprint of a relational God. Part of the significance of what we refer to as Trinitarian theology is that our very creation, redemption, and sustainability as people is dependent upon a God reflective of what one may call real community. We are all familiar with references to the Church as the body of Christ, yet God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit also embody a similar understanding. The members of the Trinity are defined by their self-giving nature. Such theological insights are not necessarily new. The work of the Church Fathers initially pointed us in this direction as they were sensitive to the relational nature of the Trinity and contended that the Church reflected this image.

The record of revelation by which we come to understand God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was granted to the church.
Through the Church we learn of a sense of reality that was lost as a result of our sinful nature; this sense of reality helps us to see the false forms of community that are all around us and compete for our attention. Just as God finds us, and we participate in God through the practices of the Church, we learn to find others. We learn to find ourselves in the same self-giving fashion. In reality, we find that our own well-being is inextricably tied to that of other members of the Church and thus to humanity as a whole. Through the Church, we learn to see the logic of the Trinity in everyday life. This logic defies modern forms of community as being expressions of self-fulfillment. The logic of the Trinity as found in the image of the Church is one that is self-giving. We learn to give of ourselves by virtue of our participation in a reality made possible by the self-giving sacrifice the Son made on behalf of the Father. Community under such terms is the reality in which we were created to live, not just an ideal to which we should aspire.

If the Church in the image of the Trinity is the reality in which we are created to live, we are left to wonder what such a reality has to do with those of us who serve in Christian higher education. On one level, we bring that identity with us as we transition from Sunday to Monday. We reflect on our reality on Sunday and then go forth to live out that reality during the rest of the week. On another level, the institutions we inhabit as educators are dependent upon the Church for their very identity and thus their very integrity. In light of the image of the Trinity, lines between disciplines, departments, and divisions appear to be simply organizational distinctions which have a part in the education of the student as a whole person. For example, those of us who serve as student affairs administrators are charged with cultivating co-curricular learning. With such a reality in mind, we realize that our success is inextricably tied to the success of curricular learning. Our success cannot be divorced from the success of our faculty colleagues, just as their success cannot be divorced from our own. Anything less than such integration impedes the educational experiences of our students because without a holistic approach to education our community would fail to point to a reality beyond our own creation.

For Further Reading:

Todd C. Ream, Ph.D. is the Director of the Aldersgate Center at Indiana Wesleyan University. Prior to coming to Indiana Wesleyan, he served as a research fellow, a chief student affairs officer, and a residence director. In addition to the “Thinking Theologically” column in Koinonia, he also has contributed articles to journals such as Christian Scholar’s Review, Educational Philosophy and Theory, the Journal of General Education, and New Blackfriars. He invites your remarks and suggestions concerning this particular contribution or concerning topics for further exploration. You can reach him at todd.ream@indwes.edu.

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Book Review

A History of American Higher Education By Jerry A. Schwenke

“For me, the discussion of timely higher education topics starts—not stops—with history.”

John Thelin’s words provide a strong introduction to his recently published work on the history of American higher education. As an author of college-sports related books and historical books, Thelin provides a fresh look at the glorious past of higher education in the United States. One aim of the book is to provide a comprehensive educational history through the turn of the twenty-first century. Frederick Rudolph’s 1962 classic, The American College and University, is an inspiration to Thelin’s work; however, Thelin goes beyond Rudolph’s work by including the last decades of the twentieth century. Another goal of the book is to examine the social, political, and economic influences that have made higher education what it is today. Through careful analysis of wide-ranging documents, photographs, journals, and books, Thelin succeeds in providing a detailed history of education in a single volume, and in the process he offers a useful summary of religious influences, national student cultures, and development practices.

Religion has always been an influencing factor in higher education; Thelin does not skirt this issue as some modern historians might be tempted to do. Thelin portrays religion, Christianity in particular, as an important part of student life since the beginning of American higher education in the 1600’s. Thelin identifies religion during the early colonial era as the driving force behind the growth of new institutions of higher education. These are facts too often forgotten by higher education professionals today. Thelin also addresses the modern notion of returning to Christian-based educational roots that some contemporary Christians and historians have. Thelin admits there are a number of educational historians who call for a return to the values of the “founding fathers” of American education. But although Thelin confronts this issue, he does not carefully address it. He argues that religion in early America was a divisive issue among institutions and asks why we would want to return to those days. Religiously affiliated institutions of higher education in the colonial era “provide a dubious model for the restoration of religion to a central place on the American campus of the twenty-first century, especially in a society characterized by religious diversity” (p. 29). This may be true, but Thelin’s response does not entirely refute the opposing argument. Besides this shortcoming, Thelin’s inclusion of Christianity in his examination of American higher education is candid and encouraging.

One major theme throughout Thelin’s book is student development. A study of educational history reminds us that education has always existed for the sake of the students. At times people and organizations have behaved in ways contrary to this idea; but, overall, student development has been a primary goal of the American educational system. Thelin gives an insightful look into student life through references to personal journals, yearbooks, and college publications, and he traces the history of many typical collegiate functions still in existence today. College sports, residence halls, and student organizations are a few of the many areas of student life that Thelin examines. He also gives an important summary of student-related issues throughout the years. These issues include educational access, cost, diversity, retention, educational effectiveness, and graduate studies. It is important to understand through a wide lens how these issues originated in a national context and how leaders have dealt with them. Thelin does not fail to include an overview of the development of the current support structures in student development. He portrays student development as central to the American higher education system.

Throughout his book Thelin offers multiple viewpoints on different issues and aspects of American higher education. This is clearly seen in his narrative on student life during the period from 1890-1920. Thelin paints a wonderful portrait of the “golden age” of universities. This was the time when college became fashionable; through the invention of nationally printed media, popular culture began to view university life as being a utopian society of sorts. Colleges became a source of pride for alumni, hence the birth of alumni associations. This was the age when campus life began consisting of friends and frivolity, and the “big man on campus” made his way to the top of the “pecking order.” However, Thelin’s analysis does not fail to give his readers the entire picture of this era. This bright time for universities also emphasized exclusivity in higher education. He states, “The first, most obvious limit of the ‘collegiate ideal’ was that it was almost wholly restricted to white males” (p. 169), Thelin portrays education as clearly limited for women, minorities, and anyone less than middle- to upper-middle-class. Despite the public’s perception of college during the beginning of the twentieth century, higher education still had many serious flaws. Thelin addresses these flaws; he consistently gives fair accounts of many of the different aspects of American higher education.

At times it is not clear to see Thelin’s flow of thought within sections of chapters. The organization of the vast amount of material covered could not have been an easy task. However, despite this shortcoming one comes away from the book with a deeper understanding of the history of American higher education from its inception and into the twenty-first century. John Thelin succeeds in providing a fairly comprehensive history of American higher education. This volume serves as an important educational experience and an informative tool for all higher education professionals. It places most areas of higher education in a broad framework, and educators can see how they fit together in a singular, historical context. Thelin’s overview of religious influences, national student cultures, and development practices speaks to many people, including religious groups who often need a reminder of the important part which they have played in developing America’s system of higher education. Thelin’s A History of American Higher Education offers an excellent opportunity to understand and view our future through the scope of our past.


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Book Review

**Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers**  
By Brie McDaniel

**Hurt** is a touching ethnography of an age group that is misunderstood, abandoned, and wounded. Clark states that the purpose of this book is "to understand and describe what the adolescent world looks like through the eyes of those who live it" (p. 37). Through insightful observation and interviews, Clark provides the reader with a glance at a subculture that feels neglected by the rest of society.

The book is divided into three parts: "The Changing Adolescent World," "The Landscape of the World Beneath," and "Where Do We Go From Here?" "The Changing Adolescent World" contains three chapters that cover ideas such as how to define adolescence, how adolescence has recently changed, how adolescents feel abandoned by the rest of the culture, and how adolescents hide their hurt from those around them.

The second part of **Hurt**, the "Landscape of the World Beneath," analyzes several aspects of the adolescent culture. Clark explores in-depth how peer relationships, school, family, sex, stress, ethics, and parties are drastically different for this generation than for any previous generation. He illustrates how each aspect of the adolescent life leaves the adolescent feeling unseen and neglected by surrounding adults. Adolescents have learned to play the game; they know that image is everything. However, they have worked so hard at perfecting their images that no one knows who they really are, not even themselves. This image-consciousness and lack of self-awareness has lead to a dependence on alcohol to have fun, using sex as a means of developing community, and an unprecedented acceptance of cheating as a legitimate way to make the grade.

Clark finishes his ethnography with a third section that asks the question, "Where do we go from here?" He focuses on the three needs of adolescents: nurturing organizations; a secure and loving presence; and authentic relationships with adults. Clark states, "A lone figure with hands upraised cannot alter the societal push of abandonment. That does not mean, however, that we cannot soften its impact or compensate for its cruelty" (p. 170).

He concludes with five strategies that will help to turn the tide of the abandonment of this generation. While these strategies are aimed at those working with high school students, most can be used in a college setting. They include: youth workers need to be trained in the culture; those who work with adolescents need to work together; adolescents need to be presented with boundaries; parents need to parent; and the community needs to work together in the lives of students (pp. 177–183).

Clark is an engaging writer. The book, while presenting a lot of information and research, is interesting. The author relies mainly on observation and interviews for his data collection, so the reader is constantly aware of how relevant the information is. More quantitative data could show how widespread the attitudes expressed by the teenagers are, but his qualitative research provides a depth often ignored in strictly quantitative research.

Clark's work focuses on midadolescents, or high school students. The information is helpful in allowing those concerned with college student development to see where their students were, and possibly where freshmen are, even though college years are characterized by a break from midadolescence. This is not to say we cannot learn from this book; the pain felt by midadolescents is not left behind when they graduate from high school. Family baggage is not abandoned in their rooms at home. They bring their backgrounds with them to college. Their insecurities, pain, and loneliness come with them when they move into the dorm. By understanding the culture in which our students live and bring with them, we are more prepared to create an environment that will help them to grow beyond the hurt of their pasts.


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