7-9 November
Doubletree Hotel
Chicago - Oak Brook
Oak Brook, Illinois

REA Annual Meeting 2014 Proceedings
religion and education

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Out of the Depths Have I Cried: *Aesthetic Opposition at the Gateway to Auschwitz*

Abstract

Terezin, the gateway to Auschwitz was a town commandeered by the Nazis to serve as a "model" relocation camp to demonstrate the Third Reich's generosity and kindness toward the Jews, was an elaborate hoax. In an environment where truth was twisted beyond recognition, artists, writers, actors and musicians used their work to revive the spirits of the condemned and to leave a legacy of truth in the face of an insidious lie. The arts became the foundation for a 'curriculum' that shaped the lives of the inmates surviving in hell.

What role did creativity play in the environment of repression, anxiety, and degradation that was Terezin? How did the aesthetic experience not only exist but thrive in Hell's antechamber? By listening to the voices of the survivors, exploring the artistic legacy that remains, and making a pilgrimage to the site, a complex and multi-faceted portrait of the incredible aesthetic response to the horror of Nazi Final Solution emerges.

It is a forty minute drive from Prague to the garrison town of Terezin, in the Czech Republic. My journey, taken last spring, began with a drive through a serene and lush pastoral landscape, graced by charming farmhouses with gardens filled with spring blossoms. My destination was the most unique ghetto in the lexicon of the Nazi chamber of horrors. After researching its extensive artistic legacy, produced in the midst of unspeakable horror, visiting Terezin would provide further illumination.

Terezin or Theresienstadt, was a garrison town built in the late 1700's, designed, ironically, in the shape of a six-pointed star. It initially accommodated a population of about five thousand inhabitants but the walled fortress town would eventually house over 60,000 prisoners at once, serving as a conduit to the Death Camps. The Nazis removed the original populace and used Terezin to incarcerate Jewish people whose disappearances would raise questions and cause concern.   "Theresienstadt was promoted not only as a special place for old Jews who "could not stand the strain of resettlement" but also as "model ghetto," thus strengthening the myth that Jews were being transferred to places where they could survive."[1] Lured to Terezin, which was touted as a resort and spa, they were assured of safe haven during the war.   The population of Hitler's so-called "gift to the Jews" included highly decorated Jewish heroes of World War I, artists, musicians, dramatists, writers and scholars. Children and the elderly also formed a significant segment of the population. The deception became immediately apparent upon arrival.

My visit to Terezin began upon by touring the "Little Fortress". Tourists walk through an archway bearing the words, *arbeit macht frei,* (*w*ork will set you free) entering into a prison complex that conveys a sense of desperation and oppressiveness that is pervasive.   " Around 30,000 prisoners passed through the Little Fortress, many of them to the extermination camps of the East. Conditions in the Little Fortress were worse than in Theresienstadt itself; many prisoners were kept in solitary confinement and under the threat of execution- a threat that was carried out 2000 times." [2] The brutality of the conditions provided for prisoners was dreadful. Standing in these rooms with a tour group of twenty and imagining the atrocious number of those

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[1] Saul S. Freiedman, ed. , *The Terezin Diary of Gonda Relich* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1992), *vii.*

[2] Ruth Schwertfeger, *Women of Theresienstadt: Voices from a Concentration Camp* (London: Oxford ,1989), 11.

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actually condemned to exist in these spaces was deeply disturbing. This locus of torture and death now stands quietly mute to what once took place within its walls.

A ten minute walk from the Little Fortress, culminates in the town of Terezin. It has not changed significantly since the end of the Second World War. The buildings that were once filled with the desperate, the ill and the starving, remain standing in silent testimony, once again serving as housing for the current inhabitants.   A single museum, built in one of the former barracks, shelters the artifacts that bear witness to the artistic and cultural life that characterized Terezin during the Shoah.

Presently, the town's three thousand inhabitants live surrounded by Terezin's legacy of cruelty and deception. The train tracks that once took the transports that carried 140,000 of its inhabitants to "the east" remain. The crematorium that disposed of the bodies of nearly 35,000 who died of deprivation and disease, is now open for tourists. A replica of one of the bunk rooms in a typical barracks, had to be re-created , however, because little remains to bear original witness to what took place here. Terezin's post-war years, were characterized by continued anti-Semitism under an extremely repressive Communist regime. Thankfully, in the last two decades following the replacement of the former government, a renewed interest in the story of the Jews who lived and perished in this Ghetto has emerged. The site continues to be developed as a center for education and tourism. Terezin, however, is a place of sadness and its grim legacy is pervasive.

After exploring creativity in the midst of the repression and degradation of this unique ghetto, it is incomprehensible that art and culture flourished here at all. " Overcrowding, filthy water supplies, vermin, unhygienic bathrooms, and lack of washing facilities led to frequent outbreaks of disease, including typhoid and scarlet fever. Constant lack of food weakened people, so they fell ill easily and failed to get better. And many old people were already sick and feeble when they arrived." [3]   The elderly perished at alarming rates. The adult population was forced to work twelve to fourteen hour days. In spite of all this, survivor Ruth Elias recounts that, "The inmates immersed themselves in any diversion that was at hand just to keep from being constantly reminded of the horrible conditions around them. We wanted to fill each free moment with something beautiful, and therefore we plunged into these cultural activities to savor every minute of life. No one knew what awaited us or when it would all end."[4]   The arts provided a time to escape. to remember, to be restored. The unknown was the greatest challenge to survival.

The majority of the residents of Terezin, were largely unaware of the town's primary function; a conduit to the death camps, primarily Auschwitz.   Survivor Vera Shiff states, "There were few among us who really knew the horrendous truth: only the members of the Council of

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[3] Ruth Thomson, *Terezin: Voices from the Holocaust* (Somerville: Candlewick Press, 2011), 28.

[4] Ruth Elias, *Triumph of Hope* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 1998), 98.

the Elders and some prominent individuals (i.e., Leo Baeck, the former Chief Rabbi of Berlin). Even Dr. Tarjan, who knew full well about the extermination camps in the East, never admitted to it openly. Only to me did he hint at the truth. He repeated many times over the instructions on how to pass successfully a selection." [5] The Nazi plan required that secrecy about the true purpose of the ghetto be maintained. What awaited those who were selected was never fully disclosed to the general populace. Nevertheless, the mere threat of transport clouded the existence of a doomed population.

For the residents of the Terezin Ghetto, avoiding selection was intrinsic to survival. "Fear of the transports was the central anxiety around which all life in Theresienstadt revolved and was at the same time the force that engendered the most impassioned response to impermanence in works of art - literary,musical and visual - that have survived much longer than Theresienstadt's three-and-a-half-year history." [6] Anxiety was a constant presence but instead of producing a malaise of indifference, it gave birth to creative expression. "Art became an essential, perhaps the only worthwhile, part of life in Theresienstadt. The artistic struggle helped the prisoners to affirm their own humanity and to keep their spirit alive." [7] Aesthetic experience as spiritual resistance was intrinsic to existence in Terezin.

Many of the survivors who share their stories are convinced that they are alive because of the aesthetic experiences they provided or were witness to. Concert pianist, Alice Herz-Sommer states, "Music gave heart to many of the prisoners, if only temporarily. In retrospect I am certain that it was music that strengthened my innate optimism and saved by life and that of my son. It was our food; and it protected us from hate and literally nourished our souls. There in the darkest corners of the world it removed our fears and reminded us of the beauty around us." [8] Artistic expression became the creative constant in an environment of false reality and chaos. "The act of making art suspended the collective nightmare, and replaced the arbitrary rules of the ghetto with individual purpose. It helped to sustain hope, a sense of the self, and the will to live." [9] The artistic experience provided a respite that allowed the residents to return to their former existence, if only briefly.   It gave them the hope that would sustain them through the degrading circumstances confronting them on a daily basis.

An astonishing variety of artistic offerings were available for those in the ghetto. "At first secretly, and then with the consent of the Germans, a rich cultural life developed for many of

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[5] Vera Schiff, *Theresienstadt: The Town The Nazis Gave To The Jews* (Toronto: Lugus, 1996), 82.

[6] Schwertfeger, 2.

[7] Gerty Spies, *My Years in Theresienstadt: How One Woman Survived the Holocaust* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1997), 17.

[8] Melissa Müller and Reinhard Piechocki, *Alice's Piano: The Life of Alice Herz-Sommer* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006),x.

[9] Anne D. Dutlinger, ed., *Art, Music and Education as Strategies for Survival: Theresienstadt 1941-1945* (New York: Herodias, 2001), 7.

Terezin's inhabitants, including dramatic and musical performances (sometimes of pieces composed in the ghetto), lectures and readings, and even a cabaret."[10] The Nazis would sanction the artistic life of Terezin because they knew it would never be permanent. "The attitude taken by the SS Command was both pragmatic and cynical: "Let them play!" [11]It would serve their propaganda agenda as they would promote the Terezin Ghetto as an ideal residence for Jews during the war. "Living amid a German enemy whose purpose in Terezin was to delude the world, their prisoners, and perhaps even some of their own members into believing that the place was not really what it was - a transit camp to the gas chambers of Auschwitz-it is no wonder that the painters of Terezin returned again and again to the contrast between truth and delusion."[12] Artists would be forced to use their talents in the service of the Nazi regime on their work details but their precious free time would provide them with the opportunity to tell the truth through their art.

The risk that the artists took in the service of truth, cannot be over-emphasized. Being caught meant torture and almost certain death.   "In their time off, evenings, nights, they sketched and painted their impressions, their criticism, their hopelessness, their despair. Of course not officially: if they would have been caught it would have meant immediate assignment into the next transport. That part of their work was hidden in safe places. " [13] But not all art remained concealed. Some of it was smuggled out of Terezin in the hope that the world would know the truth.   Upon discovering that art illustrating the actual conditions of Terezin had made its way to Switzerland, Nazi retaliation was brutal in what became known as "The Painters' Affair" .

Leo Haas, was one of four artists accused of producing "horror propoganda " and sent with their families to the horror of the "Little Fortress." He recalled his interrogation, stating, "Günther [an SS captain] questioned me, showing me a study of Jews searching for potato peels and saying, 'How could you think up such a mockery of reality and draw it?' "[14] The Nazi Regime thrived on false reality and when confronted with a challenge to their charade, they attempted to root out any possibility of the truth being exposed.   Truth in art was anathema. "The Germans labeled this art "horror propaganda," but it deserved to be called the "horror truth" of Terezin. The artists foresaw that the challenge to the postwar world would be how to imagine the reality of the camp. The real tribute to them is not to their moral courage or spiritual defiance, but their will to pit their vision of how the Holocaust should be seen against the aim of

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[10] Lawrence Langer, ed., *Art from the Ashes* (New York: Oxford, 1995), 663-664.

[11] Vojtech, Blodig, Kurt Kotouč, et.al., *Art Against Death: Permanent Exhibitions of the Terezin Memorial in the Former Magdeberg Barracks (*Pamatnik Terezin Blodig, 2002), 13.

[12] Langer, 666.

[13] Norbert Troller*, Theresienstadt:Hitler's Gift to the Jews* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 133.

[14] Thomson, 52.

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their oppressor to shape another view." [15] Haas, alone, would survive the interrogation and its aftermath. In almost miraculous fashion, much of the artwork that was concealed within Terezin's framework has been recovered.

In 1944, three years after the establishment of the Terezin Ghetto, the Nazis once again devised a treacherous hoax. They were determined to complete the Final Solution and were succeeding. The outside world, however, was beginning to respond to atrocity reports about the concentration camps.   An elaborate facade was created to deceive a delegation from the Red Cross coming to inspect conditions at Terezin.   The entire town was transformed but only on the surface. What was concealed would tell the truth about conditions in the ghetto but it was never revealed to the Red Cross team.   "They had been given a carefully rehearsed inspection tour, which avoided all buildings that might arouse suspicion. Transport records show that just before the delegates arrived 5000 people were transported, including a group of the mentally ill. In this way the streets looked less crowded."[16] Residents were forbidden to provide any information that could have given the Red Cross Team reason to assume they were being lied to. During the Red Cross visit a performance of Verdi's Requiem took place.

Rafael Schächter had the incredible vision and tenacity to facilitate the performance of this masterwork.   He worked with a broken piano in the basement of one of the barracks and rehearsed a select choir in the evenings after the work day ended.   Using a single score, the choir of 120 memorized the incredibly complex music and its Latin text of a Catholic Mass for the dead. "The importance of its staging when far beyond the walls of the Terezin fortress. Only thanks to Rafael Schächter's enormous - almost fanatical - dedication to the beauty of that work, this composition by the Italian master appeared on the repertoire of a Czech singing choir."[17] The ruling Council of Elders, the Jewish officials charged with the supervision of life in Terezin, were vehemently against the performance.   They had hoped that he would select an oratorio with a Jewish theme since Terezin was the only place in the Third Reich that allowed Jews to perform music. Schächter, however, would ultimately convince them and the performance took place. He was committed to the work because of its thematic content. Performing it in the presence of the Nazi oppressors was an act of spiritual defiance. In the words of one of the survivors in attendance, "It was as if angels were singing in hell." [18]

The Requiem would be performed three times. After the first performance, the choir members were placed on transports. "Only the conductor himself and solo singers remained. With a good deal of passion and will power Schächter rehearsed the requiem mass anew with another 120 singers. But after several weeks of the performances the entire choir was again

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[15] Langer,,663-664.

[16] Schwertfeger, 18.

[17] Vojtech, Blodig, Kurt Kotouč, et.al., 21.

[18] Hannelore Brenner**,** *The Girls of Room 28: Friendship, Hope and Survival in Theresienstadt*
      (Schocken Books: New York, 2009), 63.

deported to an extermination camp."[19] The third choir recruited had only 60 members and after performing for the Red Cross, the conductor and his singers were ordered to the transports on the next day. "Verdi's *Requiem* - a funeral mass about dying, redemption, consolation, and resurrection-performed in Theresienstadt by Jewish prisoners in death's waiting room! It was one of the ghetto's most stirring and unforgettable concerts."[20] The courage and tenacity that this performance embodied is beyond description.

Equally notable was Brundibar, a children's opera, that was also performed for the Red Cross visit. It was presented 55 times for the audiences in Terezin and was intrinsic to their life experience "The opera was chosen for its content, one which boosted the morale and courage of the youngsters. The heroes of the opera were two children, who had to fight a wicked monster, Brundibar, and his attempts to thwart their efforts to provide for their ailing mother. The end of the tale brought about Brundibar's defeat-the triumph of Good over Evil, reinforcing the daily repeated hope for a better time to come."[21] This opera was immensely popular not only with the children but with the adults as well. They were attempting to live the story being presented. The significance of the piece is all the more poignant when the fate of the performers is considered. "A total of around 15,000 children under the age of 15 passed through Terezin. Of these, around 100 came back." [22] The opera was symbolic of the valiant attempts made to enrich the lives of the children living in Terezin.

Children were cherished and represented hope for the future beyond the time of war. "The best buildings in Theresienstadt were allotted to the children. Youth qualified as children under the age of 16 and were ordered upon their arrival to be separated from their parents. The homes which sheltered them were equipped with the best the camp could muster."[23] The incorporation of hope for the future into the lives of these incarcerated children was an acknowledgement of the possibility of life. Vera Schiff reflects, " In retrospect, it seems absurd that curricula were prepared with much care to include disciplines taught at various levels of the interned children. At the time, it did not appear pathetic or ridiculous, and perhaps it was proof of the strength of the spirit to sustain the hope for a better tomorrow." [24] The curricula provided an example of how to live life to the fullest. The short time these children had on earth ceased to be empty and meaningless. Instead painting, singing, drama and poetry all gave the children a creative way to bring order out of chaos. The opportunity to create was a gift to the doomed

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[19] Vojtech, Blodig, Kurt Kotouč, et.al., 21.

[20] Brenner, 62.

[21] Schiff ,71.

[22] Volavkova*, Hana ed., I never saw another butterfly...Children's Drawings and poems from Terezin Concentration Camp 1942-1944 (*New York: Schocken Books, 1993), 81.

[23] Schiff, 71.

[24] Schiff, 71.

children of Terezin. For a time, the children were given a pathway to self-expression and meaning making through art.

The creative process offered the possibility for making meaning out of the senseless existence that was Terezin It engendered purpose in the midst of desolation, not only for the self, but for the surrounding community as well. The aesthetic experiences that nourished a starving, desolate people were essential to their existence.   Artistic expression in this context could never be viewed as mere escapism.

Noted psychiatrist, Viktor Frankl, an Auschwitz survivor stated ,"As the inner life of the prisoner tended to become more intense, he also experienced the beauty of art and nature as never before.   Under their influence he sometimes even forgot his own frightful circumstances." [25] Creative transformation is the result of embracing the opportunity for artistic expression and opening the self to the ineffable.   Pianist Alice Herz-Sommer commenting on music, stated "It is the revelation of the divine. It takes us to paradise."[26] The aesthetic experience provided a pathway to something beyond present reality. Whether it was a quest for truth, defiance in the face of oppression, a glimpse of beauty that connected one to the divine, or a moment when the community could express joy or hope and be encouraged, the artistic legacy of Terezin stands as a testament to the power of artistic expression, a lesson for our time.

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[25] Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 50.

[26] Melissa Müller and Reinhard Piechocki, ix.

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Boston Strong: The Need for Prophetic Vision in Commemorating Tragic Violence

Abstract: The way we respond to violence both expresses and shapes our social imagination. In an era of what Charles Taylor calls "flatness," the response to and commemoration of the Boston Marathon bombings evinced a real need for transcendence and a desire for solidarity. At the same time, our tendency to fall back on comfort or vengeance, presumption or despair, diffuses and de-fuses these desires. By consciously and intentionally commemorating such events, religious persons and organizations can offer educative voices of prophetic critique and support practices of prophetic hope. We can do so by recounting memories, problematizing current practices, and offering opportunities to practice hope.

On April 15, 2013, my brother called me from Atlanta to make sure that I was OK. He had just seen the first news reports of explosions at the finish line of the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) Marathon. Fortunately, I had been miles from the finish line when two homemade bombs exploded. The next several days were spent trying to ascertain that friends were unhurt and reassuring friends and family that I had not been near the scene. My reactions ranged from shock to confusion to anger to resolve. Like many others, I made serial pledges to run the race the next year, to take first responder courses, to be more courageous and generous in helping people, and to "get the most out of life."[1] I wore a "Boston Strong" t-shirt and cheered when Red Sox star David Ortiz proclaimed on live TV, "This is our fucking city!" Something, however, felt incomplete.

This past spring, the one-year anniversary of the bombing saw both formal and informal memorialization of the events surrounding the Marathon Bombings. The city held an official ceremony with speeches by survivors, local clergy, and politicians. The Boston Public Library displayed photos and articles collected from the impromptu shrines that had sprung up at the bombing site the year before -- what Sylvia Grider calls "vernacular" shrines.[2] Print media recapped the timeline of events and wrote follow-up stories on victims, survivors, and rescuers.

The commemoration of the Boston Marathon Bombings evinced a real need for transcendence and solidarity, for inspiration, meaning, and moral exemplars. It also, however, was shot through with both an uncritical acceptance of a given lifestyle and a provincialism that could short-circuit our best natures. In the way we consciously and intentionally memorialize such events, religious persons and organizations can offer voices of prophetic critique and

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[1] Three spectators were killed in the bombings, and more than 250 wounded, including sixteen people who lost parts of at least one limb -- the bombs were apparently designed to maximize lower-body injuries. Several days later, the Tsarnaev brothers, Tamerlan and Dzokhar, killed a police officer in a resumption of violence that resulted hours later in a shootout with police, during which Tamerlan was killed. Dzokhar other was found after a day-long search, badly wounded but alive, and is now awaiting trial. What made the violence so terrorizing for many locals is the extent to which the Boston Marathon is a community event. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that everyone in the area has some connection with someone who runs the race.

[2] Sylvia Grider, "Spontaneous Shrines and Public Memorialization," in *Death and Religion in a Changing World*, ed. Kathleen Garces-Foley (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 248.

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support practices of prophetic hope. In the following, I argue that memorials are pedagogical tools, and therefore ought to be part of religious education. Religious voices have fallen short of calling attention to the "dangerous memories" of the Boston Marathon tragedy, leaving too much room for both presumption and despair. Our education must more adequately turn to the hopeful prophetic vision to which this violence calls us to attend.

Memory and Meaning in Massachusetts

Patriots' Day, officially marking the battles of Lexington and Concord cited as the start of the American Revolution, has become synonymous with the running of the Boston Marathon -- so much so that in local parlance it is as often known as "Marathon Monday" as it is Patriots' Day. In the growing emphasis on the marathon (rather than American history), we can see the expression of contemporary values of participation, physical fitness, appearance, and the achievement of personal goals eclipsing the traditional rhetoric of liberty and self-defense.[3]

Memorials serve a number of purposes. In this era of what Charles Taylor calls "flatness" of time, place, and being,[4] they express our need to feel texture in the extraordinary while we come together to touch something bigger than ourselves. Secondly, they express the social imagination, providing a window into how we see and interpret the world and its violence. Given this expressive nature, Erika Doss notes that the study and use of memorials require a "critical pedagogy of public feelings."[5] Thirdly, then, if they express our imagination, they also help to shape it. They serve a pedagogical function, educating while they celebrate, often in the "subtler language" of art and symbol that Taylor sees making meaning accessible.[6] Commemorations are symbols that express emotions, thoughts, and ideals associated with an event but also make those emotions, thoughts, and ideals present anew, reinvigorating them. They offer the potential to move from trauma and victimization into transgressive possibilities of identity and purpose.[7] As such, they must be of interest to religious educators tasked with providing practical wisdom for our lives and the life of the world.

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[3] Patriots' Day has a celebratory atmosphere, with something of a bacchanalian feel at some of the colleges and universities along the race course. Of course, there is a consumerist edge to some of this ritual, as athletic shoe and apparel companies flood the city with billboards and other advertisements, official race memorabilia becomes emblematic, and local running shoe stores like "Marathon Sports" and "Heartbreak Hill Running Company" engage in fierce competition for customers' loyalties and dollars. It was this atmosphere that was shaken by the twin blasts at the finish line. The 2013 bombings at the finish line of the Boston Marathon have, of course, changed again the tone and tenor of the annual celebration, at least for the foreseeable future.

[4] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 1st edition (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007). For Taylor, part of the "malaise of modernity" is that life too often proceeds undifferentiated. "High" times and "low times," for instance, have merged into a single, "flat" sense of time, stripped of myth and mystery and transcendence. This flatness is at odss with what Mircea Eliade describes as a human drive to touch the sacred in our construction of time and space, something of an anthropological need. See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and The Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987).

[5] Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*, Reprint edition (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2010), 59.

[6] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 353–361.

[7] Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 131–133.

Memorialization of the tragic violence a year later offers the opportunity to reflect on just what is being memorialized, how it both expresses and shapes the ways we think, feel, and act. From the standpoint of Christian religious education, the memorialization of this violence evinces both possibilities and need for educating for a prophetic imagination and genuine prophetic hope in a world of flatness and tragedy.

Walter Brueggemann characterizes the prophetic task in ancient Israel as facing a couple of challenges. First, Israel held a blind and uncritical confidence in its ideology of exceptionalism. Then, when disaster struck in the form of destruction and exile, the shattering of the facade of exceptionalism gave way to utter despair. The prophetic task, then, was threefold. It involved an assertion of critical reality that would involve both identifying and critiquing the "chosenness" ideology. Second, in the face of denial of the unsustainability of such an ideology, the prophetic task involved giving voice to the real grief this denial perpetuated. Finally, the prophetic task required building a community of hope to counter the despair that could lead to violence, hedonism, or moralism.[8] With Brueggemann, we can see the need for similar tasks today, for the fostering of an imagination of prophetic hope as an antidote to the despair and presumption that mark its deficiency or excess. Such a task may be thankless, certainly it is often unpopular, and requires courage to undertake. Because it impinges upon the well-being of both the person and the community, it is a task for religious education.

In particular, it is worth investigating how the commemorations of the bombings have evidenced despair, presumption, and resources for genuine hope. We must also consider how religious educators can contribute to this task of memorializing for hope. The point is not to dictate how the memorialization of the Boston Marathon bombings ought to be structured forever, but to grasp hold of a moment, and to consider how future moments can be handled. Here I focus on three forms of commemoration that are fairly representative: the city's official ceremony, the Boston Public Library's "Dear Boston" display of artifacts from the informal shrine,[9] and the *Runner's World* May 2014 issue that carried stories of the day of the bombings and some updates on persons who were involved.

Presumption

Perhaps the greatest temptation faced in religion is the domestication of God coupled with the divinization of our own lives and desires. Part of the prophetic task is to prevent that divinization and domestication.[10] Metz puts the warning somewhat differently in his critique of "bourgeois" Christianity: We "believe in discipleship and, under the cloak of this belief in discipleship, continue in our old ways."[11] We have here what Brueggemann describes as the uncritical acceptance of current ideology and practices as unproblematically blessed. Elements of this presumptuousness are visible in the memorialization of the bombings.

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[8] Walter Brueggemann, *Reality, Grief, Hope: Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014).

[9] Although the "Dear Boston" display focused on the popular shrines, of course not everything was included. The display, then, was not exactly an unfiltered vernacular. There is still some level of an "official" story being told there. Further research could involve the exploration of the whole gamut of artifacts left at the bomb site, artifacts which were collected, photographed, and archived.

[10] James H. Cone, *God of the Oppressed*, Rev Sub edition (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1997), 66–97.

[11] Johannes Baptist Metz, *The Emergent Church : The Future of Christianity in a Postbourgeois World* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 3.

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One theme that was prominent, both in the days after the bombing and in the anniversary commemorations, was that "the terrorists" had only redoubled the running community's resolve. That there was a running "community" was widely accepted. The "Dear Boston" display recreated the array of running shoes left at the bombing scene, and featured a large poster that read "Lace up your shoes and run for those who can't." The popular pastime of running became "running for unity" or "running for freedom." The BAA eventually agreed to expand the field of the 2014 marathon to accommodate some of the swollen interest in participating in the event.

Of course, there is nothing inherently harmful in wanting to respond to communal violence with running. At the very least, it can provide an opportunity to come to together in something collective, to remember, to talk about victims, for the injured to feel empowered in their own lives, and for others to feel that they are resuming something that had been interrupted. The problem is if we act as if ALL of our running efforts are somehow blessed, as if running has become in and of itself an act of compassion and solidarity in defiance of hate. It is problematic when four-time Boston champion Bill Rodgers banally remarks, "This is a sport of peace. We try to get along."[12] Most of the time, distance running is not about world peace and unity; it is about running.[13]

One 2013 Boston finisher sounded a reflexively critical notes when she said of her short-lived pride in her personal-best performance: "I felt foolish. . . . I was embarrassed that I had crossed the finish line before anything happened, and that I spend so much of my life and my energy and my time in the pursuit of something completely selfish."[14] She asks herself -- as we must ask ourselves and others -- if it is really true that the "return to normalcy" that we herald as the goal of grieving should indeed be a return to our old way of life. Presumption puts a bandage over the wound without helping it to heal.

The presumptuousness could be seen also in equating our current lifestyle with God's blessing on the United States. Vice-President Joseph Biden punctuated his remarks at the anniversary ceremony, "America can never, ever, ever be defeated," and concluded, "God bless you all, and may God protect our troops."[15] The belief in American exceptionalism could hardly more closely parallel the Israelite exceptionalist ideology that Brueggemann sees the prophets decry. The "American way of life" is conflated with the gospel.[16]

Despair

There are also, of course, ways in which grief can spiral inward into despair and outward into violence. Real grief must be voiced, the losses must be lamented, but we cannot stay only in grief. On the other hand, for all of the inspirational success stories from survivors at the official memorial, there is a danger of glossing over the real, deep, continuing pain many continue to suffer. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, it is in the pages of the notoriously shallow *Runner's*

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[12] Christine Fennessy, "One Year Stronger," *Runner's World*, May 2014, 70.

[13] Self-identifying as a runner, and especially as a marathoner, also takes on the veneer of naturalized taste when in reality it is a sport that, at least in the United States, tends to be skewed strongly toward upper-middle class and highly-educated participants. While in theory anyone can be a runner, not just anyone is a runner who gravitates to expensive shoes, gear, and even travel to races. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction : A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984).

[14] Cindy Kuzma, "Wins And Losses," *Runner's World & Running Times*, June 6, 2013, http://www.runnersworld.com/runners-stories/wins-and-losses?page=single.

[15] "Boston Bombing Memorial Service, Part 2," *C-SPAN.org*, accessed June 12, 2014, http://www.c-span.org/video/?318905-2/boston-bombing-memorial-service-part-2.

[16] Brueggemann, *Reality, Grief, Hope*, 130.

World that some of the more honest elements of this pain were memorialized. Injured survivor Jody Mattie's recovery is described, but includes the detail that his post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) now keeps him from holding a job.[17] The severe depression of amputees and rescuers, and the lifetime of anticipated medical expenses cannot be overlooked. Many first responders were war veterans who compared the carnage to that of an IED explosion in Iraq.[18] Responders, victims, witnesses who jumped in to try to help, many of them were noted as having had trouble sleeping, losing tempers, or drinking.

Our attention ought to be drawn to the psychological and emotional ramifications of this sort of violence and destruction -- another dose of "reality." If we are to recognize honestly the lingering effects of violence on this scale, then we should also be drawn to face the emotional trauma that war has on soldiers and civilians alike. Perhaps the blame game being played over the Veterans Administration's failures would be recast with a more honest accounting of the broad failure of the American people to provide the agency with the funding to treat the emotional as well as physical needs of war-scarred veterans.

Despair can also take the form of defaulting to intrusive or unjust police state tactics as necessary and appropriate for eliminating risk. In the late 1990s, polls of Americans found government interference in life to be their top fear. After 9/11, of course, as the national security narrative became part of the conversation about and memorialization of terror, increased government intervention was prompted by a climate of fear and despair in alternative solutions.[19] It is precisely this despair that allows for the still-unexplained Florida shooting of a Tsarnaev associate by an FBI agent that would seem to belie President Obama's pledge that the bombings would not weaken the administration's fidelity to a free and open society.[20] Despair can lead to further violence as well as to paralysis.

Hope

There are, though, ways in which memorialization of tragic violence can and does overcome presumption with critical reflexivity and can offer opportunities to grieve but also to turn grief into hope through the imagination of an alternative reality, a prophetic hope. In some instances, memorialization of the Boston Marathon Bombings has provided some excellent examples of tutoring in imagination and hope. One has been through highlighting community responsiveness and self-sacrifice. BAA executive director Tom Grilk framed his remarks at the official ceremony in terms of the "caring, courage, community, and common purpose" he had seen emerge during the events of the previous year. Former Mayor Thomas Menino, at the same event, highlighted "snapshots of grace" and urged that the anniversary of the bombing not remain simply a "day of remembrance" but also a "day of action" for everyone in the community who needs it.[21] Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick emphasized the common destiny of all in the community, citing Martin Luther King, Jr., in calling for a real and active solidarity.[22]

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[17] Fennessy, "One Year Stronger," 69.
[18] Steve Friedman, "Blown Together," *Runner's World & Running Times*, April 15, 2014, http://www.runnersworld.com/boston-marathon/blown-together?page=single.
[19] Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 147–150.
[20] *At Church Service, Obama Praises Boston After Marathon Explosions*, 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vguxffX1ftg&feature=youtube_gdata_player.
[21] "Boston Marathon Bombings Anniversary," *C-SPAN.org*, accessed June 12, 2014, http://www.c-span.org/video/?318905-1/boston-marathon-bombings-anniversary.
[22] "Boston Bombing Memorial Service, Part 2."

The *Runner's World* anniversary edition included survivor Caroline Spencer saying that "Evil didn't define that day," and her shift to regularly asking herself, "What can I give back?" in a way that reframes her vision of what society can be.[23] Liz Walker, longtime Boston news anchor and now pastor at the Roxbury Presbyterian Church, pointed to the spirit of human sacrifice and heroism. She called the movement from grief to hope the "divine design" in a future-oriented movement not to be enslaved by the past. Alluding to Isaiah 40:31, she promised that we will "run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint, soaring on wings like eagles."[24] These words need not involve a prophetic vision for society, but they can promote one.

Memory, Prophecy, and Religious Education

So, what, then, ought religious educators to highlight in the memorialization of violent events such as the Boston Marathon Bombings? What in particular can religious educators add in a prophetic key? I name three, though this list is hardly exhaustive.

Recounting and Embodying Memory

Metz's concept of the "dangerous memory" must play a role in the prophetic task of critically naming reality.[25] We cannot talk about the heroic rescuers unless we also honestly assess the impact of the violence -- death, PTSD, medical costs, physical pain and limitations -- and we cannot honestly assess the impact of the violence in Boston unless we admit that the violence that shears limbs is problematic in many places around the globe.

It is also noteworthy that the memorial services and displays this year had almost no mention of the Tsarnaev brothers. Some deliberately avoided it, reporting that the victims and rescuers "don't talk about the bombers. . . . [They don't] think about the young men's inner lives or how those lives bent and curdled into violence."[26] This near-absence is not surprising, as mention of perpetrators is quite often divisive. A display of crosses erected outside Columbine High School that included crosses for the two perpetrators drew scathing words for their builder and desecration of the crosses themselves.[27]

Such a denial cultivates a false consciousness. Refusing to discuss the Tsarnaev brothers keeps us from exploring the realities of religious violence, of ethnic violence, and the disjunction felt by those who try to escape violence and land on US soil. In the more immediate term, as Dzokhar Tsarnaev's trial approaches, this denial allows us to ignore ambiguities, to keep the killer safely unapproachable, and make capital punishment a viable option. A non-person is easy to "kill." Religious educators, then, must point to the stories of the victims with long-term psychological injuries, to the dehumanization of capital criminals, and to ethnic violence around the globe that impacts the streets of Boston.

Problematize Current Practices

Always we must ask whose interests are supported by current practices and operative ideologies. If our practices of remembrance are really self-serving attempts to fulfill personal

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[23] Fennessy, "One Year Stronger," 77.
[24] "Boston Marathon Bombings Anniversary."
[25] Johannes Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society : Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology*, trans. James Matthew Ashley (New York: Crossroad PubCo, 2007). For Metz, dangerous memories make a claim on us and our futures. They are memories that threaten the legitimacy of systems that allow for victimization.
[26] Friedman, "Blown Together."
[27] Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 107–112.

marathon dreams, we lay that self-centeredness bare. If our commemorative "Boston Strong" gear is about strengthening our identities as athletes, having bought all of the proper accoutrements, then we ought to face that fact honestly as well. We must challenge our presumptive practices and ask whose interests they are serving. This challenge should come from pulpits, in liturgy, and in religious education classrooms as we seek to foster reflection on personal and social practices.

Opportunities to Practice Hope

   The reaction to the Boston Marathon Bombings undoubtedly brought to light examples of immediate courage, sustained generosity, solidarity, and ingenuity in the face of adversity. We must continue to highlight these stories, for we need these moral exemplars and narratives of healing. What we can add are more opportunities to allow people to practice generosity and solidarity as part of our memorialization. Mayor Menino's call for a "Day of Action" as part of a "Day of Remembrance" is a useful one. If conscientization[28] comes about in reflective praxis, then the pedagogical power of offering opportunities to volunteer to provide meals for the mobility-impaired, medical care for the ill, or conversation for the lonely is immense. It is essential to note that in the occasion of remembering the Marathon Bombing such practices can be linked to the way we envision our best hopes for society. For instance, when we involve ourselves in the lives of someone who has lost a limb, we can better not only appreciate the need for long-term supportive services but also enter into the discussion of how we as a society might see ourselves providing them. Practices of service, long a staple of religious education, can be seen and reflected upon as practices of imaginative hope.

   Tragic and terrorizing violence -- like the Boston Marathon bombings -- does and should stop us in our tracks, and prompts us to recalibrate time and space. In this recalibration, we have the opportunity critically to reflect on reality and express the genuine grief in this reality. If this grief is a hole the wall that holds up our psyche, papering over that hole with the presumption that everything will be fine is no more helpful than staying in the grief forever is. Pointing to, celebrating, and building on practices of community-building and meaning-making can engender prophetic imagination and hope.

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[28] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York, NY: Continuum, 1970).

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(UN)TEACHING VIOLENCE:
Virtue Ethics and Community Moral (Re)Formation

Abstract
The unteaching of violence in our faith communities must begin with some kind of system of education and moral formation. Humans are not naturally peaceful people and any attempt to teach peaceableness would have to be a process of growth and formation. While there are many ways to teach peace and unteach violence, from within Christianity one encounters the virtues as a cornerstone of personal and communal moral formation. With this in mind, a method of unteaching violence can be developed for our communities by drawing from Groome's model of Shared Praxis and MacIntyre's work with the virtues.

THE VIRTUES: THEORY IN PRAXIS
The Virtues and Violence in Community

Before anything substantive can be said about how the virtues inform and shape religious education, a solid foundation of their meaning and implications must be set. The virtues are not simply "good things" or "positive attributes", but instead are formative habits which define communities as well as individuals. Conceiving of the virtues as abstract personal characteristics[1] makes a stark break from how the virtues have been understood for the majority of Western history. Describing an act as "virtuous" says little about where it falls on an abstract moral spectrum, but instead about the nature of the person and/or community that has committed such action.

Virtues are not abstract; they find their meaning within shared experiences and practices of a particular community. Morality is not, however, a purely subjective thing, far from it actually. Morality is always connected to the socially local and particular.[2] Possessing the virtues, therefore, means being connected to a tradition and a community; objective morality is always found within a tradition and community. An examination of pre-modern cultures, namely those which Alasdair MacIntyre describes as "heroic," points towards an understanding of virtues as evolving from shared stories/myths. Homeric societies understood humans in light of their actions, what they *did*. The Greek word *aretê* which later comes to be "virtue" is used in Homer's poems to signify excellence of any kind.[3] Characteristics like courage are considered "excellent" because they are directly tied to other characteristics that sustain communities. Thus, virtues are characteristics which served the community before they were embraced by individuals.

That virtues are attached to communities as opposed to individuals spotlights how the "self" of heroic societies and the "self" of modernity are quite different moral concepts. The

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[1] This is a commonly held position, enough so that much of Alasdair MacIntyre's work has been to make more explicit what the definition of a virtue actually is.

[2] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 126-7).

[3] Ibid., 122.

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modern "self" is able and expected to step outside of its own context and community. Heroic societies would have found it unintelligible to attempt to deal with a moral issue from an "outside" perspective (i.e. the modern concept of "objectivity") because there is no concept of the "outside" at all.[4] To be "outside" is to distance oneself from his/her community and to become a stranger. Alienation and separation are the only possible results from removing oneself from the community for an "outside" perspective.[5] MacIntyre presents ancient Athens as an example for teaching virtues. Athens, according to MacIntyre, teaches us how we become "just or courageous by performing just or courageous acts; we become theoretically or practically wise as a result of systemic instruction … As we transform our initial naturally given dispositions into virtues of character, we do so by gradually coming to exercise those dispositions …"[6] The virtues, then, can only exist within a community wherein they are continually taught and learned. One also finds in Athens community participation and dialogue with a particular story. The interactions of teachers and students dialoguing and learning together shows what it means to be virtuous. Cooperation which must, if it is effective, be coupled with humility.[7]

To practice nonviolence is not about acting nonviolently, doing nonviolent things, or avoiding violence. Instead, it is about being formed in a manner of which wherein to respond to a situation violently is unintelligible.[8] When violence comes to the community, the response is not to also act violently in return; instead the response to violence is transformative which is founded in a disposition towards nonviolence.[9] MacIntyre writes that, "Virtues are dispositions not only to act in particular ways, but also to feel in particular ways."[10] Communities and individuals must learn to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way. This is not achieved by following rules, but instead by being formed by stories and practices of virtue, namely reconciliation and nonviolence. The nature of nonviolence having to be learned and formed by habits points to it functioning similarly to how Aristotle speaks of moral virtues, i.e., that they are formed by habit and not something which one has by nature.[11]While this may seem to work itself out theoretically, how does it begin to actualize itself in the real world? Paulo Freire poses the problem as such: "How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation?"[12] The only real option for those affected by violence is to make the struggle their own, to learn where they are and what is going on, and only then can the process of liberation take place. Violence must be replaced with virtue, namely the virtue of Charity.

The Virtues and Religious Education

Thomas Aquinas, coming from within the Christian tradition, adds Charity (love) to the list of traditional virtues.[13] Building on this idea of Charity as a "love that does," those of us

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[4] Ibid., 126.

[5] A more recent response to the modern idea of an "outside" perspective can be found in postmodernity's insistence on the return to more local narratives, shifting away from metanarratives. What this holds for moral theory and religious education remains to be seen.

[6] MacIntyre, 154.

[7] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1992), 78-9.

[8] It may be more suitable then to use the term being "practiced" in nonviolence.

[9] Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1103b20-6. All references to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* will use Bekker's numbering.

[10] MacIntyre, 149.

[11] *Ethics*, 1103a16-27.

[12] Freire, 33.

[13] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Q. 62, Art. 4, co.

within Christianity find the idea of forgiveness as an alternative response to violence. Aquinas alters how the "good" is understood, because the community which seeks to achieve this "good" must be one of reconciliation.[14] But becoming a community of reconciliation means learning reconciliation, learning to love; this is where religious education comes into the task.

Charity only becomes intelligible within a community by understanding reconciliation and forgiveness. Through remembering our stories, and the fact that we are storied-animals is the answer here.[15] Faith communities need tellers of these stories in order for people to become rightly-storied; this is where religious educators step in. Participation within a community is about learning how one fits within it. While there is definitely a pedagogical nature to this, it must be remembered that being able to know what stories we are part of and learning from them has to be an activity of co-learning. Teacher/students interact with these stories and learn from them together in an effort to humanize both themselves as well as the "other" in their midst.[16]

Religious education is then about reminding us of our stories, as well as how we are to act within those stories. The virtues, being grounded in the life of a community, help us to break down and un-teach individualism, which is itself a force of violence. To try and cut ourselves off from our pasts, to act purely as autonomous individuals, deforms our present relationships and prohibits us from acting.[17] What is the "good" which we seek in our community? How do we point and move towards it? What stories/practices can further our search for the "good?" For Christian religious educators, education is an activity in which we purposefully attend to the movement(s) of God in the community's present experience, the Story of the wider Christian community throughout history, and the Vision of God's kingdom which is already being actualized.[18]

(UN)TEACHING VIOLENCE

According to Thomas Groome, educational activity is "a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with people to our present, to the past heritage it embodies, and to the future possibility it holds for the total person and community."[19] We critically engage with the past in order to claim our future. Dealing with the past in a way which allows the future to fully become and not just be a shallow repetition of past failings and mistakes. An education that seeks to un-teach violence must begin by reconciling the problem of the teacher-student contradiction. Only when those involved are simultaneously teacher *and* student will those involved be able to interact with violence in a genuine way.[20]

A Pedagogy of Nonviolence

Drawing extensively from Groome's methodology found in chapter ten of his *Christian Religious Education*,[21] along with a foundation within how MacIntyre posits virtues function within society, one can begin to work out a rough pedagogy of nonviolence. For the sake of

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[14] MacIntyre, 174.

[15] Ibid., 216.

[16] Freire, 62.

[17] MacIntyre, 221.

[18] Thomas H. Groome, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 25.

[19] Ibid., 21.

[20] Freire, 59.

[21] For further reading on the movements see Groome ch. 10, pp. 207-32. The movements are as follows: Naming Present Action, The Participant's Stories and Visions, The Christian Community Story and Vision, Dialectical Hermeneutic Between the Story and Participant's Stories, and Dialectical Hermeneutic Between the Vision and Participant's Visions. Henceforth, the will only be referenced by their numbering in the order described by Groome.

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brevity, Aquinas' theological virtue of Charity will be examined as an example of how virtues can be examined and taught within a community as a response to violence.[22]

Groome's first movement would focus on asking praxis-related questions such as, "How do we love in the face of violence in our communities?" or "What does charity look like in a violent world?" By asking praxis related questions, we begin to, as a group involved with the present action (the unlearning/unteaching of violence), describe how we engage with the issue at hand. How do we respond to violence in our communities?[23] The goal is to shift from a *theoria* way of knowing to that of a *praxis* one.[24] It is not enough to talk about ideas; we must focus on actions--what do we *do* instead of what we *think*. Ultimately, the group must describe their experience with violence as well as how it affects their faith community.

The second movement shifts to a time where those involved in the exercise are encouraged to share what love and charity have meant for them in their own lives in order to produce critical engagement with the answers given during the first movement. Groome simplifies the movement by posing the question, "Why we do what we do and what our hopes are in doing it?"[25] Specifically, then, when we respond to violence with violence, why are we doing it and what are we hoping to get out of it? These questions are not about challenging a perspective, only asking to reflect on it. The aim here is always encouraging and enabling participants to critically engage with their experience (past, present, and future), their reasoning behind it, and the consequences.

The third movement, introduces the participants to how their specific faith tradition has understood love and charity as well as what that understanding means for formation. While the previous movement was about how the community understands charity and love and how violence affects the community, this movement is an opportunity for those involved to begin encountering the Church's Story and the Vision which the Story invites.[26] This is difficult because while one may be able to trace a rhetorical trend throughout the Christian Story concerning violence (the Vision), it seems that the Church has had a difficult time applying it practically. It is here, with an engagement with the Story and Vision, that participation and appropriation begin to happen. This movement is not about handing a bullet-list or point-for-point explanation on how to do things. Personal appropriation hinges on those involved making the Story and Vision their own in their own way.[27]

Moving forward, the fourth movement is where participants begin to critique the Christian story in light of their own, as well as critiquing their stories in light of the Christian story, holding everything together in dialectical tension. Groome suggests asking, though in less metaphorical language, "What does the community's Story mean for (affirm, call in question, invite beyond) our stories, and how do our stories respond to (affirm, recognize limits of, push beyond) the community Story?"[28] As it relates to teaching charity in the face of violence, this is where communities can begin to recognize the violence inherent within the Story/stories and unpack how to engage with their specific contexts oriented towards healing, reconciliation, and

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[22] It is worth noting that while Groome's movements are ordered one through five, it is conceivable to go about them in an order other than how he describes them.

[23] While confronting violence on a global scale is important, the focus first has to be the violence in our everyday lives.

[24] Groome, 210.

[25] Ibid., 211.

[26] Ibid., 214.

[27] Cf. *Ethics*, 1104a4-11.

[28] Groome, 217.

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growth. We can begin to deal with the violence in our past in an attempt to make for a different future. How can we begin to love God and neighbor while still building our communities around violence?

Finally, the fifth movement is similar in function to the fourth movement, but instead emphasizes the Vision/visions dialectic. This is the time where participants begin to engage with how the present action relates to the Christian community's vision and ask how we are to act in light of the vision itself. This movement may be the most important of them all because it is ultimately what drives praxis forward. If this movement does not take place, a praxis-response may not be reached and the entire enterprise may collapse in on itself. It is not enough to recognize violence in our communities and how it contrasts with virtues such as charity. If we hope to see change, growth, and formation we must begin to be formed morally in a manner where the only way we know to respond to violence is with love.[29] We critique the visions embodied by our present action in the light of the Vision of God's Kingdom, deciding on future action that will be an appropriate response to that Vision.[30] This movement is the "where do we go from here" moment, inviting us to a change, a movement, and a decision, rather than a theory. Sometimes the response is to start the whole process over again, which is completely appropriate. For this movement (as well as the Fourth), the question is never "Do we or do we not respond to violence with love?" Responding to violence with love is a mandate of the Kingdom of God. While some may choose to overlook it, the educator cannot pretend that this is a valid response. We invite others to understand what love *is* and then pose the question of what it looks like in action.[31]

The Religious Educator and Violent Communities

To bring change to violent communities, religious educators must act politically within time and history. Though some violence may *seem* to exist apolitically, all violence is political because it involves persons bound up in the shared experience of a community. While it is common within Christianity in the United States to envision Christian political activity as voting for a "Christian" candidate or forming a "Christian political party", Christian religious educators must be wary of this understanding of political action. By acting politically, we mean acting in ways that "influence and structurally intervene to influence how people live their lives in society."[32] Part of this political activity is the act of entering into communion with those who are in violent communities, a political shift that can be likened to a "conversion." Education does not occur from the "outside" and as religious educators, we must be willing to abandon our "status" as educators in order to be a part of the process of liberatory education.[33]

So the question must be asked: how do we make a story of peace intelligible within violent communities? How do we make it accessible in a way that people can appropriate it and make it their own? From a Christian perspective, we have to be able to unteach any understanding of salvation that places it "later" or in an otherworldly reality. It must be resituated here and now. Injustice and cycles of violence and destruction are more easily accepted when it is believed that respite from them will only come after this life has ended. For Freire, there is no "way things just are" when it comes to violence in communities.[34] Those affected by violence

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[29] Cf. *Ethics*, 1105a17-1105b19.
[30] Groome, 220.
[31] Ibid., 222.
[32] Ibid., 48.
[33] Freire, 47.
[34] Ibid., 34.

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must perceive it for what it is: not a closed and fixed reality, but one that can be changed. Only when this realization is made can people begin to change. Such a realization comes with an interaction with a community's shared story, as well as how that story relates to the Christian Story. Tying in with Aristotle and the virtues, the end of education is not an "abstract knowing" but instead a specific kind of moral character that makes for a good member of a community. Only a way of knowing centered on praxis can create this.[35] As Christian religious educators, there is a responsibility to represent Jesus Christ in communities incarnationally. One cannot hope to make a difference if he/she attempts to remain detached from the pain and sorrow around them. Solidarity and cooperation are the only options. Responding to violence is not about making self-replicas, or even replicating a way of doing Christianity. Instead, focus should be on trying to give individuals the tools they need to be like Christ.

<center>Community Moral (Re)Formation</center>

The difficulty that runs throughout is that both individuals and communities are not blank slates waiting to be filled. Responding to violence is about moral reformation as opposed to simple formation. While communities could get to a place where this process of learning begins during childhood and is nurtured throughout life, as it stands faith communities exist within and are surrounded by violence. Violence has been a shaping characteristic that must be dealt with. The reformation towards nonviolence and love cannot be based upon some kind of thin moralism. The virtues have to be taught and learned.

Writing over thirty years ago, MacIntyre suggested that the modern attempt at conceiving of morality as being disconnected from the local and the communal, from shared practices and stories, had been a colossal failure.[36] Moral theory, and just as importantly the praxis that should come alongside said theory, has to be relocated in the dialectical relationship between people's experiences and the shared experiences of their communities. This is done by, as Groome so clearly puts it, embracing the present action and critically reflecting on it.[37] There is no answer or response to violence found in the realm of abstraction because violence, as a force in the world, is not abstract.

Just as violence is a learned reality,[38] so in the same way nonviolence and peaceableness are and can be learned. But learning nonviolence and peace can be difficult, especially after having spent years, if not decades, being shaped by violence. Muscles, both physical as well as moral, are born, conditioned, and strengthened. It can sometimes take just as long for a person to be reformed as it did for them to be formed in the first place. It is only by grounding the moral muscles that are the virtues in shared praxis that people can begin to truly change. Whether this takes place on the individual or community level, it must ultimately come from the bottom-up. Violence, as an oppressive force in the world, acts from the top-down and responding to it means refusing to act in the same manner. The only freedom from violence comes from people unlearning violence and being morally reformed in a manner wherein to act violently becomes unintelligible. It is only then that the oppressed find themselves freed and only then the oppressors can be freed from their own oppressive nature.[39]

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[35] Groome, 156.
[36] MacIntyre, 52.
[37] Groome, 184.
[38] Violence, like anything else, is learned by experiencing and reacting to it.
[39] Freire, 28-9.

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Moral Injury, Soul Repair, and Creating a Place for Grace

Abstract

Government estimates indicate that there are approximately 2.3 million veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan war in the U.S. currently. Over 20% of these veterans, estimates continue, have PTSD and/or depression. Veterans also suffer from substance abuse, homelessness, family problems and many are unemployed. In addition, the suicide rate for these veterans is 5,000 a year. Though wars have been fought throughout human history, we are actually only now beginning to understand the true impact of war and violence on those called to fight and those for whom they fight. These men and women have been taught to be violent. Yet when they return home, they are not taught how to unlearn violence. Unmaking violence is hard to do when our veterans are reliving their experiences of violence daily.

Ministers and religious education attempt to assist the veterans to reintegrate into their communities and provide them and their families with pastoral care. However, we are just now beginning to realize that they have injuries that are harder to see. The terms that have been used to describe these injuries include moral injury, moral pain and soul wound. Therefore, in order for religious educators to have a more profound impact on our students, the field of peace studies and education for nonviolence and those preparing for military chaplaincy, it is important to understand moral injury and identify resources religious traditions, communities, and leaders bring to the tending of the moral wounds of war in individuals, families and societies.

Utilizing the vantage points and experience of religious education and military chaplaincy this paper is organized around two main sections. The first section discusses the psychological, theological and ethical dimensions of moral injury in conjunction with how it aids the perpetuation of violence both within the individual and between the individual, their families and communities.

The second major section will discuss the role that religious education can play in order to support the healing and recovery of our veterans and our communities as well as genuinely teaching how to unmake violence.

I.   Defining the Basic Concepts

The increasing number of returning veterans in our churches and communities signals a growing need for clergy and religious educators to assess the pastoral concerns and requirements that

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these veterans and their families may be facing. It also presents an opportunity to initiate a more serious discussion of the moral and theological issues that accompany war and global violence. In doing so, it is important to first name and understand the central issues.

A. Moral Injury

In an effort to more accurately diagnose what could be the major cause of suicide among American veterans returning from Afghanistan, Iraq and even Vietnam, professionals across multiple disciplines – including clinical psychologists, social workers, Christian ethicists and clergy – are using with greater frequency the phrase "moral injury."[1] "PTSD, as officially defined, is rarely what wrecks veterans' lives or crushes them to suicide," writes career Veterans Affairs psychiatrist Jonathan Shay, "Moral injury does both."[2] Military professionals now warn of the real danger of "spiritual and moral trauma" and advocate "education about moral injury and its relationship to spirituality and stress" and "development of spiritual fitness" to help "mitigate moral injury."[3]

A shift of focus away from the language of "disorder" to the language of "moral injury" presents both "a challenge and a call to spiritual leaders."[4] Medical professionals admit they cannot adequately address what they are calling "moral injury," and are reaching out to religious leaders and communities for help, acknowledging "religious and cultural therapies are not only possible,

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[1] *For studies from clinical psychologists and social workers, see*: Brett T. Litz, Nathan Stein, Eileen Delaney, Leslie Lebowitz, William P. Nash, Caroline Silva, and Shira Maguen, "Moral Injury and Moral Repair in War Veterans: A Preliminary Model and Intervention Strategy," *Clinical Psychology Review*, 29.8 (2009): 695-706; William P. Nash and Brett T. Litz, "Moral Injury: a Mechanism for War-Related Psychological Trauma in Military Family Members," *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review,* 16.4 (2013): 365-75; *for interdisciplinary studies from medical and religious professionals see*: Kent D. Drescher, David Foy, Caroline Kelly, Anna Leshner, Kerrie Schutz, and Brett Litz, "An Exploration of the Viability and Usefulness of the Construct of Moral Injury in War Veterans," *Traumatology*, 17.1 (2011): 8-13; Eileen A. Dombo, Cathleen Gray, and Barbara P. Early, "The Trauma of Moral Injury: Beyond the Battlefield," *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work,* 32.3 (2013): 197-210; C.T. Tran, E. Kuhn, R.D. Walser, and Kent D. Drescher, "The Relationship between Religiosity, PTSD, and Depressive Symptoms in Veterans in PTSD Residential Treatment," *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 40.4 (2012): 313-322; Kent D. Drescher, Jason A. Nieuwsma, and Pamela Swales, "Morality and Moral Injury: Insights from Theology and Health Science," *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, 33 (2013): 50-61; *for studies from Christian ethicists and clergy*, *see*: Warren Kinghorn, "Combat Trauma and Moral Fragmentation: A Theological Account of Moral Injury," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 32.2 (2012): 57-74; Beth A. Stallinga, "What Spills Blood Wounds Spirit: Chaplains, Spiritual Care, and Operational Stress Injury," *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, 33 (2013): 13-31.

[2] Jonathan Shay, "Moral Injury," *Intertexts*, 16.1 (2012): 58. While not using the phrase "moral injury," Larry Dewey made a similar observation in identifying "grief and guilt, not fear of death" as the core of the problem. *See* Larry Dewey, *War and redemption: Treatment and recovery in combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2004), 109.

[3] *See*: David J. Hufford, Matthew J. Fritz, and Jeffrey E. Rhodes, "Spiritual Fitness," *Military Medicine,* 175 (2010): 73, 85; *see also*: Patrick J. Sweeney, Jeffrey E. Rhodes, and Bruce Boling, "Spiritual Fitness: A Key Component of Total Force Fitness," *National Defense University Press*, 66 (2012): 35-36.

[4] Gabriella Lettini, "Engaging the Moral Injuries of War: A Call to Spiritual Leaders," *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, (2013), 37-47.

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but may well be superior to what mental health professionals conventionally offer."[5] Yet in order to provide competent help, religious leaders and communities need education. Effective religious education can equip clergy and faith communicates to speak and act with greater pastoral authority in addressing moral injury and its root causes, moving beyond the constraints of the medical model, in order to meet the real needs of war-torn individuals and society.

Since the language of "moral injury" has emerged out of the medical community, let us begin with the definitions of moral injury from that community. Although efforts to name the hidden wounds of war go back to ancient times, Jonathan Shay, who spent decades working with combat veterans, was the first to use "moral injury" He defines moral injury as "a betrayal of what's right" and considers the injury "an essential part of any combat trauma that leads to lifelong psychological injury."[6] Brett Litz , a Veterans Affairs psychologist, builds upon Shay by defining potentially "morally injurious" experiences as "*Perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations* (italics theirs)."[7] Shay responded to Litz with further clarification of what he means by "moral injury" in a way he says "complements Litz, but differs in the "who" of the violator." His revised version includes three components:

1) Betrayal of what's right
2) By someone who holds legitimate authority (in the military – a leader)
3) In a high stakes situation.[8]

The fundamental distinction between moral injury and PTSD is in the core emotion: moral injury is based in *shame* and *guilt* whereas PTSD is rooted in an overwhelming experience of *fear*. Litz further distinguishes moral injury from PTSD noting that "anguish, guilt and shame are signs of an intact conscience" and that the existence of moral injury indicates healthy "expectations" about "goodness, humanity and justice."[9] Rita Nakashima-Brock and Gabriella Lettini contend, "Veterans with moral injury have souls in anguish, not a psychological disorder."[10] Edward Tick

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[5] *Quoted in* Jonathan Shay, *Odysseus in america: Combat trauma and the trials of homecoming* (New York: Scribner, 2002), 152; *see also* Shira Maguen and Brett Litz, "Moral Injury in Veterans of War," *PTSD Research Quarterly*, 23:1 (2012):1-3, http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/newsletters/research-quarterly/v23n1.pdf, retrieved December 11, 2013; *see also* Larry Dewey, *War and redemption: Treatment and recovery in combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2004), 200.

[6] Jonathan Shay *Achilles in vietnam: Combat trauma and the undoing of character* (New York: Atheneum, 1994)*,* 20.

[7] Litz et al., 700.

[8] Shay, *Intertexts*, p. 59.

[9] Litz et al., 701.

[10] Rita Nakashima-Brock and Gabriella Lettini, *Soul repair: Recovering from moral injury after war* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013), 51.

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rejects PTSD as a diagnostic label, initially preferring "identity disorder" and "soul disorder" and most recently "social disorder" and soul wound."[11]

In other words, moral injury is not a personality disorder but rather a wound suffered by a self-reflective and conscientious moral agent. As such, moral injury is best understood as the inevitable outcome of moral engagement with the harsh reality of war and killing. Understood in this way, should religious leaders really seek to "mitigate moral injury" and find ways to "prevent" or even "treat" it? Nakashima-Brock and Lettini offer this well-placed critique of the spiritual fitness dimension of the U.S. Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness initiative: "it seems to glorify soldiers as spiritually fit who can remain unaffected in any deep moral or emotional way."[12] "Veterans who experience moral injury testify to human capacities for empathy and to the resilience and persistence of moral teaching," writes Lettini.[13] "A person of good character feels moral pain—call it guilt, shame, anguish, remorse—after doing something that caused another person suffering, injury, or death, even if entirely accidental or unavoidable," writes Shay.[14] If we define spiritual fitness to include the capacity for empathy, moral engagement, and all the rest that good character entails then it would seem moral injury is *directly*, not *inversely*, proportional to spiritual fitness. Moral injury is a hopeful sign we are no longer on the "road to ruin" that David Grossman warned us about in *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*; but rather on "the road home" toward "the resensitization of America."[15]

Evidence based research indicates moral disengagement aids in the perpetuation of violence both within the individual and between the individual and their wider relationships. Albert Bandura, a pioneer in the field of research on moral disengagement, has established the high costs of such disengagement: "It contributes to social discordance in ways that are likely to lead down dissocial paths. High moral disengagers experience low guilt over injurious conduct. They are less prosocial. They are quick to resort to aggression and transgressive conduct."[16] Despite these costs, the U.S. Military systematically trains soldiers to morally disengage to produce more efficient killers. Admittedly, some soldiers may need to morally disengage and embrace what the psychologist Daniel Goleman calls "vital lies" to cope with the anxiety inherent in combat.[17] But

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[11] Edward Tick, 2005. *War and the soul: healing our nation's veterans from post-traumatic stress disorder.* (Wheaton, Ill: Quest Books), 5; Edward Tick, "PTSD: The Sacred Wound," *Health Progress*, 94.3 (May-June 2013): 14-22.

[12] Nakashima-Brock, 101.

[13] Lettini, *Reflective Practice,* 44.

[14] Shay, *Odysseus*, 112. When Shay writes of "Preventing Psychological and Moral Injury in Military Service" his audience is military leadership, not the clergy.

[15] Dave Grossman, *On killing* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1995), 328-330.

[16] Albert Bandura, "Selective Moral Disengagement in the Exercise of Moral Agency," *Journal of Moral Education* 31 (2002): 115.

[17] *See generally*, Daniel Goleman, *Vital lies, simple truths: the psychology of self-deception* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985).

a veteran who remains morally disengaged never returns home. As Shay notes, "To really *be home* means to be emotionally present and engaged."[18]

A pastoral intervention rightly directed toward human wholeness ought neither mitigate or prevent moral injury but rather accept it, honor it, and perhaps even celebrate it as the "sacred wound" that it is.[19] From the perspective of the religious leader, fostering moral reflection on killing and war, even if it means bearing moral injury, is better than condoning a military and society that is morally disengaged and desensitized from the unsavory business of killing. "If we must have a military at all it *should* hurt," (italics his) wrote M. Scott Peck in *People of the Lie*: *The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, after resigning as Assistant Chief of Psychiatry and Neurology Consultant to the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army during the American War in Vietnam.[20] Peck argues that if we refuse to acknowledge the harmful consequences of our war-fighting – confess our own "sin" – and live in a state of moral disengagement, psychic numbing, denial and self-deception as "people of the lie," then "as a whole people we will become … evil."[21] Reinhold Niebuhr calls this the "final sin," that is, "the unwillingness to hear the word of judgment spoken against our sin."[22]

Perhaps, then, the most important task of religious leaders and educators is to move a culture that is sin and guilt-averse into a new way of seeing that values moral engagement, and the resulting moral pain and injury, as critical for the moral development of individuals and society. If we understand guilt as Niebuhr does, "the objective and historical consequence of sin," then a pastoral intervention must both tend the guilt and expose the root sin.[23] "If guilt is not experienced deeply enough to cut into us, our future may well be lost," writes one combat veteran reflecting on the carnage of World War II.[24] "If a nation, seeking peace and security forgets its own conscience or the judgment of God upon it, the nation loses its soul," writes another.[25] In order to foster this development, religious educators should learn and teach (1) the distinction between shame and guilt since moral injury that is shame, rather than guilt-based is maladaptive and contributes to acting-in and acting-out violence towards self and others;[26] and (2) how to tend the guilt that is essential to moral injury, the kind of guilt psychologists have

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[18] Shay, *Odysseus,* 39.

[19] Edward Tick, "PTSD: The Sacred Wound," *Health Progress*, 94.3 (May-June 2013): 14-22.

[20] M. Scott Peck, *People of the lie: The hope for healing human evil* (New York: Touchstone, 1983), 232.

[21] Ibid., 233.

[22] Reinhold Niebuhr, *The nature and destiny of man: A christian interpretation* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), 219.

[23] Ibid., 222.

[24] J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 212.

[25] Roger Lincoln Shinn, *Beyond this darkness; what the events of our time have meant to christians who face the future* (New York: Association Press, 1946), 57.

[26] June P. Tangney, Jeff Stuewig, and Deborah J. Mashek, "Moral emotions and moral behavior," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 58 (2007): 350.

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found "goes hand in hand with other-oriented empathy" is "adaptive" and "benefiting individuals and relationships in a variety of ways."[27]

B.   Theological Dimensions

Talk of sin, evil and redemption moves us beyond the constraints of the medical construct of moral injury into a dimension that integrates the insights of theology and the resources of religious traditions, and this is exactly where religious educators can make their greatest contribution. Warren Kinghorn contends moral injury "is an important and useful clinical construct" but the phenomenon it attempts to name "beckons beyond the structural constraints of contemporary psychology toward something like moral theology" or "penitential theology."[28] Kinghorn says Christian moral theology, which has to do with Christian character and conduct, offers a "depth of context to moral injury that clinical psychology cannot" which makes the psychological construct (Litz et al, Shay) "unhelpfully limiting."

Kinghorn considers the advent of "moral injury" within the literature of combat trauma "a very welcome development" because it "forces critical analysis of the relationship between combat trauma and the moral agency of the acting soldier." He says, the focus on agency is helpful in three ways: (1) Combat trauma can no longer be understood apart from "a sociocultural matrix of language and meaning and valuation" which Kinghorn says, "resonates with Christian affirmations of the embodied, relational, responsible self."; (2) Combat trauma understood as moral injury "forces a more complex account of human agency than is often displayed in cultural conversations about combat trauma."; (3) Moral injury reminds us that "traumatic effects of war on soldiers and civilians cannot be separated from the more theoretical considerations of war's moral justifiability, and vice versa." The benefit of this to Christian communities, he writes, is that "moral injury can call Christian ethics out of abstract arguments about just war and pacifism toward closer consideration of the concrete psychological and individual costs of war."[29]

For Kinghorn, the moral injury construct offered by Litz and Shay is nothing more than the "transgression of a soldier's own internalized rules and assumptions." Out of such a construct, he argues, the clinicians' response to the suffering of veterans is sadly inadequate. We are left with "therapeutic instrumentalism" or "the use of technique to relieve suffering." These techniques, he says, have great "moral zeal" but are constrained by "teleological silence."

> They cannot pass judgment on the validity of the moral rules and assumptions that
> individual soldiers carry, since to do so would be to venture into the ethics of war. They

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[27]Ibid.

[28] Warren Kinghorn, "Combat Trauma and Moral Fragmentation: A Theological Account of Moral Injury," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 32.2 (2012): 57, 62.

[29] Ibid., 62-63.

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also cannot name any deeper reality that moral assumptions and the rules that engender them might reflect.[30]

A more accurate diagnosis of a person suffering combat trauma, Kinghorn says, is "moral fragmentation of a teleological whole." In response to this, he says, Christians, through pastoral and congregational care, can provide what psychiatrists and psychologists cannot: reconciliation to God and community. Such reconciliation, he says, "calls for the interlocking practices of patience, of confession, and forgiveness."[31]

> Unlike the clinical disciplines, Christians can name the moral trauma of war not simply as psychological dissonance but as a tragic and perhaps *even sinful* reminder that the peace of God is still not yet a fully present reality (italics mine).[32]

To arrive at a pastoral diagnosis of the problem facing returning veterans, we need to wrestle with the word *sin* and be open to the possibility of "recovering a sense of sin."[33] This point was made more than a quarter-century ago by William Mahedy, who served as a chaplain in Vietnam. "I believe the essential failure of the chaplaincy in Vietnam was its inability to name the reality for what it was. We should have first called it sin, admitted we were in a morally ambiguous and religiously tenuous situation, and then gone on to deal with the harsh reality of the soldier's life."[34] Could "moral injury" amount to nothing more than a euphemism for sin, or at least, the consequence of sin? One marine combat veteran dismisses moral injury "as deceptive a euphemism as collateral damage."[35] Kinghorn reminds us, "the language of "wound" and "sickness" is deeply rooted in Christian speech about sin, particularly in the Eastern tradition."[36] Church history reveals times when Christians imposed penance on soldiers returning from battle, even when the battle was just and the soldiers fought justly.[37] Religious educators who disable the insulating walls and confront the vital lies that shield us from our complicity in war and killing may not alleviate suffering, but may very may well redeem us from sin and deliver us from evil.

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[30] Ibid., 67.

[31] Ibid., 67.

[32] Ibid., 70.

[33] Bernard Verkamp, "Recovering a sense of sin," *America*, 149.16 (November 1983), 305.

[34] William P. Mahedy, *Out of the night: The spiritual journey of vietnam vets* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), 135.

[35] Timothy Kudo, "I killed people in Afghanistan: Was I right or wrong," *Washington Post*, 25 January 2013.

[36] Kinghorn, 65.

[37] Bernard Verkamp, *The moral treatment of returning warriors*, 18-19; Darrell Cole, "Just war, penance, and the church," Pro Ecclesia11, no. 3 (2002): 313-328. ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost (accessed December 14, 2013): 314.

It is one thing to talk about moral injury from the perspective of medicine and theology and the challenges it presents for not only our veterans and their families but for our communities as well. It is another to consider how we might constructively and effectively address it, for their sake and for the sake of our communities. Religious education has the opportunity to address these challenges posed by moral injury and soul wound on the educational and pastoral levels.

II.   Possibilities for Religious Education in the Unmaking of Violence

A.   Creating a Space for Grace

What can we as religious educators contribute? One important response is to create a space for grace. A challenge veterans face is to feel God's grace again as they try to distinguish shame from guilt. It is all the more difficult for them because the very training they received that helped ensure their survival in combat also played into their feelings of guilt and shame. The tough stance they learned makes it hard for them to let go of what they are feeling. But a space in which God's grace is present and experienced offers support that enables them to let go and begin the healing process. How do we do this? We need create a space "safe for the soul."[38] Confession and forgiveness contribute to such a space.

[Chris]: Confession is just one among many classic spiritual disciplines that religious leaders and educators can employ and teach about to tend moral injury and reconcile the morally wounded to God and community.[39] In my own experience as a military chaplain in Afghanistan I found the discipline of confession vital for my own well-being as well as for the soldiers in my care. The story of one soldier, "Angelito," illustrates well how confession can open the path towards forgiveness and reconciliation in community.[40] Angelito came to me at my office on a military base in southern Afghanistan burdened with guilt and shame. "I hate myself," he told me. When he arrived at my door I learned he had come to me as a last resort. He had tried it all - PTSD counselors, anger management, medications, alcohol, but nothing would ease the pain. He was preparing to shoot himself in the head. I asked Angelito what he wanted and he replied "peace" yet finding the peace of God in this world seemed to him an impossible dream; suicide seemed the best option. Over the ensuing weeks, I built a relationship of trust with Angelito and he eventually felt safe enough to tell me his story. His unit had shot a civilian and then passed by all the while shouting obscenities as the man bled to death in front of his wife and children. The image of the blood and the sounds of the children screaming haunted Angelito. "I betrayed my true self," he told me. His father had taught him to be compassionate, like the Good Samaritan in

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[38]*See* Parker J. Palmer, *A hidden wholeness: The journey toward an undivided life: Welcoming the soul and weaving community in a wounded world* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

[39] *See* Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of discipline: the path to spiritual growth* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988).

[40] Angelito authorized a release from privilege so I could share his story and his song for the lessons it holds for us all. You can find the song and my interview with him online at: http://bamiyan.us/wordpress/?p=737.

Jesus' parable, yet moral reflection on his behavior led him to conclude he did "the exact opposite" of what the Good Samaritan would have done. "My heart was so cold," he told me. "I'm a monster."

"Relationships with the missing and the dead, and with death itself, are at the core of the soul wound we call post-traumatic stress disorder," writes Tick.[41] As I listened to Angelito confess his story, I heard the shame and guilt characteristic of moral injury. In shooting a civilian and then disrespecting the dying man in front of his family -- "we flipped him off as we drove by" -- Angelito had ventured into two of the "four areas of pain and horror that are worse than killing enemy soldiers," and thus had broken "the Geneva Convention of the Soul."[42] Angelito confessed first to me, and then turned his confession into a song called "Driving By as I Watched You Bleed," that he performed publicly at my invitation before a religious community that had gathered one Sunday morning at Kandahar Airfield. The community heard Angelito without judgment and became a channel for him to experience forgiveness, mercy, and grace. In creating a song and dedicating it to the man he had helped kill, Angelito moved from the moral emotion of shame to appropriate guilt for real harm done, and ultimately to gratitude: "Thank you for being there in my life. Thank you for reminding me of who I need to be in the world." His relationship with the dead was transformed; the man was no longer a haunting phantom but part of his conscience. By the end of our time together, Angelito no longer hated himself and his broken soul was on the mend. While this intervention did help Angelito achieve post traumatic growth, it fell short of the demands of restorative justice, which requires tending the unmet needs of the traumatized widow and children, and all the others harmed in this incident.[43]

It is important that pastoral leaders and students recognize the value of confession for both the returning veteran and the congregation as a whole. As Foster describes it: "The Discipline of confession brings an end to pretense. God is calling into being a Church that can openly confess its frail humanity and know the forgiving and empowering graces of Christ. Honesty leads to confession, and confessions leads to change."[44] In addition, the congregation that is able to confess together with the veterans signals that it too is moving toward reconciliation together. Kinghorn sees this as a strength and advantage of the faith-based communities as opposed to the medical community. For Kinghorn, the veterans need:

> . . . a community that can help them be forgiven when appropriate as well as to forgive
> the wrongs inflicted upon them in war. And they need a community that is able to own
> and to acknowledge its own violence, as embodied in the lives and actions of its soldiers,

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[41] Tick, *War and the soul,* 140.

[42] Dewey, 74. The two areas are: "causing civilian casualties and killing while filled with hate, rage, or something like elation." The other two areas being: killing one's own men (aka friendly fire) and vigilante actions (aka battlefield justice).

[43] *See generally*, Howard Zehr, *The little book of restorative justice* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2002).

[44] Foster, 157.

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yet that is capable, with the veteran, of imagining a world in which violence is not ultimate and does not rule.[45]

As noted patience, confession and forgiveness are all essential to reconciling the morally wounded back to God and community. Without patience, we risk "premature forgiveness." Shelly Rambo, in her book *Spirit and Trauma, a Theology of Remaining* suggests remaining with Holy Saturday, between death and life, instead of rushing to the joy of the resurrection on Easter Sunday.[46]   The time of remaining is also the time when the community can face the tragedies of war, accept appropriate guilt for their complicity in war, and share the burden of responsibility with the veteran who served on behalf of the community. As Stanley Hauerwas writes:

> A commitment to nonviolence rightly requires those who are so committed to recognize that we are as implicated in war as those who have gone to war or those who have supported war. The moral challenges of war is too important for us to play a game of who is and who is not guilty for past or future wars. We are all, pacifist and nonpacifist alike, guilty.[47]

By patiently *remaining* with Angelito I earned his trust, and on the foundation of that trust he was able to confess, experience appropriate guilt for real harm done, grow in empathy, begin working toward forgiveness, and make meaning out of tragedy.

B.   Education of the Wider Community

Equally important is the need to generate and foster theological reflection and examination by the veterans and the wider community on the larger fundamental issues and hard reality of war. This means asking the hard questions: Can war ever be "just"? Is war always collective sin? Is the act of killing by individuals in war sinful? Why must we as a peace-loving people rely on war for our sense of security? As men and women of God and as a nation that proclaims the centrality of God, can we continue to sanction killing on a national level? How do we view our returning veterans knowing some of the actions they had to commit? How do we make sense of the atrocities committed by our soldiers and atrocities committed by "the enemy"? These are questions that require discussion if our religious leaders and communities are to go beyond "therapeutic instrumentalism" and reclaim their pastoral authority. As Nakashima-Brock expresses it: "To treat veterans with respect means to examine our collective relationships to war with the same standards of courage and integrity veterans themselves have modeled."[48]

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[45] Kinghorn, 69.

[46] Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and trauma: A theology of remaining* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010).

[47] Stanley Hauerwas, *War and the american difference: Theological reflections on violence and national identity* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic, 2011), ebook, location 167.

[48] Nakashima-Brock, 115.

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Changes in weaponry, language and how we conduct a war also point toward the need for a public discussion and theological reflection. There is a danger of losing touch with the moral issues involved in war due to the use of medical clinical language that can be misleading. Talk of delivering a "surgical strike" or "eliminating the target" leads us to forget that the action will result in loss of life. We therefore stand to lose sight of the moral issues involved in war if there is no venue or forum in which to examine and reflect on these assumptions and issues.

As Nakashima-Brock offers: "Engaging in collective conversations about moral injury and war can help us all to strengthen the moral fabric of society and the connections that tie us to the rest of the world. Our collective engagement with moral injury will teach us more about the impact of our actions and choices on each other, enable us to see the world from other perspectives, and chart pathways for our future."[49] The veterans need to see this level of conversation taking place. It is one thing for those going through therapy to bring these issues out in the open on an individual level as they deal with their own feelings of guilt and shame but the guilt and shame they may be experiencing is not confined just to them. They are part of a larger social context and network that had a hand in the decision to deploy the troops in the first place either directly or indirectly. Such conversations are the start of unlearning violence and learning peacemaking.

Immediately following the World Trade Center tragedy, the news was replete with stories of skirmishes and fighting that broke out in communities composed of diverse cultures and faiths. To a great extent, many of the conflicts were the result of inadequate, inaccurate or the lack of proper information and knowledge. It is relatively easy to demonize and dehumanize those whom we know little or nothing about or those whose customs differ from our own. It is much harder to do so when one has the appropriate knowledge and understanding of other faith traditions and cultures. Resources on inter-religious education and multicultural education are readily available to support coursework and public discussions in these areas.

Conclusion

World War I was hailed as the "war to end all wars." However, we unfortunately learned that this was not to be so. Since 1917, there have been numerous armed conflicts impacting millions of people. With each conflict, we have become more adept at waging war through new technology and new forms of warfare. But one thing has not changed: returning veterans who are left to pick up the pieces of their lives and to move on, family members who must deal with their loved ones and a public that struggles to make sense of it all.

On the other hand, our improved understanding of what returning veterans are dealing with through redefining this experience as moral injury and soul wound and the willingness of some to pose the larger questions of the moral rightness of war and global violence is a step in the right

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[49] Nakashima-Brock, 119.

direction. What is needed now to complement and move this effort forward is a religious educational program. One dimension of this educational process involves creating a space for grace for both returning veterans and the wider community to heal and be reconciled with God. The second equally important educational dimension is a public conversation to discuss the real issues of war or, essentially how to unlearn violence and war. Religious education has the opportunity to initiate and guide this two-fold educational process. The question remains though, is there the will to do so?

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(Mis)representation of religions in Religious Education, and the "making" of religious violence

Abstract

Little research has been done to examine how religious education curricula represent religions and the effects of such representations on students' behavior. This paper examines religious education curricula of Ghanaian schools and reveals that whilst Christianity is presented as the standard religion, Indigenous Religion and Islam are misrepresented as inferior, yet, worth tolerating. Given that the flourishing of religious misrepresentations can lead to the suppression of minority views and incitement to hatred, I examine the connection of such misrepresentations to the "making" of religious violence.

Religious Mis(representation)

The inclusion of religion in public school curriculum around the world attracts both support and criticism. For most critics, religious education can become a proselytization tool, or worse still, cause disaffection emanating from religious misrepresentation. While a lot of work has been done in literature to distinguish *teaching about religion* from *teaching from religion* (Wright, 2008; AAR, 2010; NCSS, 1984), the same attention has not been devoted to misrepresentation of religion in the curriculum. The lack of scholarship in this area is regrettable, for misrepresentation can lead to hatred for the 'other,' and if done to the extreme, can ultimately "make" violence. I define religious (mis)representation as a phenomenon in curriculum discourse where a particular religion is presented or taught about in a manner that is displeasing to adherents of that religion.

(Mis)representation of religion is far more pronounced in curricular materials than educators would readily admit. This is because texts are integral to the creation and legitimation of ideologies, beliefs, knowledge and values of the dominant in a given society (Crowford, 2003). Thus, such materials become the tools for misrepresentations that subjugate specific groups through the twisting, massaging and removal of facts. In the words of Pingel, (2010) curricular materials could be constructed to shape discourses to the advantage of powerful groups in societies. For instance, Dalton (2014) observes that the desire by teachers and parents to work with "tamed" children results in production and circulation of texts that present the boyhood

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nature of Jesus as meek and mild. Additionally, Hammad (2014) identifies Islamic Science textbooks as lacking the transmission of high-order thinking skills because some Islamic traditions glorify teachers and make students subject to their dictates. Taken together, the quest by powerful groups to maintain their influence in society could manifest in curricular materials that are skewed to favor the status quo. It is therefore important that texts are not viewed as sacrosanct, but materials that arise out of contestation (Apple, 2000).

With REA's renewed commitment towards the "unmaking" of violence, I see the (mis)representation of religion in curricula as a threat to creating and maintaining religious harmony, hence requiring critical inquiry. Research has long recognized what the flourishing of religious (mis)representation can lead to: the suppression of minority views, resentment towards persons of different faiths, holding of entrenched opinions about one's religion, insensitivity to others' beliefs, and even incitement to hatred (Subedi, 2006; AAR, 2010; Hess 2008; Jackson 1995). All these outcomes cannot be dissociated from violence and religious conflicts around the globe. Hence, working towards an understanding of the phenomenon of (mis)representation ought to be an issue of concern to religious educators globally.

This paper is written out of the context of Ghana, a religiously plural country on the west coast of Africa where a multi-faith religious education program is mandated in all public schools. Since the 1970s when efforts were made to integrate different religious education programs into a single subject of study, practical challenges have been identified. Notable among these is the continuous suspicion by parents that their children are not being provided the religious education (RE) they desire (Kudadjie, 1996). In fact, Christians, Muslims and adherents of Indigenous Religion (IR) have at different times challenged aspects of RE (Kudadjie, 1996, Thomas, 2012, Joy News 2012). Although such controversies have not resulted in violent acts, it is important that attention be devoted to them because of their potential long term deleterious effects.

As part of a broader research that examines the representation of religion in schools in Ghana, this paper explores the following question: *How are religions represented in RE text of elementary schools in Ghana?* RE text stated here includes: the national syllabus of a compulsory subject called Religious and Moral Education (RME), and three textbooks of RME published by private publishers. My interest in this broader question lies in untangling whose religious values are espoused in the elementary school curricula, whose values are missing or denigrated, and the possible outcomes.

RE Curriculum in Ghana
Elementary school curriculum in Ghana is centralized such that syllabi, textbooks and other teaching and learning materials are uniformly published and distributed by the government throughout the country. Consequently, the national RME syllabus published by the Ghana Education Service (GES) is the "standard" curricular material for RE and is expected to be implemented throughout the country. Research has confirmed a widely held claim that official textbooks in Ghana are rarely supplied to schools (Oduro, 2013; Owen et al, 2005), and if they are, they do not make it to the hands of students (Okyere et al, 1997). This results in only one-tenth of pupils in schools in Ghana with textbooks in the core subjects, a category which includes RME (Okyere et al, 1997; Opoku Amankwaa, 2010; Amoah, 2012). In my survey of seven schools in a metropolitan area in mid Ghana, none had copies of the official RME textbooks,

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leaving teachers to resort to those published by private publishers. As expected, the vacuum created by the absence of the government approved textbooks has been filled by private individuals and businesses whose motivation for intervention has profit as the bottom line. As the texts were absent in many cases, I examined the national syllabus to represent the official curriculum. In a tabular fashion, the syllabus outlines themes (grouped into sections), topics, objectives, core knowledge, teaching and learning activities, and assessment activities for every grade.

In addition to the national syllabus, I examined three textbooks published by private publishers. The choice of these books was based on their popularity in a school district of interest for my research. *Religious and Moral Education for Junior High Schools* (hereafter referred to as Gateway) written by William K. Nwinam was published by Gateway to Success Publishers and covers the curriculum of junior high school (middle school). Its 409 pages are filled with content (text and pictures) as well as exercises at the end of each of the seventeen chapters. New Golden publishers also have six different books on Religious and Moral Education for each of the six classes of primary school. All the books were written by Alexander Okyere Baafi. For this analysis, I will use his book *Religious and Moral Education for basic six pupils* (hereafter referred to as Golden). The third book, *Religious and Moral Education with Excellent Victory* (hereafter identified as Victory) does not reveal the publishers of the book. The text is authored by Felix Djan Foh who describes himself as an "educationist/socio-political commentator". His book is written for junior high students and was published in 2006. It contains 89 pages of text with no pictures or illustrative diagrams. It is written in point to point format with no room for elaborate discussion of the content. As curious as I was to identify the authors' positionalities in terms of their religious affiliations, nothing in print acknowledges their subjectivities. The books are written and presented as value neutral, suggesting its suitability for all students regardless of their religious identities.

Critical Discourse Analysis
I ground this paper theoretically and methodologically in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Gee, 2004) to examine how authors and publishers represented Christianity, Islam and Indigenous Religion (IR). My main goal is to make visible and transparent, the "opaque structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in text" (Wodak 1995 in Blommaet & Buleaen 2000 p. 448). Van Dijk (1996) defines CDA as "analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (p. 352). CDA is built on the premise that society is inherently unjust and that what has become accepted as social norms work to the advantage of the dominant. Such normalization finds itself in language which becomes the embodiment of "acceptable standards" and influences not just by what is said, but who, when and how it is said. The task of CDA therefore is to unearth such inequalities and draw attention to them. CDA uniquely positions research to focus on language in use and its embodied meanings that would traditionally escape the attention of other theories. I share Van Dijk's (1996) view that "scholarly discourse is inherently part of and influenced by social structure, and produced in social interaction" (p 153). I therefore aim to explore the relationships that exists in texts to understand how they arise out of and or are shaped by struggles for power (Fairclough 1993) over whose knowledge should count as official (Apple, 2000)

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To answer the research question, data from the textual curricula materials were analyzed using Madison's (2005) point of view analysis strategy. By point of view analysis, the researcher creates a point of view or a stance that signals the theoretical perspective of the study (Creswell, 2007). The choice of this strategy was informed by the critical nature of the study and its theoretical alignment with CDA. Three themes emerged from the analysis which I consider as forms of religious (mis)representation and the "making of violence".

Us versus Them: Polarization by identification
My analysis revealed that the texts' representation of religions was done in tandem with the association and dissociation of authors from the different religions. Authors' use of personal possessive and objective pronouns "their" and "our" could hardly escape my attention. Consider the following statements:

> The pouring of libation is the form of prayer by the traditional believers to their lesser gods. (Victory, p.25)
> Festivals are part of every religion and so Muslims have theirs that they celebrate every year. (Golden, p.74)

It is even more interesting when compared with:

> Christians believe in Jesus Christ …… but was crucified and died for our sins. (Victory, p. 25)

and

> God's love toward us draws us to Himself and by His love towards us, He (God) called us his sons. (Victory, p.53)

These statements expose the perceived neutrality of the authors of Victory and Golden. Although each book is introduced with the premise of neutrality, the authors' associations based upon possessive pronouns function to lay bare their hidden loyalty. They, through the text show that they believe Jesus died for "our" sins. "Our" here includes the author and any other person who identifies with that group's beliefs. In contrast, traditional believers pray to "their" lesser gods, and Muslims have "their" festival, implying that the authors of Victory and Golden, dissociate themselves from these religions, and by extension expect readers to do same. By the simple use of pronouns, the authors create a divide between followers of Christianity and others, making Christianity the privileged religion, while (mis)representing IR and Islam as inferior and existing as 'other' (Said, 1979). The fundamental ideas behind the two statements would change significantly if the pronouns were omitted for them to read: "The pouring of libation is the form of prayer by the traditional believers to lesser gods" and "Christians believe in Jesus Christ …. but was crucified and died for believers' sins".

Apple (1992) and Crowford (2003) write that texts are not neutral. This is because they are written by people who are influenced by society, who have their own biases, and work within the political and economic constraints of the market. Though no text can be truly neutral, exclusionary practices regarding RE cannot continue in our quest for religiously inclusive classrooms. The "us versus them" divide has been the starting point of most conflicts. As Wondolleck et al (2003) put it, "they play a pivotal role in the emergence, evolution, and intractability or resolvability of a conflict" (p. 207). Other conflict prevention literature also warn that dichotomous "us versus them" has embedded in it, a belief of moral superiority of the dominant and combined with feelings of disenfranchisement for the subaltern, it may make

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terrorism considerably more likely (Schwartz, Dunkel & Waterman, 2009).

Ours is better: Christianity as model religion
Postcolonial literature is replete with an expose of representational practices of colonialists who viewed Christianity as the norm and all other religions as "the other". In fact, Jackson (1995) argues that the introduction of comparative religion as a discipline in 1944 was in part to compare religions in order to show the superiority of Christianity. Decades after postcolonial "enlightenment", my study revealed the representation of Christianity as a model for all other religions. Like the years past, Islam and IR are compared to Christianity in order to identify and highlight their shortcomings. For instance, in some text analyzed (Gateway and Golden), Jesus performing healing miracles is constructed to be the exemplar, and founders of other religions are judged on their ability to perform similar miracles. Consider the following comparison of leaders of three faiths - Christianity, Islam and IR, (Jesus, Muhammad and Okomfo Anokye[i]).

> concerning healing it has never crossed my ears that Anokye healed someone of an
> illness or a disease. (Gateway, p.63)
> on the part of healing it is not known that he [Muhammad] performed any. (Golden, p.68)

Okomfo Anokye is presented in the Golden and Gateway texts as a traditional priest who had power and the ability to perform miracles that saved the Ashanti kingdom of the fifteenth century. Yet Gateway and Golden highlight his lack of supernatural powers in their contrast of his powers with that of Jesus. The absence of information relating to Okomfo Anokye and Muhammad's ability to heal the sick functions to give the impression that they are less powerful than Jesus. Moreover, the presentation of sentences of similar import about Okomfo Anokye and Muhammad in both texts goes to emphasize my argument about demeaning comparisons. A more balanced treatment of the religions is possible, given that there were miracles performed by Okomfo Anokye and Muhammad that Jesus is not known to have done. Golden mentions Muhammad miraculously made water flow from his fingers for his followers to drink, whereas Gateway records that Okomfo Anokye commanded a golden stool from the sky. In discussing Jesus's miracles, none of the books query Jesus' inability to perform similar miracles.

Moreover, Gateway and Golden are not alone in their representation of Christianity as a superior religion. Christian worship day is described by the national syllabus as "normal Sunday/Saturday service" (Syllabus, p.48). By extension, readers can imply that other worship days are "not normal", "unacceptable" and strange. It is in the same vein that Golden series writes that: "Christmas is the time God blesses the world" (Golden p. 69). To cap it, Christianity is made a standard religion whereas Islam and IR are misrepresented as counterfeit religions that strive, but are unable to match up to the "original".

The quest to see Christianity as the "norm" and IR as the "other" can again be explained in line with Fairclough's (1993) representational practices. He defines representation as "relation between two entities - x is different from y" (p25). Representation thrives on a clear distinction between two entities and all acts at description aim to make such distinctions clearer. In this instance, Christianity is made distinct from other religions and this representational practice builds on the "us versus them" divide to further polarize participants in classroom discourse even further.

You should go with ours: Religion of choice
The two other representational practices take on a third form in which authors make it imperative for the reader to choose a single religion. The material examined revealed value embedded statements recommending "universal" Christian values be upheld by students. An example of this can be seen in the following statements:

> According to new life good news Bible which is ideal for everyone, before God created the universe, the earth was formless and desolate, and in total darkness. (Golden p.8)
>
> Humankind is created to serve God. That is why we must worship God only, and obey His instructions, laws and commandments. (Gateway p.11)

Curricular texts here are not just passing information. They are making recommendations based on the value judgments of their authors for students to read the new life good news Bible because it is ideal for everyone, and to worship God only because humankind is created to serve God. It becomes even clearer when such statements are understood within a postcolonial mindset. Missionaries who arrived in the Gold Coast in the thirteenth century denigrated IR, and were largely successful at separating indigenes from their religion in order to introduce them to Christianity. Indigenous religious practices were therefore described as barbaric, heathen, totemic, polytheistic and uncouth (Beyers, 2010). Since then the relationship between IR and western religions (Christianity in particular) has been strained. I see the statement "that is why we must worship God only" as semantic innuendo aimed at portraying IR adherents as worshiping "many gods" and not believing in the Bible. The otherness of such Islamic and indigenous religious practice stands in sharp contrast to Christianity, because it deviates from the "norm" of reading the good news bible and worshiping God alone.

Conclusion
My analysis shows that the representational practices of authors of the curricular materials position Christianity as a standard religion and provide legitimacy for its content. IR and Islam are considered the "other", marginalized and misrepresented as unequal in status to the "standard" Christianity (Jackson, 1995). Taken together, the RE curriculum which is meant to uphold religious pluralism and promote peaceful coexistence of different religions can be understood to be marginalizing Islam and IR.. This is extremely dangerous considering that most classrooms in Ghana are religiously plural. If students of religions other than Christianity are exposed to such content, they could harbor ill-feeling about other religions and resent adherents of majority faith traditions, which could ultimately lead to religious tension and conflicts over time. Conflict prevention literature has warned that while marginalization might appear to be harmless initially, it results in escalating violence in the long term (Yiftachel 2004). People respond to oppression differently. In face of religious misrepresentations in classrooms, other students might resort to violent means to settle emotional scores because of religions' connection with histories and identities of individuals (Peek, 2005).

RE has been acknowledged the world over for promoting religious dialogue and tolerance; it could also become the source of conflict and violence if misrepresentations persist. If RE is to make headway in championing the "unmaking" of violence, authors should acknowledge their complicit role in the making of violence, and institute appropriate safeguards. I am arguing here that such seemingly harmless biases in the curriculum coupled with nuances of presentation informed by teachers' religious identity, students' religious identity and school religious climates

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make classrooms unwelcoming, especially for students who do not share in the normative religion. With connections drawn between marginalization, misrepresentation, bias and hatred, fanaticism, (Hess 2008, Jackson 1995, Faour, 2012, AAR, 2010) the way to (un)make religious violence is for RE research to focus on happenings in classrooms and draw attention to religious (mis)representations. Further research is needed in areas relating to school character and religious representations, teacher religious identity and misrepresentations as well as students representation of "other" religions.

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[i] Okomfo Anokye is a traditional priest of historical significance. The Ashantis of Ghana revere his heroic and miraculous acts that saved their kingdom

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How to Prevent the Danger of Double Violence: Religion in Education?

Abstract

Interpreted against the background of my transformative pedagogical paradigmatical view that I have developed during the last 20 years I will deal with Derrida's notion of 'transcendental violence'. This notion is, in my view, a wakeup call for educators and religious educators that their practice is by definition loaded with violence, and that they should be attentive on the dangerous sides of it. From a deconstruction as justice stance practices should consist of both intervention, embodying a danger of violence, and invention, a counterweight that may compensate for the dangerous side of violence. The space that opens itself lies precisely in between the will to govern and a complete lack of interest. However, not as a kind of compromise, nor just a bit of both, but it exists precisely as undecidability. Filling in this space by way of intervention is not something that we can completely organize or arrange in advance and have 100 percent control over it, because we do not know how and when the invention will happen, who it will be, and how the o/Other will speak and act. It is rather about creating opportunities for children to respond, towards situations and relations, towards societal, communal and religious practices and rites, insights, knowledge, doctrines and narratives, traditions and visions.

Introduction

In an earlier publication in *Religious Education* under the title 'Jacques Derrida's Religion With/Out Religion and the Im/Possibility of Religious Education' Gert Biesta and I focussed on Derrida's theorizing in relationship to religious education (Miedema & Biesta 2004). One particular issue in that article with which we only briefly dealt with was Derrida's notion of 'transcendental violence'.

In my presentation I will relate the notion of Derridean transcendental violence to the theme of this year's conference namely 'Religion and Education in the (Un)making of Violence'. My first focal point is whether violence is an inescapable aspect of education in general and of religious education in particular. My second focal point is, if this is indeed the case, in what way educators and religious educators could prevent for the danger or dangers of violence being a pre-condition of education and also of religious education. Leading concepts in this essay are the terms 'intervention' and 'invention'. Theoretically speaking, I will address these questions and the issues of intervention and invention from the background/foreground of my transformative pedagogical view that I have developed during the last 20 years.

My transformative pedagogical paradigm

Recently I have brought the different aspects of my transformative pedagogical paradigm aiming at personhood formation of children[1] in a concise way together (Miedema 2014, 89-92) as it is based on a set of particular publications (Wardekker & Miedema 2001a, 2001b; Biesta & Miedema 2002; Miedema & Biesta 2004; Miedema 2012).This paradigm implies that schools assist children in the double process of socialization and individuation, of becoming competent members of communities of practice. Presentation and representation of information, norms and values must always be seen in the perspective of how children are able to transform this into elements of their own participation, in the process of the formation of their own personhood. This transformation is an active and dynamic process on the part of the child, in which the subject matter – the educational 'stuff' – being the starting point and selected, presented and represented by the teachers, becomes the personal property of the children. The transformation is an activity authored by the children, and necessary for them, in order to acquire their own personhood. In this respect, it is a problem rather than an asset that schools have developed into practices in their own right, separated from the social practices into which they are supposed to introduce children, because learning to participate is best done by participating.

Such a transformative view rests on a conceptualization of how human beings act in the world. The basic image is that of humans as signifiers. Humans in most cases do not make explicit decisions for action based on objective knowledge of the alternatives. Instead, by being bodily in the world and transacting with it, they form images and meanings on which they act. There is thus a continuous interplay between action, signification and reflection. Meanings are never 'objective' but are always the result of the momentary and creative relation between the human being and its environment. Not all transactional relations "ask to be known, and it certainly does not ask leave from thought to exist. But some existences as they are experienced do ask thought to direct them in their course so that they may be ordered and fair and be such as to commend themselves to admiration, approval and appreciation. Knowledge affords the sole means by which this redirection can be effected" (Dewey 1980, 296). So, knowledge is not aimed purely at the continuation of acting as such, but at the problematical in the broadest sense of the word. And knowledge has a function for the other domains of experience too, for example for religious or worldview, moral and aesthetic experiences. From this perspective knowledge is "a mode of experiencing things which facilitates control of objects for purposes of non-cognitive experiences" (Dewey 1980, 98).

Defining education in school in terms of participation and transformation, implies that personhood formation, coming-into-the world or being-in-the-world is seen neither as exclusively cognitive nor as individualistic. On the contrary, all domains of human potentiality and ability (be it cognitive, creative, moral, religious, expressive, etc), that is the development of the whole person should be taken into account by the schools (see also Wardekker & Miedema

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[1] Please notice that due to my relational personalistic view on educational processes and relations I use the term 'child' instead of the notions 'student' or 'learner' which I find too reductionist in terms of connotation and characterization. See for the still very interesting and stimulating highly sophistically articulated philosophical, theological and pedagogical personalistic view of the Dutch public intellectual Ph. A. Kohnstamm J. Exalto, L.F. Groenendijk & S. Miedema. 2014. Philipp Abraham Kohnstamm. Een normatieve en empirische persoonlijkheidspedagogiek [Ph. A. Kohnstamm. A normative and empirical personalistic pedagogy]. In V. Busato, M. van Essen & W. Koops (Eds.). *Vier grondleggers van de pedagogiek [Four founding 'fathers' of Dutch Pedagogy]. Ph. A. Kohnstamm, M.J. Langeveld, H.W.F. Stellwag, S. Strasser. Pioniers van de Nederlandse gedragswetenschappen*. Bert Bakker: Amsterdam (in press).

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2001a). And 'the formational stuff', brought in by the teachers, but also embodied by the children's peers, should invite children to take responsibility for their self-formation, their self-actualization both from an individual as well from a societal perspective. Transformative pedagogy is never solely dealing with the presentation of knowledge or facts, nor a clear cut technology. It is about creating opportunities for children to respond, to speak, to take stance, to come further into the world or to become aware of their being in the world positively or negatively, towards knowledge, facts, practices, doctrines, narratives, traditions and visions. And teachers may feel responsible to create in their school classrooms such opportunities for children *in optima forma* to open up.

No human being, however, ever finds herself or himself in a position in which she/he can signify at will, and is then able to coordinate the created meanings with other humans at a later time. Humans are born into a culture, which means that the whole world already has a meaning. Newborn humans have to acquire these meanings in order to be able to participate, and to make their own sense out of the collective cultural meanings in which they are initiated. Most of this acquisition process is not, at least not initially, made explicit (in fact, the ability to 'learn' meanings in an explicit way, as in schools, has to be learned in itself); learning to participate develops by participating in socio-cultural practices. Although no two human beings construct exactly the same life-world, enough of it is shared to make communication and coordination of actions within practices possible. In fact, cultural practices may be interpreted as culturally predefined meaning systems that enable coordinated activities. Such meaning systems encompass interpretations of the world (including other human beings), abilities for interacting with it in order to obtain intended results, values and norms, etc. They are shared by the group of people that engage in the practice, and thus form its associated community of practice. Thus, growing up may be described as acquiring the abilities to participate in practices, or as becoming a competent member of several communities of practice.

The process of socialization, however, presupposes a process of individuation, the process of personhood education, for its necessary reverse side: one cannot become a competent member of a community of practice if one does not contribute at an individual level. This process of individuation rests on the fact that cultural meanings have to be appropriated, transformed into personal sense and thus becoming part of one's own personality. In this process, personal elements like genetic make-up, emotions, and unique experiences gained in past and present circumstances play a significant role, so that no two persons grow up to have exactly the same personality. This forms the basis of the uniqueness of personhood. It is precisely these uniqueness and these interpersonal differences that make for changes, for renewal in cultural practices. Some of these changes simply occur because of the different views participants bring to the practice; at other times, changes are intended. Ultimately, no practice can stay 'alive' without change; and being able to contribute to changes that are perceived as necessary is a structural element of the competency of participants. This implies that participation is never merely technical, manipulative or instrumental, but always has a normative side because choices have to be made concerning the direction in which a given practice should develop (see Mead 1934, 200 ff.). Just like other meanings, the material this normative side is built upon, like goals, ideals and values, comes into being within the context of acting.

This plea for a transformative pedagogical paradigm is not celebrating a monadic or isolated view on personhood. I have already articulated the relation of individuality and sociality, of socialization and personhood formation. With Gert Biesta, I want to add here another important task of education in schools, the qualification aspect of education, that is providing children, young people and adults "with the knowledge, skills and understandings and often

also with the dispositions and forms of judgment that allow them to 'do something' – a 'doing' that can range from the very specific (such as in the case of training for a particular job or profession, or the training of a particular skill or technique to the much more general (such as an introduction to modern culture, or the teaching of life skills, etcetera)" (Biesta 2010, 19-20). Qualification is and should, as Biesta adequately states, not be restricted to preparation for the world of work, for the labor market and economical development and growth. Knowledge and skills are also important where other domains of life, of formation and personhood are in a more general sense at stake, for instance in respect to political, cultural and religious literacy.

Crucial in my transformative pedagogical pradigm is the view that both the qualification and the socialization aspect of education should be evaluated from their adequate or inadequate contribution to the personhood formation of the children. These aspects are always intertwined. The pedagogical criterion is whether there is a dynamic balance, an equilibrium between the three aspects. Reducing for instance the aim of education only to qualification terms, that is positioning children for the labor market or preparing them for the knowledge-based economy, is reducing both the community of practice (the socialization aspect) as well as the view on the formation of personhood (the subjectification aspect). What is absolutely necessary here is to take a critical-deconstructive stance in the sense of Caputo's notion of deconstruction:

> (T)hings – texts, institutions, traditions, societies, beliefs, and practices of whatever size and sort you need – do not have definable meanings and determinable missions, that they are always more than any mission would impose, that they exceed the boundaries they currently occupy. What is really going on in things, what is really happening, is always to come. Every time you try to stabilize the meaning of a thing, to fix it in its missionary position, the thing itself, if there is anything at all to it, slips away (Caputo 1997, 31).

The fixation of any of these aspects can lead to essentialist and fixated views on either qualification, socialization or personhood formation, and such views will block forms of dynamic intertwinement, and are a hindrance to a pedagogical and transformative defensible equilibrium. Education and religious education should strengthen the potentialities of social engagement, solidarity, encounter and dialogue.

Derrida on 'transcendental violence'

The Derridean notion of 'transcendental violence' has to do, as we have shown in our 2004 article, with the way in which educators and religious educators relate to the otherness of children, to their subjectification or their personhood-in-formation (and this is a life-long developmental process). How can we do justice to them as others, how can we do justice to their otherness and uniqueness? This question goes to the very heart of the matter, not in the least because of Derrida's claim that ultimately deconstruction is justice. For Derrida, justice is always directed to the other; it is, as he has once put it, nothing more and nothing less than 'the relation to the other'. Justice is a concern for the other as other, for the otherness of the other, for an otherness that, by definition, we can neither foresee nor totalize. If justice is always addressing itself to the *singularity* of the other, we are obliged to keep the unforeseen possibility of the in-coming of the other, the surprise of the invention of the other open.

This might be read as an 'anything goes pedagogy' (in classical pedagogical terms coined as 'laissez faire, laissez passer pedagog'), as if Derrida is advocating that the only way to really do justice to the otherness of the other, to the other as singular being, is to leave the other completely alone. Any intervention, any attempt to name or define the other, to let the other in on our terms, could be seen as a violation of the otherness of the other. But if we leave the other alone, we would precisely block the very possibility for him or her to come into the world. This would be utterly unjust. The educational predicament, therefore, is that educators should engage with the child, which we can only do through talking, naming, identifying, presenting, stimulating, confronting, interrupting, et cetera. We need, in other words, to recognize the other; yet such a recognition is always a mis-recognition too and for that reason we could say that it is an act of violence, because "it *presents* the non-representable (the other as other)" (Biesta 2001, 46). And here Derrida refers to this violence as 'transcendental violence' in order to express that the violence of intervening in the life of the children is the very transcendental condition of possibility (and hence at the same time the condition of impossibility) for them to come into the world, to develop the subjectification or their personhood-in-formation. To be concerned and to take responsibility for the coming into the world of the children as unique, singular beings is the ultimate task, the ultimate vocation of educators.

In between intervention and invention

Educating, religious educating and the academic disciples related to these practices are normatively loaded, instead of value neutral or aim-less or in case of the academic disciplines only taking a descriptive stance towards the domain of education and pedagogy. Crucial is the aspect of intervention or intervening in order to stimulate the development of the subjectification or to put it differently to support the flourishing of the personhood-in-formation of children. I have outlined the intervention characteristics and the clear aim-directedness of educational and pedagogical practices in my concisely presented transformational pedagogical paradigm above. What we especially can learn from Derrida is that a pedagogy of intervention and intervening (Van IJzendoorn & Miedema 1983; Miedema & Biesta 2004), of interruption (Biesta 2006; 2010) and disruption, is not something that is straightforward, it is not something that can simply be 'done' as a 100 percent technical action, presupposing a perfect fit between means used to reach a teleological defined aim or end.

Besides, next to the pedagogical practice of intervention the aspect of the unforeseen, of the invention need to be taken into account too. In education and in religious education we not only prepare ourselves as educators for the impossible invention, the incalculable coming into the world of the singularity of children. At the very same time we need to prepare children for the impossible coming into the world, the incalculable invention of the Other. This is not something that we can simply do in a positive way. It is not something that we can organize or arrange in advance, because we do not know how and when the in-coming of the o/Other will happen, who it will be, and how the o/Other will speak and act. It is rather about creating opportunities for children to respond, to take a stance, positively or negatively, towards situations and relations, towards societal, communal and religious practices and rites, doctrines and narratives, traditions and visions.

Both education and religion can 'use' deconstruction to prevent them from sliding back into the danger of technological approaches which aims to possess and control the o/Other (the child, g/God), threatening the singularity and uniqueness of children. Deconstruction also makes clear that if we want to avoid the possession of and the control over the child, we should not leave the other, the otherness of the o/Other to h/Her or h/His own device. Within the domains of education and religion we have the duty and the responsibility to speak, to name, to give a name.

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To be silent or passive here is the ultimate form of injustice, and thus the dangerous or shadow side of transcendental violence, resulting in the making of an anti-pedagogically violence. The space that opens itself in deconstruction precisely lies between the will to govern (possession, technology, control) and a complete lack of interest (not to speak, not to name, no recognition, no acknowledgement, no answers, no reaction). This space is not a kind of compromise, nor just a bit of both; it exists precisely as undecidability.

So, what I have been arguing for in this essay is that taking into account impossible inventions as anthropological and ontological possibilities next to and in relation with the practices of intervening, the potential for the unmaking of the dangers of the double transcendental violence of religion in education could be created.

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Unlearning violence "in the presence of the other"

First empirical findings of a research project on prediction of violence against religious others through interreligious learning in Germany.

Abstract

Scientific interest in interreligious learning theories is highly topical. Whether pupils are learning to deal with religious otherness, with religious diversity or specifically changing self- and foreign-perception as an outcome of interreligious learning settings of contacts is assessed in the analysis of the findings of this present study. 9 case studies (5 girls, 4 boys, M aged= 16) in 4 classes at two schools in Germany are the main data basis of the whole intervention study by now. Additional to this qualitative approach, about 50 pupils responded to a quantitative questionnaire. Analysis results show an attitudinal change concerning own and foreign religion through "the presence of the other" and are discussed as a form of prevention of misunderstandings of the religious others as potential source of violence.

Theoretical Framing

The interreligious learning discourse in dialog with psychological theories of attitudes

The pedagogies of interreligious learning aim at challenging pupils to deal with the otherness of the religious other and more specific to un-learn stereotype thinking or even change negative attitudes as a form of prevention of violence in the context of religious diversity e.g. by creating contact zones[1]. These big ideas are convincing in theory, but leave open the question of real learning outcomes that need to be proved and analyzed with empirical data to discuss the chances of learning arrangements of contact zones within RE. Below the theoretical basis is given to bring theories of RE and psychological theories together to structure the learning arrangement of encounter with a Jewish person during a synagogue visit in RE for young catholic pupils, which is mainly the content of the currently presented research.

Un-learning violence via religious education? Un-learning violence against the religious other via interreligious education?

To claim a contribution for un-learning violence (prevention) by religious education, the first issue is to define the term violence and conditions of developing violence. Violence is often defined (in social psychology) as a form of aggression with various manifestations of physical, verbal or passive nature. It creates always a relation of victim-perpetrator and is primarily multi-causally determined. Various scientific disciplines focus on different (complementary) explanations. The following ones provide the basis of the considerations for this research project: *the theories of attitudes* in the paradigm of personality- and social-psychology. The psychologist and one of the most important scientists of theories of attitudes, Gordon Allport (1954), describes the most influencing factor in the emergence of violence:

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[1] e.g. Rothgangel 2013,169.

"The development of hostile stereotypes"[2]. The unreflective application of perceived prejudices or negative stereotyping of groups, e.g. a group of religious others, can lead to violent reactions e.g. by means of verbal or physical discrimination in a situation in which someone is perceived negatively. If one wants to prevent violence by applying this perspective of theories of attitudes and its influence on behavior (un-learning violence), the question is how one can prevent the development of negative prejudices (attitudes) or even may change existing ones.

"The most important theory regarding stereotype change within social psychology is the *contact hypothesis*"[3] by Gordon Allport (1954)[4]. Thomas Pettigrew, a student of Allport, added to Allports´ popular "four *conditions* for optimal intergroup contact: equal group status within the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation and authority support", four *processes* of changing attitudes through intergroup encounter: learning about the outgroup (*1*), changing behavior (*2*), generating affective ties (*3*), and ingroup reappraisal (*4*)[5].

What conclusions can be drawn especially for the RE from this psychological view on the prevention of violence?

Transferred to the domain of interreligious learning those *processes* can induce that learning new things can correct views on the e.g. different religious group (*1*), but also "other processes are involved"[6] like behavior modification in a new situation as a "precursor of attitude change"[7] (*2*) e.g. by creating a new situation of dialog with outgroup-members e.g. in a synagogue. If intergroup contact leads to, for example, friendship, positive emotions can also correct negative attitudes (*3*). Additional new perspectives can also "reshape view of your ingroup" (*4*)[8]. If these processes are taking place in an interreligious learn-arrangement of contact, like visiting a synagogue and meeting a Jew there, then there is theoretically a potential of changing attitudes and an opportunity to discuss the unlearning-of-violence-effect by this.

When adopting the approach of psychological theories to interreligious learning arrangements it becomes obvious that making use of these ideas in the context of RE is a great chance to fulfill central aims of RE: (e.g.) dealing with the religious diversity in real life without violence or prejudice (un-learning violence) in an increasing religiously pluralistic world in Europe.

In order to prove the compatibility of ideas from psychological theories with theories on RE, the following describes more detailed matters of interreligious learning theories.

The scientific interest in this topic is high and highly topical, as a glance at the most recent literature shows. Lots of designed models to structure the construct of interreligious competence (e.g. Willems, 2011, Schambeck, 2013), extrapolations of theories of interreligious learning through formulations of learning aims, didactic and methodological considerations or learning conditions (Roebben, 2011, Sajak 2013) illustrate the urgent interest in interreligious learning. The following abstract gives a short survey of the common central ideas in the discourse of interreligious learning theories:

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[2] Lind, 1993, 19.

[3] Stangor et al. 1996, 664.

[4] Pettigrew 1998, 66.

[5] Pettigrew 1998, 70.

[6] Pettigrew, 1998, 71.

[7] Pettigrew, 1998, 71.

[8] Pettigrew, 1998, 72.

Interreligious learning can be initiated for example by 5 steps: First by detecting different religious beliefs, second by interpreting religious phenomena, third by learning through encounter with an expert of another religion, fourth by trying to respect the permanent strangeness and fifth by furthering personal religious beliefs.[9] Central aim is to make inter- and also intra-religious learning possible. "Learning in the presence of the other" (which is the comprehensive designation of this inter- and intra-religious learning process, according to Roebben 2013, 162-164, following the work of Mary C. Boys) should initiate the tolerance for religious others and should also be taken as a challenge for a better understanding of one's own religiosity. The concrete entrance to these experiences of ambiguity and tolerance is through creating contact zones.[10] Constructs of interreligious competence are formulated to concretize even more the aims of interreligious learning: the competence of perspective changing, "*Relations- und Diversifikationskompentenz*"[11] (competence to make distinctions and even to put them in relation to oneself) and competences like basic knowledge about different religions, the competence to indicate allday-situations, if they are characterized by divergent religious point of views and the competence to deal within those situations, to be able to act in an adequate way by articulating the own religious point of view, but also to note different religious points of view and to have the competence of ambiguity to deal with these differences in a reflective way.[12]

Additional to this short summary of the interreligious learning discourse, explanations of learning theories within the intercultural paradigm, that is often reviewed in the context of interreligious learning paradigm, show compatible ideas: Intercultural learning aims at developing the own self-concept in a way that includes reflecting self- and foreign-perception, and additionally even expected self- and foreign-perception from a religiously different person.[13]

To bring the given basics of theories of inter-RE together with the ones of attitudes and attitudinal change [through the four processes mentioned above: learning about the outgroup (*1*), changing behavior (*2*), generating affective ties (*3*), and ingroup reappraisal (*4*)], the religious pedagogue Martin Rothgangel lined out the changing of attitudes as a central aim of interreligious learning[14]: The concern of interreligious education focuses on the shift of negative attitudes towards religious others into positive ones.[15]

Obviously it could be shown by now, that preventing violence against people with a different religion, means preventing the formation or the changing of negative attitudes – for which psychological theories outline the effect of contact in learning arrangements and which is even exactly one of the concerns of interreligious education by learning in the presence of the religious other.

Working-Hypotheses

Referring to the ideas of the four processes of attitudinal change in a contact situation (*Pettigrew: psychological paradigm*), in combination with the aims of interreligious and intercultural education (*Willems 2011, Schambeck 2013, Roebben 2011, 2013 and others: interreligious learning paradigm; Thomas 2014: intercultural learning paradigm*) –

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[9] Ziebertz, Leimgruber, 2007, 439f, 441.

[10] Ziebertz, Leimgruber, 2007, 441.

[11] Schambeck, 2013, 174.

[12] Willems, 2011, 168, 169.

[13] Thomas, 2011, 20.

[14] Rothgangel, 2013, 169.

[15] Rothgangel, 2013, 168.

especially of reflecting self- and foreign-perception – the following hypotheses are formulated to show direction for the analysis of the empirical research, that focuses especially on effects of attitudinal change through the encounter with a Jewish person in his sacred space, the synagogue.

I. *Attitudes towards a foreign religion can be changed while contact through the process of "learning about the outgroup – the Jews" (process 1).*
II. *Attitudes can be changed by changing behavior towards Judaism (process 2).*
III. *Attitudes can be changed by generating affective ties towards Judaism (process 3).*
IV. *Attitudes can by changed by the process of ingroup reappraisal of the own religion (4).*

Method

By relying on a broad literature based framework (of a religio-psychological and religio-educational nature), this doctoral thesis works inductively by formulating hypotheses to structure the field of interreligious learning in a sacred space of a religious other, but also by using the methodological procedure of mixed methods to evaluate hypotheses. This so called intervention-survey includes qualitative interviews, quantitative questionnaires and structured observations at different times, which are split in a pre- and posttest, that frame a short teaching-unit to prepare the pupils for the encounter with a Jewish person during a synagogue visit and also the synagogue-visit itself.

Participants and procedure

While the whole sample of the doctoral thesis (until now) summarizes 9 case-studies and about 50 questionnaires – that are not all analyzed jet – now just reference is made to one case study as an excerpt of the entire work. The catholic boy aged 16 is a pupil at a „Gymnasium" in Bochum, Germany. All data were collected across 3 weeks per class. Questionnaire completion took approximately 45 minutes, interviews 10 to 20 minutes. In presenting this one case study, the author realizes that this provisional research report has serious limits and needs to be completed by several other cases. This is at least the final intention of the PhD-thesis!

Psychometric Measures

All measured variables, representing the learning-setting, can be allotted to 3 different groups: input-factors, process-factors and output-factors. While the variable of attitudes of the Christianity (self-perception of own religion) and the attitude of the Judaism (foreign-perception of other religion), are input- as well as output-factors, the variables "knowledge", "behavior", "emotions" and "reappraisal of the own group" frame the process-factors of Pettigrew`s theory. All variables are measured by quantitative (questionnaire) and by qualitative approach (interviews). The items and questions in the questionnaire ask partly for open answers and M-C-Forms. Regarding theories of measuring attitudes, answers also should be given within formats of the Likert-technique[16]. The questions of the interview are mostly open and partly created by imagining being part of a short illustrated story, choosing pictures or place aspects of own and foreign religion on a target.

Findings

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[16] e.g. Diekmann, 2009, 240.

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The following analysis is only one short excerpt of the whole data-set of the complete PhD-survey, which is not analyzed jet.[17]

What can be *learned new* about Judaism by creating contact-zones like visiting a synagogue and encountering a Jewish person within inter-RE in school? (*process 1*)

Regarding the *questionnaire-items* concerning *facts of the Judaism*, a look at a special item called "*exclusion principle*" offers clues to what is *learned new:* Pupils are asked to sort out, which of the following things do <u>not</u> belong to Judaism: baptismal font, the Ten commandments, star of David, Chanukah-candlestick, kippah, thora-role or calligraphy of surah 1. 55%[18] of the pupils answered first: baptismal font and the Ten Commandments, after visiting the synagogue they corrected their answers into: baptismal font and calligraphy. The Ten Commandments are perceived as an attribute of their own religion – Christianity – and pupils answer by using the exclusion principle *(in case of ignorance?).* So, pupils use their own religion as a kind of *contrast-sheet* to sort which things belong to their own and the foreign religion – first. After visiting the synagogue and talking to a Jewish person, they become aware that different religions – Christianity and Judaism – have also something in common.

More results…

Asking for the meaning of the word "*synagogue*", pupils should choose out of the following set: holy house, house of books, house of memory or house of convention. 32% of the pupils gave the correct answer even before the intervention. 40% of the pupils answered first "holy house" and after intervention "house of convention". In case of ignorance, pupils use the facts, they know about their own religion (holy church in the context of Christianity) to transfer this to the foreign religion – *they use their own religion as a kind of "sheet"* first. Afterwards pupils built a new concept of the synagogue from a different point of view.

Summarizing analysis of more items concerning facts of Judaism show: Pupils do associate after intervention more details e.g. of the tora-role, the tora-shrine, the denotation of rabbi and tallit. The denotation of the prayer "Schma Israel" and the "date of the Jewish year" are also learned new. Most of the pupils have a concept of "tora", the "women-gallery", "kosher" and "parting milk and meat", "Shabbat", "kippah" as a sign of "respect" even before the intervention.

Additional to the quantitative analysis, a look at the case study provides the following results: The boy changes his way of agreement towards the item "*Judaism is a lively religion*" by using the likert-scale first with 2 (little), after intervention with 5 (very strong). Additionally he agreed with the item "*Judaism is a religion from the past,*" first with 5 (very strong) and second with 1 (not a bit). His concept of Judaism in combination with concepts of vitality changed through the intervention to the very opposite. More information about the boy's attitude are given by the answer to the question "*What meaning has faith for Jewish people?*" First he claimed faith "gives power", after intervention he said "a lot, depending on their faith". By contact while the synagogue-visit his first concepts of function of religion are overwritten by concepts of emotional meanings. Additional general concepts are relativized in terms of "depending on". More evidence for a re-generalization-strategy gives the item: Complete the following sentence *I am a Jew, Judaism is…. for me.* First he completed "my religion and my life", afterwards with "my religion, depending on their faith also diverse".

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[17] Data-set of the current analysis are 25 pupils of three different RE classes.

[18] 55%: 13 of 24 pupils, which are at this time the sample of analysis. Data set will get more pupils. 37% of the pupils were wrong at both measuring-times.

Regarding first the hypotheses-assumption it can be stated by the quantitative and qualitative approach, that most pupils changed their cognitive basis and concepts of their attitude (*foreign-perception*) by *learning partly anew*. Analysis also shows evidence for *re*learning facts, changing concepts or dedications and even for re-generalization-processes. Evidence for *process 1,* which is also compatible with the concept of interreligious competence of basic-knowledge, is given.

Are there *changes in the behavior* or *imagined behavior*[19]? (*process 2*)

By creating (for the pupils of this RE-classes) a *new situation* of dialog with a Jewish person in a synagogue there is even by this a change of their behavior towards the attitude-object "Judaism". Additionally the agreement to following items changed: I could imagine living some time in a Jewish family (first: 31% choose 3 (middle) and 13,8% 2 (less), second: 28,% choose 2 (less) and 21,4% 3 (middle). Imagined behavior changed from conceivably to more un-conceivably after contact. Imagining the attendance at a Jewish church service change in the same way from first 4 (strong) (32, 1 %) to 3 (middle) (28,6%).

Evidence for process 2 is given in a way that imagined behavior changed from conceivably to not conceivably – experienced strangeness during visit and encounter may be an activator for this and needs to be discussed.

And does such a learning-arrangement *generate emotions*? (*process 3*)

Formulated items to operationalize the construct of foreign-familiar-emotions show the following results via quantitative approach[20]: *I can imagine Jewish faith* or *I can imagine Jewish life* as a predictor for familiar feelings changed through contact from point-3-aggrements (51% first item; 27% second item) into point-4-agreement (50% first item; 53% second item). *Judaism is strange to me* was agreed with 2 (less) first by 27,5% and afterwards by 35,7%. These items show that pupils get more familiar with Judaism through contact. More items within this item-set concerning the food rules show opposite results.[21]

Evidence for process 3 is given and needs to be discussed in the context of chances to unlearn violence.

Does contact lead to a *new perspective on the ingroup* (*process 4*)?

Allocating aspects of own and foreign religion on a target, visualizing the own person in the center, the following changes can be shown as the result of the intervention via the case study: It is not that just aspects of the foreign religion, like Jewish life, synagogue or kosher eating are closer to the own person, but also aspects concerning the own religion like *church* (first at 5th ring, second at second ring) and *church service* (first: 5th ring, second: second ring) are associated to be very/more close to one´s own life and person after intervention.

Asking for the view on Christianity the boy answers first by using the following aspects: *one* religion, not being *strongly* religious. Afterwards he mentions the following concept: *my religion of birth*, not being *strictly* religious, supporting religions because they include human rights, observing them out of respect for god and not to displease him. The accessed picture of his own religion changed by using the foreign religion as a kind of information source: getting

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[19] „imagined behavior" represents the category „changing behavior" cause even imagined behavior or intended behavoir represent behavior-construct within attitude-theories (e.g. Ostrom, 1989, 13).

[20] Item-sets get a cronbachs alpha about .795 and .764.

[21] *Food-rules are irritating me*: 24 % of the pupils show agreement on the likert-scale with point 3 (middle) and afterwards even 35,7%.

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to know anew that being Jewish is a question of birth and getting information about the rules for life in Judaism – the boy transferred this view to his own religion. In contrast – he uses the presentation of a *strict* life as a contrast sheet to re-built the picture of being *not strongly* religious into being *not strictly* religious.

Regarding the item "Christianity is foreign for me" the boy first agreed with 5 (very strong) and afterwards only with 1 (not a bit).

Taking a look at anticipated foreign-perceptions from a Jewish point of view at Christianity, the boy said first it´s a different religion, different set of beliefs, afterwards he added the fact of being a daughter-religion. A concept of thinking in commonalities is accessible.

Having a look at this short selection of self-perception of the own religion, gives evidence for process 4 on cognitive and emotional dimension during contact in the synagogue.

Discussion

Detected attitudinal change in various dimensions and different forms through visit and encounter present new elements in the discussion on the contact hypothesis in the context of inter-religious learning in school and needs to be more scrutinized as a form of prevention of misunderstanding religious others as a potential source of violence: *Is there a change of un-learning violence via inter-RE by means of visit and encounter?*

The following abstract gives a short overview of potential questions for presentation at REA conference 2014 in Chicago, which will be also supported by new analysis results by then.

Is there a chance of being more competent in dealing with religious otherness and diversity through the presented form of contact to un-learn violence (aims of inter-RE)? *[Analysis-results showed e.g. effects of creating more detailed concepts of the foreign religion and also changed views e.g. of Judaism as a lively religion.]* Is there also the chance to become more competent in a way, that pupils can make distinctions but also can put these in relation to oneself ("Diversifikations- and Relationskompetenz") as a form of unlearning violence? *[Results show an effect of using the foreign religion as a contrast-sheet and on the other hand also as a kind of information-source, e.g. in processes of re-formulating the position of one`s own religion]* Can this be seen as a step forward to learn empathy, being aware of and reflect self- and foreign-perceptions (*intercultural learning theories*) and develop a religious faculty of speech to un-learn violence? Can changing of concepts of differences *[e.g. exclusion item]* and re-learning processes of deleted commons *[concept of holy]* and e.g. re-imagining attendance at a Jewish religious service be seen as aspects of respecting permanent strangeness and furthering personal religious beliefs in a way of identity-building through contrast-experiences (*5 steps of inter-RE)*?

All these questions should be discussed on a larger scale of new ideas regarding empirical results for formulating new aspects in a "didactic of the other" e.g. taking the opportunity of emotional change towards the attitude-object for opening deeper processes of prevention of building negative attitudes (or even changing existing ones) and even of becoming more interculturally and interreligiously competent in our pluralistic world.

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Violence Among Jews and Gentiles: The Consequences of Failed Christian Biblical Education

Précis:
Because religious educational leaders in the institutional church have not insisted upon a post-*Shoah* theology that would challenge the historicity of the Gospel narratives and relocate Jesus and Paul in their 1st century Jewish contexts, explicit and implicit supersessionism continues to license Christian violence toward Jews. Christian leadership is culpable, not only in their failure to correct for the effects of 1st century Gospel polemics, but also in their failure to help Christian lay people study and interpret biblical texts so as to enable them to live faithfully among other faith communities.

The first portion of the title for this paper is taken from Krister Stendahl's 1976 book *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*. But, as is often the case in a paper that is named before it is written, I need to tweak my title. I need you to imagine that the title is, "Violence Against 'Jews' and 'Gentiles.' " Put in those air quotes. Because it is the thesis of this paper that when it comes to talking about Jews and Gentiles, we Christians are just making stuff up.

I am currently a leader of adult Bible studies in the parish, primarily Old Testament, although I do venture into the New Testament occasionally. For many years, before beginning my work with adults, I taught Bible studies with junior high and high school students. I have been doing bible studies with lay people of all ages for over 40 years now. And I am still being astonished at the ways in which we Christians are just determined to misread our own canon.

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It seems that every Christian is trained at some point to believe that "the Old Testament is Law" and "the New Testament is Gospel." Sometimes you actually hear Christians say "the Old Testament is Law" and "the New Testament is Love" which is so self-congratulatory you would think our irony detectors would ping, but no. Anyway, the message we have received is clear: however good the Old Testament might have been and might still be on occasion—for certain specialized uses, such as devotional psalms, fodder for VBS musicals, and material for big budget movies—the New Testament is better.

I am of a certain age—which is to say, I am a Boomer—and therefore I clearly remember when we Christians made up our minds that we really had to clean up our act about supersessionism and start working out a post-*Shoah* theology. It was in the 60s, when the public at large became fully aware of the horrors of the Holocaust, the Six-Day War was fought, and the Second Vatican Council issued *Nostra Aetate*. Or maybe it was in the 70s, when E.P. Sanders came out with *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. Or perhaps the decade we really made up our minds to do away with supersessionism in our theology was the 80s, when so many U.S. Protestant denominations came out with their church-wide statements repudiating anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism. Then again, it might have been the 90s, when Clark Williamson came out with *A Guest in the House of Israel*; or, in the first decade of the 21st century, when Amy-Jill Levine came out with *The Misunderstood Jew*. Or maybe it was last year when Mary C. Boys published *Redeeming Our Sacred Story*.

From all this activity it would certainly seem that at least one of our goals as Christian Religious Educators for the past 50 years was the correction of false stereotypes about Jews. Fifty years on and a lot of books about teaching and preaching without contempt, a lot of Jewish-Christian dialogues, a lot of church-wide statements authored and issued, Martin Luther's remarks about the Jews thoroughly repudiated, generations of seminary students trained to understand that the four Gospels reflect "the expansion of the Gentile mission" and "the polemic of the early church after the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 CE," and where are we? Every Christmas we still happily admire our crèches and sing the hymns that imply there was of course a handy and widely available scriptural checklist available for "the Jews" on how to recognize the Messiah when He comes. Nary a word from Christian education about "the expansion of the Gentile mission," which needed a Messiah for first-century Gentiles. Every Holy Week we still solemnly read aloud all those gospel verses about how "the Jews" killed Jesus while poor old Pilate looked on helplessly wringing his hands. Nothing from the pulpit about "the polemic of the early church after the destruction of the Temple" or how the Gospels are wartime literature. Still plenty of sermons that portray Jesus as a proto-Christian set against the corrupt Temple establishment, exactly as though he were Martin Luther facing down the papacy or Martin Luther King facing down segregation. And I still have to vet every bit of the biblical scholarship available to me whenever I plan a bible study, because I never know when some perfectly nice and well-meaning Christian scholar is going to come out with something so patronizing about a character or story from the Old Testament it sets my teeth on edge.

My favorite examples on the unself-conscious condescension contained in Christian biblical scholarship come from commentaries on the book of Jonah. It seems to me, reading the first two sentences of the book of Jonah, that the author of the book is

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neatly setting us, the hearer or the reader, up to understand that the stakes here are very high. The first line of the book of Jonah is "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai." Anyone who has a study Bible with footnotes, a computer, or a smart phone, can look and see that Jonah son of Amittai was a court prophet active during the reign of Jeroboam II, ruler of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, 786-746 BCE.

The second sentence of the book of Jonah is "Saying, Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it, for their wickedness has come up before me." Now, every scholar of every commentary I have looked at knows perfectly well that Nineveh was a major city of the Assyrians, who conquered Israel in 722 BCE. But how many of them make the connection between Jonah being a prophet of the ancient Kingdom of Israel and his not wanting to be the agent of salvation of a people who will wipe the ancient Kingdom of Israel off the map for all time?

Here's Mary Joan Winn Leith in the introduction to the book of Jonah from the 3rd edition of *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, which is the Bible I bought for myself when I was working on my Master's in Old Testament: "Instead of portraying a prophet who is an obedient servant of the Lord, calling people to repentance, it features a recalcitrant prophet who tries to flee from God and his mission and sulks when his hearers repent."[1]

Here's James S. Ackerman in the introduction to the book of Jonah from *The Harper-Collins Study Bible*, which is the Bible I usually recommend that my friends at church buy: "Should one all-out repentance ceremony that includes sincere adults as well as innocent children and animals warrant God's 'changing his mind' concerning the judgment planned for the city? This is not justice, thinks Jonah; this is divine caprice."[2]

And here's Steven L. McKenzie in *How to Read the Bible*, a book used in the Introduction to the Old Testament course in which I am currently serving as a TA: "[Jonah] is a self-centered bigot whose reasoning is clouded by prejudice and hate."[3]

Whether you take the traditional view that Jonah is a prophet and therefore Jonah knows what the future may bring, or you take a post-modernist reader-response view that the audience for the book of Jonah is one that knows what the future *did* bring, shouldn't it be immediately apparent that we need to begin the reading of this book with empathy for a character who has just been ordered to offer salvation to the people who will kill his children and enslave his grandchildren? I mean, if *you* knew a group of people were going to destroy the United States of America in the next generation, and God wanted you to go tap them on the shoulder and wake them up so He could save them, how do you think you'd feel? Do you think you'd just be cool with that?

Here we have an ancient book that is both heartbreaking and hilarious—in just four chapters! —and we, seemingly, cannot wait to turn it into a VBS lesson. Always do what God tells you, kids. Even if it means the agonizing death of all you hold dear.

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[1] Mary Joan Winn Leith, "Jonah," in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (ed. Michael D. Coogan; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1321.

[2] James S. Ackerman, "Jonah," in *The Harper-Collins Study Bible* (ed. Harold W. Attridge; New York: Harper-Collins, 2006), 1233.

[3] Steven L. McKenzie, *How to Read the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 13.

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This is what Christian Education has taught us to do: take magnificent poetry and timeless prose that reminds us what it is to be a human being in a world created by God, and substitute for that, the most complacent and self-congratulatory theology possible. We have nothing to say to a violent world other than "Try to be more like us."

Obviously this is not sufficient, and that is why for 40 years I have been trying, with varying degrees of success, to get people to bring their whole heart and mind and soul and brain to this ancient text. During this time I have had three phrases, from three eminent religious educators, serving as my hermeneutical slogans.

The first is "what it meant and what it means" from Krister Stendahl's 1962 article on "Contemporary Biblical Theology" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.[4] Obviously I didn't read this in 1962—I was seven in 1962—I read it 15 years later, in 1977. It was assigned to me, along with Stendahl's *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, in a class I took at the University of Michigan on biblical criticism. These two texts really shocked me. Stendahl's appallingly obvious premise was that the texts of the Bible didn't necessarily mean in their original settings what we take them to mean now. I was the product of 18 years of the best church education available and I thought the Bible had been written by Christians. I thought—I mean, if I *had* thought about it at all, which I hadn't—that even though the people in the Bible had been *living* in the time of Jews, Abraham and Moses and David and Matthew and Luke and all those people were really Christians—they were just *dressed up* like Jews. Unfortunately I think a lot of us still feel that way.

The second is Verna Dozier's "the authority of the laity." I came to read Dozier in the 80s because she was published by the Alban Institute. Dozier is famous for two things: revivifying the study of the Bible, and renewing the churches understanding of the ministry of all believers. However, in Dozier's work these two things are really one thing: the study of the Bible authorizes lay authority and lay authority authorizes lay biblical interpretation. If it's good for preachers and pastors to study the Bible, it's good for the laity to study the Bible; and Dozier makes a sharp differentiation between lay people *reading* the Bible for their own individual devotional purposes, and *studying* it in a group. The thing I love best about Dozier, however, is how she recommends study, not as an aid to integration and certainty, but as a means toward a desirable *dis*integration and a sought-after *un*certainty. Dozier believes that the demand for certainty is the besetting sin of Christianity: "We resist living with the doubt, incompleteness, confusion, and ambiguity that are inescapable parts of the life we are called to live."[5] "Over and over we show that we are not willing to live in the uncertainty. We grasp that new insight and hold onto it anxiously. We have to see ourselves reproduced in order to know that we are right."[6] But Dozier believes that "living by faith means living in unsureness."[7] To be

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[4] Krister Stendahl, "Biblical Theology, Contemporary" in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (ed. G. A. Buttrick; Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 419.

[5] Verna Dozier, *The Authority of the Laity* (Washington DC: Alban Institute, 1982), 8.

[6] Verna Dozier, *The Authority of the Laity* (Washington DC: Alban Institute, 1982), 12.

[7] Verna Dozier, *The Authority of the Laity* (Washington DC: Alban Institute, 1982), 8.

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Christians, we must bear with "the uncertainties with which the gospel message calls us to live."[8]

The third is Any-Jill Levine's phrase "the scandal of the Jewish Jesus," the subtitle of her book, *The Misunderstood Jew*.[9] John Dominic Crossan calls this book, "A searing challenge from the heart of Judaism to the conscience of Christianity." Which it is. It's also hilarious and eye opening. The chapter on "Stereotyping Judaism" should be required reading for all Christians, especially preachers. Levine lists seven misperceptions or slanders concerning first-century Judaism; I hear them in sermons almost weekly. First century Jews were anti-woman; but Jesus was a feminist! The Law was a hideous burden; but Jesus came to save us from the Law! The Temple was an oppressive institution; but Jesus was a liberator! Somehow Christian seminary education has managed to train our preachers into a sort of liberation "-ish" theology that requires turning 1st century Judaism into a murky and monolithic backdrop before which Jesus can appear in glorious and radiant relief. As Levine points out, "The proclamation of the church can, and should, stand on its own; it does not require an artificial foil, an anti-Jewish basis, or an overstated distinction."[10] No, the New Testament is not sinister soldiers, ugly advisors, corrupt leaders, or decaying edifices of ancient evil; that's not the Gospel, that's a Peter Jackson movie.

The consequences of failed Christian biblical education have left Christians without any way to witness to their own faith without condescending to or patronizing the faith of others. We can't read our own canon without turning it into something with considerably less nuance and sophistication than, say, *Veggie Tales*, or Monday night football; and fifty years of feverish scholarship about Jews and Romans in the ancient world, and dialogues with Jews and Muslims in our modern world has not put a dent in our happy self-regard concerning our own tolerant universality.

Here are three things I would like Christian education to do in regard to biblical education in the 21st century:

Following Levine, I would like to see acknowledgement on the part of religious educators that Christian biblical scholarship, Christian theology, and Christian preaching is not just partially or incidentally supersessionist, but largely and foundationally supersessionalist; and I would like seminaries and churches to adopt curriculums that challenge Christian supersessionism. We don't need Judaism to be wrong in order for Christianity to be right.

Following Stendahl, I would like to see religious educators incorporate more challenging historical-critical material—particularly that concerning the dating of the biblical texts, and the non-historicity of many parts of the Gospel narratives—into devotional and educational guides. I realize that previously this information was to be found only in seminary courses and seminary libraries, but it is now a part of popular culture, available on social media, on Wikipedia, on television, on the N.Y. Times best-

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8 Verna Dozier, *The Authority of the Laity* (Washington DC: Alban Institute, 1982), 8.
9 Amy-Jill Levine, *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2006) 228.
10 Amy-Jill Levine, *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2006) 125.

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seller list, in public libraries, and in movies. Religious education needs to deal with this newly public information in a faithful and intellectually honest way.

Following Dozier, I would like to see serious reflection on the part of religious educators as to the negative impact of the professionalization of theological and biblical studies in the 20th century, and the extent to which this has led ordinary Christians in the 21st century to believe that serious biblical study and theology are "not their job." Many Christian educators are now calling for lay people to do theology in their day-to-day lives; but this call ignores that fact that for a long time now, lay people have been told that any theology they could come up with could only be second best, after that of people who had been to seminary and learned how to pronounce Wellhausen and Barth.

The consequences of failed biblical education in the 20th century are that Christians in the 21st century have been taught to think that a reading of scripture that does not contribute to Christian certainty cannot be a good reading. This does violence to the dialogue, the tensions, the conversations and conventions that undoubtedly exist within our shared scriptures. If we cannot learn to listen to the voices at our center, how will we ever learn to listen to the voices at our margins?

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Sharing the Language of Peace and the Rhetoric of Violence:
William Rainey Harper's Founding Vision for the REA
And the Rhetoric of American Imperialism

Abstract

This research engages the question: In what ways and to what extent was William Rainey Harper's founding vision for the REA shaped by the rhetoric of early 20th century American imperialism and its legitimation of violence against other nations? This paper explores how Harper's originating vision for the REA grew out of his fundamental conviction that the United States, critically informed and democratically inspired by the Bible, could be the world's prophet of democracy. It analyzes how Harper's vision for the REA tacitly, if not explicitly, supported the ideological framework of American imperialism in the early twentieth century and yet, at the same time, offered a broader vision in working toward peace.

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Introduction

William Rainey Harper's (1856-1906) founding vision for the Religious Education Association (REA) presents a mixed legacy in the making and unmaking of violence. On the one hand, Harper's vision for the REA supported the development of an organization whose explicit aim and purpose is working toward peace by building structures of ecumenical and interreligious cooperation. On the other hand, that same vision grew out of Harper's wider understanding of America as a biblically inspired, democratic nation whose purpose is to help transform the world as its prophet of democracy. It is a vision that advocated a type of "progressive imperialism" that uncritically assumed that the United States had a destiny to "civilize" the world through its missionary efforts in spreading democracy around the globe[1]. For Harper, a biblical scholar by training and an educational visionary by temperament, this vision was expressed as a faith in America as a democratic, "Judeo-Christian" nation that would help bring about what fellow REA founder George Albert Coe called "the democracy of God."[2]

In this paper, I argue that Harper's founding vision for the REA, rooted in his belief that America was to be "the messianic deliverer of the world" as its prophet of democracy,[3] was tacitly shaped by and in turn helped to shape the religiously infused political rhetoric of American imperialism that legitimated violence against other nations. This vision was fostered by the notion of American "providentialism" which perpetuated the myth of American exceptionalism in the early twentieth century.[4] At the same time, I suggest that Harper's broader educational vision for the REA, though seemingly uncritical in its acceptance of the rhetoric of American providentialism, nevertheless opened spaces for further conversation in the unmaking of violence and working toward the building of peace. Overall, this paper argues that the founding vision of William Rainey Harper for the REA continues to present a mixed legacy and a challenge for religious educators today as they examine their own practice in both the making and unmaking of the rhetoric of violence.

Methodology

This research employs an historical methodology, utilizing both primary and secondary sources. It engages the method of rhetorical criticism in order to examine "the climate of opinion and audience attitudes of the time under

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[1] Walter Nugent, *Habits of Empire: A History of American Expansion* (NY: Vintage, 2000), 1.

[2] Quoted in Helen Allen Archibald, George Albert Coe," *Christian Educators of the 20th Century Project*, http://www2.talbot.edu/ce20/view.cfm?n=george_coe.

[3] James Wind, *The Bible and the University: The Messianic Vision of William Rainey Harper* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 7.

[4] Stephen Webb, "American Providence, American Violence," in *From Jeremaid to Jihad: Religion, Violence, and America*, ed. John Carlson and Jonathan Ebel (Berkley: University of California Press, 2012), 91-108.

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consideration."[5] It seeks to analyze Harper's originating vision for the REA in the wider context of the currents of American life and thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And, it aims at interpreting REA's founding mission in light of the written and oral discourse found at the confluence of democratic and religious ideals in American imperial rhetoric at the turn of the century.

Harper's Educational Vision and the Founding of the REA

William Rainey Harper organized the first Convention for Religious Education held in 1903 under the auspices of the Council of Seventy, a group of biblical scholars of the American Institute of Sacred Literature which he had founded as an extension project of the University of Chicago to promote literacy in higher biblical criticism for the wider public.[6] By the time the first Religious Education Convention was held in Chicago, Harper was already nationally recognized as an educational leader as the first president of the University of Chicago, known for his innovations in higher education and commitment to creating a major research university which attracted many leading scholars in the United States, including John Dewey, Thorsten Veblen, George Herbert Mead, and G. Stanley Hall.[7]

At the same time, Harper was also recognized as a biblical scholar in his own right and was a leading advocate of critical biblical scholarship in the United States.[8] Born in 1856 in New Concord, Ohio, he enrolled in nearby Muskingum college at the age of ten, graduated as valedictorian at the age of thirteen, completed a Ph.D. in Philology from Yale at the age of nineteen, taught Hebrew at Morgan Park Baptist Seminary in Chicago at twenty-two, and become professor of Semitic languages at Yale by the age of twenty-nine.[9] Later, when he was appointed President of the University of Chicago at the age of thirty-five, he also served as dean of the Divinity School where he continued to promote critical biblical scholarship.[10] He was considered one of the foremost experts in Biblical Hebrew in the United States, founding what was to become *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* and hailed by *The American Journal of Theology* as doing "more, perhaps, than any man of his generation to promote the study of the Bible among the people."[11] As Martin Marty observes, "Harper wanted to disseminate the critical views from the Sunday school through

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[5] Paul Crawford, "The Farmer and His Role in Society," in *The Rhetoric of Protest and Reform: 1878-1898*, ed. Paul Boase (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1980), 102-103.

[6] Helen Allen Archibald, "Originating Vision and Visionaries of the Era," *Religious Education* 98, no. 4 (Fall 2003), 414.

[7] Louis Meand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (NY: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2001), 285-319.

[8] Richard Storr, *Harper's University: The Beginnings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 57-64.

[9] See Milton Mayer, *Young Man in a Hurry: The Story of William Rainey Harper* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957)

[10] Ibid.

[11] *The American Journal of Theology* 10, no. 2 (April 1906), 201.

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graduate school." He wanted to free the study of the Bible from what he called the "bibliolotry" of narrow sectarianism and authoritarianism by inviting ordinary people to study the Bible in a spirit of free, open, and democratic inquiry.[12]

Thus, to a large extent, for Harper, religious education was synonymous with critical biblical education, reflecting his belief that the Bible expresses universal moral and religious values which have the power to transform society. Moreover, this vision for religious education was rooted in Harper's overarching educational vision for the United States. He believed that the United States, critically informed and democratically inspired by the Bible, could be the "deliverer of the world," as its prophet of democracy.[13] Such a vision reflects the quintessential early twentieth century progressive spirit, with its abiding faith in American democracy and in the power of education to change the world. It is a spirit which Harper fundamentally possessed and which animated his overarching vision. Hence, at its core, Harper's founding vision for the REA was an educational one, infused with a profound sense of America's religious mission to do nothing less than transform the world through democracy.

For Harper, the vanguard of this socially transformative educational vision was the university with its scientific, universal, and cooperative spirit, making it "the prophet, priest, and sage of democracy."[14] He argued: "Democracy has been given a mission to the world…that the university is the prophet of this democracy, as well as its priest and philosopher; that in other words, the university is the messiah of democracy, its to-be-expected deliverer."[15] Such unabashed claims reflect Harper's fundamental belief in the transformative power of education and his optimistic faith in American democracy to usher in a universal spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In this, Harper reflects the optimism found in early twentieth century Protestant liberal theology which sought to transform society itself.

As Sydney Ahlstrom observes, the term "liberal" used to describe this theology "denotes both a certain generosity or charitableness toward divergent opinions and a desire for intellectual liberty."[16] For proponents of liberal theology like Harper, the liberal spirit was synonymous with the democratic spirit in pursuit of true intellectual liberty. Harper believed that these democratic ideals were themselves derived from the Bible and that the true spirit of democracy depended on freedom in search of God's truth.[17] As George Marsden points out, for Harper "modern education at all levels, particularly when integrated with the

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[12] Martin Marty, *The Irony of it All: 1893-1919*, Vol. 1, *Modern American Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 40.

[13] Wind, 7.

[14] Quoted in Storr, 13.

[15] William Rainey Harper, "The University and Democracy," in *Trends in Higher Education* 12 (1905).

[16] Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 779.

[17] George Marsden, *The Soul of the American University* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1994), 242.

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teaching of modern scientific higher critical principles of biblical study, was the best path to truly Christian and democratic ideals."[18] Therefore, Harper maintained that "in this work of educating humanity to understand God and itself, America is the training school for teachers," as the world's beacon of democracy.

Here, Harper's grand educational vision also found resonance with the progressive educational views of John Dewey whose laboratory school Harper helped to establish at the University of Chicago. As George Marsden notes "Dewey proved himself a kindred spirit to Harper" insofar as "Dewey and Harper both believed in the redemptive function of education" in "teaching the values of American democracy."[19] Likewise, George Albert Coe of Chicago's Northwestern University gave similar expression to the transformative power of religious education in bringing about what he called "the democracy of God." For Coe, as the United States "progressed" in the democratic ideal, "the Christian life could be an incarnation, a realization of divine purpose, presence, and communion."[20] As Helen Allen Archibald underscores, Coe represented "the ebullient confidence" of early twentieth century American Protestant liberal theology "that the conscience of modernity was being sensitized to higher values in an ongoing historical process," a process in which the United States was perceived as playing a key transformative role in the world.[21]

Harper shared Coe's "ebullient confidence" in the religiously inspired liberal ideals of American democracy and his optimistic belief in the power of education to liberally spread those ideals. Together, these ideas crystallized in Chicago in 1903 at the first Convention on Religious Education. Initially concerned with the narrowly evangelical tenor of the Sunday school and the resistance of the International Sunday School Association to implement reforms based on critical biblical scholarship, Harper and the Council of Seventy proposed a convention of religious educators that would "promote a more responsible approach to the Bible and a more progressive approach to education in religion."[22] Hence, Harper envisioned an organization which would facilitate putting "critical study of the Bible…within reach of every person," thereby promoting a truly democratic spirit of free and open inquiry.[23]

Moreover, as Stephen Schmidt points out, Harper envisioned universities leading the way in this reform of religious education as part of their overall mission to reform education in general. Harper believed universities would fulfill their role in "reforming the nation and the world in light of a religious

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 251.

[20] Marty, 265.

[21] Archibald, "George Albert Coe."

[22] Allen Moore, "One Hundred Years of the Religious Education Association," *Religious Education* 98, no. 4 (Fall 2003), 428.

[23] Ibid.

understanding of democracy."[24] Thus, Harper and the other founders of the REA imagined an organization that would "inspire the religious forces of our country with the educational ideal" and "the educational forces of our country with the religious ideal," thereby serving as a catalyst for a truly democratic social and cultural transformation of the world.[25]

Yet, as Mary Boys emphasizes, underneath this overarching vision for religious education, there lies a "hidden curriculum" of an uncritical faith in American democracy.[26] In extoling the values of freedom and a democratic spirit, Harper not only uncritically assumed that the United States is the ultimate exemplar of those values, but also he unabashedly accepted the idea of American providentialism in proposing that America would serve as the prophet, priest, and messiah of democracy for the rest of the world.

Religion and American Providentialism

The trope of providentialism has a long history in the American rhetorical lexicon. Gabriel Moran points out that from its earliest usage the word "America" had "mythical and religious" connotations as "a new promised land where the world could begin again."[27] In his sermon to the puritan settlers of Massachusetts Bay, John Winthrop evoked the biblical image of "a city set on a hill," to remind the settlers of their providential destiny in a new land. And, the great seal of the United States contains the words *Annuit Coeptis*, "Providence favors our undertaking." Stephen Webb argues that this "doctrine of Providence" provides a key conceptual framework in shaping American identity around the idea of what Americans "hope and believe their country is destined to be."[28] Thus, both Moran and Webb argue that "America" is not so much a place as an idea, an idea with deeply religious connotations.[29]

Moreover, Webb points out that this idea of American providentialism was inextricably intertwined with the notion that "God created in America a land bound only by freedom and opportunity." Hence, American providentialism was historically tied to the American frontier, which represented unlimited opportunity and a democratic spirit of freedom, a "meeting point between savagery and civilization," where America was perceived as having a "manifest destiny" to tame, civilize, and Christianize an untamed wilderness.[30] Webb argues that this

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[24] Stephen Schmidt, *A History of the Religious Education Association* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1983), 26-27.

[25] "The Purpose of the Association," *Religious Education* 1 (April 1906), 2.

[26] Mary Boys, *Educating in Faith: Maps and Visions* (Lima, OH: Academic Renewal Press, 1989), 59.

[27] Gabriel Moran, "Religious Education Toward America," *Religious Education* 72, no. 5 (1977), 475.

[28] Webb, 91.

[29] See Webb, 91 and Moran, 474.

[30] Webb, 92-93.

idea served as a religiously infused rhetorical justification for American expansionism throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, an idea which legitimated violence not only against Native Americans but against other nations as well.[31]

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, Frederick Jackson Turner suggested that America was entering a new phase of its history with the closing of the Western frontier. He prophetically observed that "American energy will continually demand a wider field for its exercise."[32] As Ivan Musicant points out, Turner's thesis foreshadowed American imperial expansion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which included the acquisition of Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and control of the Isthmus of Panama.[33] Yet, as Matthew McCullough suggests, this new imperial phase of American expansionism was supported by a renewed sense of American providentialism as America saw its role on the world stage as a democratic, "Christian nation" which had a "redemptive role in the world" to uplift and "civilize" people who were "broken and downtrodden."[34]

Here, America's providential rhetoric took on new meaning as "Uncle Sam became the Good Samaritan," claiming intervention in the affairs of other nations for "purely humanitarian motives."[35] Such was the justification for the Spanish American War in 1898, and American intervention in the Philippines in 1899, which President McKinley justified by saying "We could not leave them to themselves-they were unfit for self-government . . . there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all and educate the Filipinos and uplift and Christianize them."[36] Aside from the fact that most Filipinos were already Catholic Christians, the use of such rhetoric underscores the extension of the idea of American providentialism to the world stage and the legitimation of American imperial violence that it offered.

Harper's Educational Vision and the Rhetoric of American Imperialism

In many ways, Harper's vision for education in general, and religious education, in particular reflected the rhetoric of the new imperial phase of American providentialism found in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such rhetoric can be found in Harper's claims that "education will be

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[31] Webb, 92.

[32] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *A Documentary History of the United States*, 7th edition, ed. Richard Heffner (NY: Signet, 2002), 221-222.

[33] Ivan Musicant, Empire by Default: The Spanish-American War and the Dawn of the American Century (NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1998), 658.

[34] Matthew McCullough, "Biblical Metaphors for Interventionism in the Spanish American War," in *The Blackwell Companion to Religion and Violence*, ed. Andrew Murphy (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 413.

[35] Ibid., 410-412.

[36] Quoted in Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*, First Perennial Classic Edition (NY: Harper, 2003), 313.

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the watchword of the new Christianity," that "it is a call to establish here at home the foundations for the evangelization of the world; for if the world is to be evangelized America must do it." Hence, Harper believed that the United States, transformed through democratic ideals, would become a beacon of "the teaching of Jesus Christ, the world's greatest advocate of democracy."[37]

As McCullough points out, it was such providential rhetoric in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that was used to legitimate American imperial violence as "a providential necessity."[38] During the Spanish-American war, for example, there was wide consensus among Protestant churches on the rightness of the American cause against Spain and "even among pacifist groups there was little vocal opposition."[39] While Harper made no public statements concerning the war itself, throughout this period he continued to espouse publically and vociferously the doctrine of American providentialism and support America's role as the world's anointed champion of democracy. Thus, he tacitly, if not explicitly supported the consensus of the religious establishment that it is America's Christian duty "to civilize" our "neighbor."[40]

Moreover, in *The Biblical World*, published under the auspices of the University of Chicago, Harper endorsed a series of articles on "The Field of Religious Education in America." These articles supported the idea that religious education in America must stand for the cause of "truth and righteousness" against "the enemies of the republic" and democratic freedom.[41] Likewise, they maintained that "the religious history of our country" and "the duties of patriotism" must be understood" as part of "the long and glorious fight for purity, liberty, and the enlightenment of the world."[42] Against the backdrop of American imperial expansion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such rhetoric resonates with Sydney Ahlstrom's observation that "never have patriotism, imperialism, and the religion of American Protestants stood in such fervent coalescence as during the McKinley-Roosevelt era."[43]

Harper's use of the rhetoric of providentialism and his belief in the role of America as the world's prophet of democracy echoes the sentiments of his era. The year Frederick Jackson Turner presented his thesis on the closing of the American frontier at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, foreshadowing American imperial expansion, Harper was finishing his first full year as president of the University of Chicago, which had opened its doors a year

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[37] William Rainey Harper, "America as a Missionary Field," in *Religion and the Higher Life: Talks to Students* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904), 175-184.
[38] McCullough, 412.
[39] Ibid., 406-407
[40] Ibid., 409.
[41] Clyde Weber Votaw, "The Field of Religious Education in America," *The Biblical World* 25, no. 5 (May 1905), 356-360.
[42] W.G. Ballantine, "The Material of Religious Education," *The Biblical World* 27, no. 2 (February 1906), 116.
[43] Ahlstrom, 880.

earlier.[44] Harper conceived of Chicago as a thoroughly modern and American University, a true prophet of democracy that would be a shining beacon for the rest of the world.[45] Such optimism reflects the progressive optimism of the age as symbolized by the Exposition itself, known as the "White City" as it lighted the way toward the future progress of America in the new century.[46]

Conclusion

To a large extent, Harper's uncritical advocacy of the rhetoric of American providentialism, and his tacit support of American imperial violence, reflects the fact that, in many ways, Harper was simply a man of his times. He believed education was the path to unlocking freedom of conscience; yet, he believed that America held the key. He dreamed of peace, yet uncritically supported the rhetoric of war. And, he broadened the scope of religious education, yet narrowly clung to the idea that American liberal Protestant Christianity was the world's teacher. Thus, it is apropos that Marin Marty describes this period in American religious history as "ironic." Quoting Reinhold Niebuhr, Marty emphasizes "that a situation is ironic if 'virtue becomes vice through some hidden defect in the virtue' or 'if wisdom becomes folly because it does not know its limits.'"[47] Yet, Marty cautions, in spite of vice, "one must not overlook the virtue" and in spite of folly, one must recognize "there is also wisdom."[48] While William Rainey Harper's folly may have been his uncritical acceptance of the rhetoric of American providentialism and its supporting role in the making of American imperial violence, there is wisdom found in Harper's founding vision for the REA which recognized that by building structures of cooperation, religious education has the potential, at least, to become a pathway in working toward peace.

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[44] See Mayer, 16-17.

[45] Julie Ruben, *The Making of the Modern University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 98-115.

[46] Jaques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence: 1500 to the Present-500 Years of Western Cultural Life* (NY: Harper Collins, 2000), 600.

[47] Marty, 7.

[48] Ibid.

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From Martyrdom to Internationalization—overcoming and becoming through religious education

Since its inception violence and education are tightly woven threads sewn in the tapestry of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (whose member are commonly known as Mormons). In fact, it was the young prophet Joseph Smith's search for wisdom which led to his martyrdom, two and a half decades later, in Carthage, Illinois, a city just south of Chicago. Although the Saints lost homes and schools as they were violently driven from New York to Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, and eventually the Great Basin, their thirst for and emphasis on education could not be destroyed. As one scholar stated, "To the Saints learning was a form of religious devotion, not just a secular pursuit."[i] LDS scripture emphasized education declaring that "The glory of God is intelligence," and a that "if a person gains more knowledge in this life, he will have advantage in the world to come." (D&C 130:19)

The LDS Church, now with a worldwide population of over fifteen million, has overcome much of the persecution and violence aimed at it and has become innovative in religious education internationally. This paper will provide a brief historical summary of the LDS Church's educational pursuits amidst violence. It will portray how Church leaders used opposition as a catalyst to educate their members and in the process, create a largely successful worldwide religious education system whose mission reaches beyond knowing something, to becoming something.[ii]

History of Violence and Education

In 1820 in upstate New York, Joseph Smith, a teenage boy, found himself confused by the various religious groups. After studying from the Bible, James 1:5, and recognizing his "lack [of] wisdom", Joseph decided to accept the invitation to "ask God." As a result, Joseph declared that he had seen a vision in which he saw God and Jesus Christ and received instruction. Joseph quickly realized, however, that the sharing of his experience with others, especially religious

leaders "excited a great deal of prejudice against me . . . and was the cause of great persecution." Years later he wrote how "very strange it was that an obscure boy. . . should be thought a character of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the great ones of the most popular sects of the day, and in a manner to create in them a spirit of the most bitter persecution and reviling."[iii]

In the spring of 1831, only one year after the LDS Church was organized, escaping persecution and following revelation, Joseph and the saints left New York and gathered in Ohio. During that first year, Joseph established schools for children living in Ohio.[iv] In addition, the Latter-day Saints offered adult education, becoming among the first to do so in America.[v] The School of the Prophets was also established to teach the male church members the doctrines of the kingdom.[vi] In 1837 the "Kirtland High School" met with an enrollment of 145. Here, Joseph received a revelation regarding a temple designed to be a "house of learning" (D&C 88:118). This same revelation admonished the saints to seek learning and wisdom out of the best books, "even by study and also by faith" (D&C 88:118).[vii] The Saints were exhorted to instruct each other not only in spiritual matters, but also in history, geography, politics, languages and other areas of important. "Appoint among yourselves a teacher," they were taught, "and let not all be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege." (D&C88:121)

For a time, the Saints lived a peaceful life in Ohio, but the United States banking "Panic of 1837," coupled with the Church's own financial difficulties, and unorthodox teachings, caused Joseph and his followers to become a target for violence once again. After suffering greatly at the hands of their enemies including an attempted murder and the resulting death of his son, Joseph penned, "I am like a huge, rough stone rolling down from a high mountain; and the only polishing I get," he continued, "is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else striking with accelerated force against religious bigotry, priest-craft, lawyer-craft, doctor-craft, lying editors, suborned judges and jurors, and the authority of perjured executives, backed by mobs, blasphemers, licentious and corrupt men and women—all hell knocking off a

corner here and a corner there. Thus I will become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty."[viii]

Once again, escaping persecution and in obedience to what they believed was revelation from the Lord, the Saints fled to Missouri, joining others of their faith. One of the first revelations Joseph recorded in Missouri reads, "I, the Lord, am well pleased that there should be a school in Zion. . . (D&C 97:3) As was the case in Ohio, education was a top priority, unlike Ohio, however, persecutions began immediately. In Independence, Missouri, leaders stressed, "It is folly to suppose that children can become learned without education.... It is necessary that children should be taught in the rudiments of common learning out of the best books; and then, as they grow up they can be qualified to search the scriptures, and acquire the knowledge of the Lord"[ix] ·During this time LDS apostle Parley P. Pratt taught a school of Elders. "The place of meeting was in the open, are under some tall trees, in a retired place in the wilderness where we prayed, preached and prophesied, and exercised ourselves in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. . . To attend the school I had to travel on foot, and sometimes with bare feet at that, about six miles."[x] The Missouri years didn't last long however, as the Mormon's anti-slavery stance, their practice of plural marriage, and increased political power were perceived threats to locals. In 1838, following years of discord between the Mormons and Missourians, Governor Lilburn Boggs issued an order which in part read, "We must treat the Mormons as enemies and exterminate or drive them from the state." Three days later, at Hauns' Mill, between twelve and eighteen LDS members were massacred and buried in a common well.

The next day, Joseph and other Church leaders were arrested leaving the town to be disarmed and plundered by a mob. For six months these leaders suffered in Liberty jail as their families and fellow saints were violently driven to Illinois. While in a helpless and vulnerable state, after suffering privations difficult to imagine, Joseph recorded what he declared to be a revelation from the Lord. One which has become a staple to LDS educational endeavors. "All these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good," he recorded. "The Son of Man hath descended below them all; art thou greater than he?"[xi] For Joseph and the Saints, education came not only through books and formal tutoring, but through experience; for the purpose of not only learning, but for becoming. While accompanying his brother in jail Hyrum Smith wrote to his

wife, "Bonds and imprisonments and persecutions are no disgrace to the Saints. It is that that is common in all ages of the world since the days of Adam. . . . The same things produce the same effect in every age of the world. We only want the same patience, the same carefulness, the same guide, the same grace, the same faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . What we do not learn by precept we may learn by experience. All these things are to make us wise and intelligent that we may be happy recipients of the highest glory."[1]

After being released from jail, Joseph met his family and Saints in Nauvoo, Illinois. Between the years 1839-1844, Nauvoo went from being a city of refugees and immigrants, to one of the largest cities in Illinois, rivaling Chicago in number. There the Saints were given a liberal charter, allowing for a system of common schools including a university.[xii] Joseph hoped that the university would become "one of the great lights of the world, and by and through it, to diffuse that kind of knowledge which will be practical utility, and for the public good, and also for private and individual happiness."[xiii] Due to the political environment, unorthodox teachings, economic strength and perceived threat to power, persecutions again mounted and Joseph's hopes were cut short. Eventually, pressure against the Church and prophet reached a boiling point, and calls for extermination of the Mormons and especially their prophet mounted until Joseph and other leaders were again incarcerated, this time in Carthage, Illinois.

 "I am going like a lamb to the slaughter;" he told his family and associates on his way to Carthage, "but I am calm as a summers morn. I have a conscience void of offense towards God and towards all men. I shall die innocent, and it shall yet be said of me—he was murdered in cold blood." Within a couple of days, between one and two hundred mobbers gathered around the jail, with blackened faces, and stormed the jail. Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, was shot and killed instantly, and Joseph, hit in the collarbone and chest from the doorway and two more from outside the window, fell out the upstairs window crying, "O Lord, my God!"[xiv] The full affair took place in less than four minutes. From his early twenties to his death at age 38, Joseph Smith had received over two hundred total suits, whether as a defendant, plaintiff, witness or judge, equaling an average of one lawsuit per month during most of his ministry! "Not once was he found legally guilty of any charges against him."[xv]

Only two years prior to his martyrdom, in a letter to John Wentworth, editor and proprietor of the Chicago Democrat, Joseph Smith wrote, "Persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent visited every clime, swept every country and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done."[xvi]

Learning from History

Although violence killed the prophet, it did not destroy the LDS Church nor their educational endeavors. In an attempt to avoid further persecution, the Saints, under the leadership of Brigham Young headed west to the Great Basin. Even in this depressed state of poverty, Brigham instructed the Saints to bring books of history, politics, science, philosophy, astronomy, maps and diagrams, for the benefit of the rising generation.[xvii] Herbert E. Bolton explained, "every new settlement as soon as it had planted crops, opened a school—in the open air, in tents, in log houses, in adobes."[xviii] The first school in the Salt Lake valley was built only 3 months after their arrival. By 1850, the University of Deseret was created.[xix] As communities were built throughout the valley, schools were often the first buildings edified.[xx]

With little separation between Church and state, these schools were under the direction of ecclesiastical authority. This approach however, lasted only for a decade as the isolated society began to mingle with easterners, many of whom came to wean the young Mormons from the influence of the LDS Church. [xxi] With this new influx of people came tension between the "gentiles" and the Mormons which would culminate in the Utah War of (1857-1858) and the Edmunds Tucker Act two decades later. The Utah War resulted in the transfer of Utah's governorship from Brigham Young to non-Mormon and federally appointed Alfred Cumming, a full pardon for the Mormons, and the peaceful entrance of the U.S. Army into Utah. The Edmunds-Tucker Act, two decades later (1887) prohibited, "the use of . . .any book of sectarian character," and Disincorporated the LDS Church from . . .public schools in the Territory. [xxii] Not willing to once again be bullied out of their land and schools, LDS leaders came up with a plan that would allow them to stay and hopefully dwell in peace among their neighbors. [xxiii]   "We

feel that the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people," the President of the LDS Church declared. "Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of those principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices."[xxiv]

Rather than sending their children to the public schools, LDS leaders counseled members to build their own private schools and teach both secular and religious education. By the late 1800's over 22 academies were built in highly populated Mormon settlements. By 1920 nearly 6,000 students were enrolled in Church high schools.[xxv] Eventually, however, due primarily to the expense required of the saints to pay not only for their own private schools, but also to pay taxes for the public schools, Church leaders assessed the situation and came up with a new innovative program. Rather than spending internal funds on secular education, LDS leaders encouraged their members to support government schools while supplementing them with religious education of their own. Thus between 1920-1929, following a few years of preliminary testing of religious education which supplemented secular education in both high schools and colleges, the Church Board of Education announced the closure or transfer to state control of almost all of the academies. Some junior colleges still remained and served as feeders to the larger Church owned Brigham Young University. Now, rather than competing with the government and the public system, the Church cooperated and supplemented it, allowing students to receive both private and public education with little extra cost to the Church and its members.

During the next few decades, as the Church began to expand internationally, especially into Latin America and the Pacific Islands, Church schools again were created for a time when the country itself was not providing sufficient education to the members. As public schools adequately met the needs of LDS students according to professional evaluators, leaders of the Church continued to follow the pattern demonstrated previously, and closed Church schools and supplemented public schools with religious education.

By supplementing public education with religious education, the LDS Church has been able to support and work with, rather than become victims to a people and a system who do not

necessarily hold their own values. They are able to focus their time, talents and resources on strengthening the spirituality of the student by training teachers to be experts in this area according to foundation principles of religious education tailored to the needs of teachers and students throughout the world. Now, over 750,000 students between the ages of 14-30 are being taught in these supplementary religion classes throughout the world.

Conclusion

Violence and education are fundamental components to the history of the LDS Church. Indeed, for most members, it is understood that suffering, although not sought after, is a necessary part of real life education. Orson F. Whitney, a prominent early Church leader penned, "No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God. . . and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father in heaven." [xxvi] Since its inception members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have used the stumbling block of violence and persecution and turned it into a stepping stone to create a worldwide educational system tapestry that not only teaches students to know something, but helps them become something. [xxvii]

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[i] Casey Griffiths, "The globalization of Latter-day Saint Education." P. 33.

[ii] Dallin H. Oaks, Challenge to Become

[iii] The Church or Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Pearl of Great Price, 2013,49.

[iv] Milton Lynn Bennion, Mormonism and Education (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News Press, 1939), p. 6.

[v] Leonard J. Arrington, "The Latter-day Saints and Public Education." Southwestern Journal of Social Education (Spring-Summer 1977), 10.

[vi] D&C 88:77-78, 188.

[vii] Bennion, p. 12

[viii] (History of the Church, 5:401)

[ix] Esplin and Randall, that little children might also receive an education

[x] Parley P. Pratt, The Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt: Revised and Enhanced Edition. Edited by Scott F. Proctor, and Maurine J. Proctor, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 113-114.

[xi] (History of the Church , 3:293)

[xii] Darowski, "School of the Prophets," 11.

[xiii] Marnie Hopkins, "History of Latter-day Saint Education in Nauvoo, 1839-1845," Master's Project, David O. McKay School of Education, 2010, accessed June 13, 2011 at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cgi-bin/showfile.exe?CISOROOT=/IR&CISOPTR=986&filename=989.pdf

[xiv] (History of the Church 6:618)

[xv] (From "Legal Trials of the Prophet, Joseph I. Bentley, August 2006)

[xvi] (History of the Church 4:450)

[xvii] Gardner, David P., Education: Attitudes Toward Education, from Education –The Encyclopedia of Mormonism.

[xviii] Berbert E. Bolton, "The Mormons in the opening of the Great West," The Desert news (October 24, 1925).

[xix] Church history in the fullness of times, 367-368.

[xx] Bennion, Mormonism and Education, 4.

[xxi] See Scott C. Esplin, Education in transition: Church and State, Relationships in Utah Education, 1888-1933, Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 2006. P. 59.

[xxii] L. Rex Sears, "Punishing the Saints for Their "Peculiar Institution": Congress on the Constitutional Dilemmas," 2001 Utah L. Rev. 581

[xxiii] Buchanan, "Education Among the Mormons," 441.

[xxiv] James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 3 vols., (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 3:86-87.

[xxv] Scott C. Esplin, "Stake Academies," unpublished manuscript, in author's possession, 4.

[xxvi] (Quoted by Spencer W. Kimball, "Tragedy or Destiny," Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year, Dec. 6, 1955, 6.) (Conference Report April 29, pg. 110)

[xxvii] Dallin H. Oaks, Becoming, Ensign

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A Theology of Resistance in Unmasking and Unmaking Violence

Abstract

This paper seeks to develop a theology of resistance to unmask and unmake violence, particularly violence committed against indigenous people. From the fact finding exposure trip to Guatemala, the author proposes three inter-related ways of articulating a theology of resistance: remembrance, relationship, re-claiming. First, we will describe the remembrance ritual for the Rio Negro Massacre in Guatemala and its role in developing a theology of resistance. Next the example of International Women's Day events serves to model a heterogeneous performance of relationship building. Finally a school made up of the children who are survivors of the Rio Negro Massacre serves as an example of reclaiming space for creating alternative communities. The paper concludes that a theology of resistance is a practice of faith and reflects on the Hebrew term, *emunah*.

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1. Locating a Reality as a Methodology of Practical Theology

Guatemala is close to North America (USA and Canada), yet the violent conditions under which they live are unknown to most of North Americans.[1] In order to learn more about this situation, a group of 9 people including myself went to Guatemala on March 2014.[2] This trip was organized by "Breaking the Silence."[3] March was deliberately chosen for two primary educational purposes: to learn about Rio Negro Massacre that occurred in March 1982; to mark International Women's Day together with the local women and activists there. This paper examines a particular reality of Guatemala, as an "*epistemological situation.*"[4] It further seeks to develop a practical theology and "thematize the complex and dense subject matter of contemporary *situation"*[5] in order to construct "the critical reflection that is done about the meaning of faith and action in the world."[6]

On March 13, 1982, 177 Mayan indigenous women and their children were killed by the Guatemalan army and the civil patrollers of Xococ in Río Negro.[7] These killings were related to the community's opposition to the construction of the Pueblo Viejo-Chixoy Hydroelectric dam.[8] This construction project endangered the people living nearby. When it was completed it did indeed flood villages and destroy a way of life. But the people knew the consequences would be

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[1] By the end of 2010, Guatemala reportedly had a homicide rate of 41.1 per every 100,000 individuals, a rate four times higher than that of Mexico and twelve times higher than that of the United States, making it the fourth most murderous country in the world. Found at http://www.coha.org/guatemalas-crippled-peace-process-a-look-back-on-the-1996-peace-accords/, accessed June 19, 2014.

[2] http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com/general/2014-delegation/ accessed June 19, 2014.

[3] This known as "Breaking the Silence" (BTS), a voluntary organization, made an active presence with people in Guatemala since 1989, as it has celebrated its 25th anniversary 2014. BTS, based on the Maritime region of Canada, is housed at Tatamagouche Centre, a Christian educational center where various programs of retreat, social justice, youth and family, faith and spirituality, leadership development, and art and creativity happen throughout year. See more https://www.tatacentre.ca/index.php/partnerships/bts, accessed June 19, 2014.

[4] Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, "Michel de Carteua: Introduction Certeau Texts: How is Christianity Thinkable today? And White Ecstasy," in Graham Ward, ed., *The Postmodern God: A Theological Reader* (Malden: Blackwell, 1997), 142.

[5] Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 7.

[6] James N Poling and Donald Miller, *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985), 33.

[7] There was an incident that led up to this massacre. On May 4, 1980 a killing happened between local police and local indigenous people. This prompted the entrance of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP) who organized leadership of resistance groups in that region. EGP was targeted as a terrorist group which means the army and the government could legally oppress them and those who were labelled as accomplices. This aggravated the situation at Río Negro in terms of the economic development becoming politicized and militarized.

[8] Between 1977 and 1978, the National Electricity Institute (INDE) proposed the project of building the dam which would force 150 families to leave their lands.

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more than the material consequences related to home and their livestock. Michael Hardt has described the consequences of such development as a kind of "immaterial" and "biopolitical" exploitation which may be even more violent and damaging in the long run.[9] "The dam project not only affected the community; it also *affected the heritage of the Mayan culture.*"[10] When the dam was completed it was largely funded by International Monetary Fund (IMF) with the collaboration of the local elites and their military government. This was a greedy handshake between European American colonialism and transnational capitalism. Aided by the local culture of militarism, the deal perpetuated a history of racism against Mayan people. In the end this evil concoction of factors led to a ghastly orgy of violence that cost many innocent lives.[11] International financial institutions only served the interests of 1% of very wealthy stakeholders, while 99% of the majority did not benefit from them. Hence, a new sense of solidarity for the 99 percent became even more urgent than ever before.[12]

2. A Theology of Resistance

1) A Theology of Resistance as Remembrance

Every year since 1982 people of the Achi Mayan community mark March 13 by climbing a mountain called Pak'oxom. In order to get to the mountain, we all had to take a boat across a river above a dam and walked for another few hours to get to the mountain. But this journey was more than a pleasure hike; it was a pilgrimage of remembrance. The whole mountain has become a monument to a terrible massacre that happened there. More than that, it is a site of resistance. On our way there, we paused 6 times at the behest of our guide Juan Uscap to mark the place where an act of violence took place. Uscap was just nine years old at the time of the massacre and was himself an eye witness. When all of us had made it to the top, his child came running to embrace Juan. In the hugs and smiles of son and father, we were reminded that "death is not the final word. Beyond every death…, there is resurrection, new life."[13]

A few hundred people of all ages spent the night together, observing Mayan and Christian rituals, telling stories to their children and grandchildren, breaking bread, and sharing tears together. All these culturally and religiously embedded acts of playing and praying were

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[9] Michael Hardt, "Foreword: Creation beyond Measure," in Antonio Negri, *The Labor of Job: The Biblical Text as a Parable of Human Labor,* translated by Matteo Mandarini (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2009), xii.

[10] Jesús Tecú Osorio, *Memoir of the Río Negro Massacres* (Ixmules, Guatemala City, 2012), 51-52. The emphasis mine. He is one of the survivors of the Río Negro Massacres.

[11] Luis Solano, a Guatemalan political and economic analyst, came to us on the first of our visit, to share such poignant analysis on these interlocking oppression and international involvement in violence in Guatemala. Ironically such oppression has been escalating since the peace accord of 1996. He told us that peace accord brought the international money grabbers into the country since Guatemala is stable enough to worth investing. Since the accord, Canadian mining companies of Gold Corp and others have been so comfortably (but violently) making astronomical profit by taking the gold, silver, and other natural resources.

[12] Joerg Rieger and Kwok Pui-lan, *Occupy Religion: Theology of the Multitude* (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 33.

[13] Parker Palmer, *The Active Life: A Spirituality of Work, Creativity, and Caring* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 140.

embodied as a concrete form of remembrance and resistance. Even though their land was stolen and some of their cultural treasure was drowned under the water, those gathered were determined not to let the perpetuators of the violence take their memory away. For this reason they are determined to remember the massacre and to "remember truthfully."[14] In fact, the act of remembrance is an act of faith which is both resilient and resistant.[15] Faith is an act performed by the body such that it comes to know. This bodily knowing, through the communal gesture of remembrance, is learned in this physical gathering.[16] "There is a critical connection between space and memory, a connection that refashions itself from one generation to the next."[17] The connection between space and memory creates "a counter-map to sanitized landscape of national forgetting."[18] The people on Pak'oxom Mountain were engaged in a bodily knowing acquired through their senses, while physically present in the very site of the massacre they seek to preserve in memory. This bodily knowing is also a communal knowing. Remembrance cannot be done alone. Here the site (physical, mental, social) interrelates and overlaps as it becomes a shaping force in life.[19] Re-mapping this site from stolen lives to lives shared is one way to unmask and unmake violence. Remembrance is, thus, not simply a commemorative act that marks and mourns for the past but also a transgressive act that corrects and crosses the past to shape the present. The pilgrimage to the mountain, and the practice of staying together through the night, by which the community remembered what happened is a primary source of a theology of resistance.

- 2) A Theology of Resistance as Relationship-Building

On March 8 2014, the delegation joined with the National Union of Guatemalan Women (UNAMG) in the march to mark the International Women's Day. We gathered in downtown Guatemala City and shouted together, "*Si a la vida digna, si a la justicia*!" (Yes to a dignified life, yes to justice!). Along with UNAMG, there were many different organizations and individuals who came out to "publicly condemn the actions of the government" that lead to "economic, political, and social crisis generated throughout the world by the patriarchal, neoliberal, racist, and colonizing system."[20]

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[14] Miroslav Volf, "Love's Memory: Redemptive Remembering," in *Compass Points: Navigating Vocation,* The 2002 Princeton Lectures on Youth, Church, and Culture (Princeton, NJ: Institute for Youth Ministry, 2002), 73.

[15] A Catholic indigenous woman from another tribe said, "Even though they took away and polluted our land, they cannot take our faith away." http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com/general/2014-delegation/ accessed July 9, 2014.

[16] Brett Webb-Mitchell, *Christly Gestures: Learning to be Members of the Body of Christ* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), 173.

[17] Mona Oikawa, "Cartographies of Violence: Women, Memory, and the Subject(s) of the 'Internment," in Sherene H. Razack, ed., *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002), 74.

[18] Ibid., 75.

[19] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 7, 120.

[20] http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com/general/unamg-press-release/ accessed June 20, 2014.

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What was most striking about this event was the heterogeneity of the gathering: those who were present were different. While there were many indigenous people, they were not at all homogenous but representative of different languages and cultures judging from their clothing that features unique patterns. There were also many different non-indigenous Guatemalans and non-Guatemalans. It was the "polydoxy" of heterogenous people, making the public performance of differences through movements, sounds, speeches, seeing, and even the silence in between movements that distinctively marked the march. [21] Some young people (artists) were making graffiti on the wall, while others were singing and dancing. Some were observing a Mayan ritual in silence, while others walked shoulder to shoulder in a gesture of solidarity. Threads of relationship were strong and visible as people from different organizations and groups, were hugging, laughing, and talking with each other. Though chaotic, disorderly, and loose, the march demonstrated a model of relationship-building in heterogenous ways, whose aim was to defend the right to life, land, water and also the dignity, history, and memory of this country.[22]

From the point of view of relationship building, a theology of resistance takes differences seriously. Relationship-building encourages people to work across differences. It does so without failing to return to the claim of sameness or unity. One of many challenges of relationship-building is the fear of those who are different. This fear is more than a feeling from a social interaction; it is deeply engrained at a philosophical and ideological level. Laurel Schneider puts it succinctly: "If to *be* is to *be the same,* then *to be other* is a frightful loss of existence."[23] This loss is frightening, indeed, so we create fear that breeds our capacity to exclude and erase others, leading to violence and the distortion of humanity. The remedy for the fear of the other as solidarity is a matter "of the heart and of faith."[24] In fact, a theology of resistance as relationship-building comes to full flower in "manifold institutions and relationality" fed by "the embodiment of love" that "hangs together" in the web of living interactions.[25] This "hanging together" is another name for relationship-building when the heart is moved and the faith takes root. It "occurs only through the actual presence of people who have the courage to be physically present, to *be* in a place of hunger, violence, or despair, who have the courage to really see, and the courage actually to sin against its prevailing ethos of disrespect and disregard."[26] Our group were physically present in that march when indigenous and non-indigenous Guatemalans cried out for dignity. Despite our limit (and privilege), we were touched by their courage to fight for

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[21] Catherine Keller and Laurel Schneider, eds. *Polydoxy: Theology of Multiplicity and Relation* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 2.

[22] http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com/general/unamg-press-release/ accessed August 6, 2014.

[23] Laurel Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism: A Theology of Multiplicity* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 88.

[24] Kathryn Anderson, *Weaving the Relationships: Canada-Guatemala Solidarity* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003), 199. She cites Marta Gloria de la Vega, a lawyer, who worked closely with Guatemalan Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú, who said, "Solidarity is revolutionary and is of the heart, of faith." It should be noted that Anderson, trained as an adult Christian educator, was the one who did revolutionary solidarity work with the people in Guatemala when she first encountered them during the World Council of the Churches' General Assembly in 1983, which gave birth to the BTS in 1988.

[25] Keller and Schneider, *Polydoxy,* 3-4.

[26] Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism,* 206.

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justice and life. Cognizant of our complicity (as visitors from Canada, the country that is home to the biggest and the most mining companies in the world), we were led to repent our systematic sins. We, in other words, turned to the God who was marching among us. This kind of relationship building is theological for it unmasks inhumane reality, while manifesting the face of God for "the indignity done to one person degrades the image of God in all of us."[27]

Relationship-building is communal. Indeed, it is this communitarianism or "communalism"[28] that fuels just relationships which in turn are critical in developing a theology of resistance. Earlier, it was argued that remembrance cannot be done alone. Stories (as a powerful medium of remembrance) cannot *be* stories if they are told by one person to no one else. To be a story it needs the tellers and hearers. In community, through relationships, stories and events are remembered. In this setting they shape people's identity, such as was the case with our Christian identity.[29] Thus, remembrance and relationship-building is fundamental to a theology of resistance. They go hand in hand. Both remembrance and relationship-building are a communal act; they create *koinonia* that in turn teaches and practices solidarity and responsibility.[30]

3) A Theology of Resistance as Reclaiming Space

In order to weave the final thread of a theology of resistance as reclaiming space we need to go back to Río Negro, Rabinal, where the massacre occurred. There is a school, called "the Inter-Cultural Bilingual Institute in the New Hope Foundation" established by Jesús Tecú Osorio, the survivor of the massacre.[31] The Foundation states its goals, "to share the bloody history that we have lived, and to make this story available in all of the education centres so that our children and grandchildren may know it and never forget it."[32] These goals combine the first and second threads of a theology of resistance where remembrance is taught by passing down wisdom and actualized through relationship-building in community by focusing on education for the children, the survivors of the massacre.

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[27] Anderson, *Weaving the Relationships,* 202.

[28] Boyung Lee, *Transforming Congregations through Community: Faith Formation from the Seminary to the Church* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2013), 12. She illuminates the linguistic uniqueness of Korean and Japanese, where "We" or "ourselves" are not the many separate individuals but refers to the coexistence of 'I' and 'You' in binding relational ways.

[29] No one alone can be Christian. Only through and in relationships can we be Christians. Michel De Certeau, Michael Smith, trans. *The Mystic Fable: The Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 231, 258, 293. I give thanks to Prof. Cho Min-Ah, who provided this reference.

[30] David Ng, "A Path of Concentric Circles: Toward an Autobiographical Theology of Community, " in Peter C. Phan and Jung Young Lee, eds., *Journeys at the Margin: Toward an Autobiographical Theology in American-Asian Perspective* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999), 102. In Cantonese, *koinonia* is translated as *tuen kai*: "solidarity" and "responsibility."

[31] He was awarded the Reebok Prize for Human Rights on December 11, 1996 for the work he did to bring justice to the massacre at Río Negro. This award came with USD $25,000 which allowed to create the foundation, focusing on education for those affected by political violence.

[32] Jesús Tecú Osorio, *Memoir,* the back cover.

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Despite the brutal history of violence, it was impossible not to notice the sign of life that was manifested by the children in this school. Their curriculum involved remembering their colonial history, claiming who they are (as Maya Achi people), and celebrating their languages, religions and cultures through intercultural and bilingual education.[33] Many students and teachers practiced Christianity mixed with their indigenous cultures and Mayan spirituality. While one may label it as syncretic (and even heretical), it was fully inculturated.[34] That is to say that their religion, culture and education are integrated. Their curriculum also involved critical thinking and leadership development by employing a pedagogy similar to bell hooks' "engaged pedagogy"[35] but extended to incorporate their Mayan cosmology and spirituality. This pedagogy is performed at the round table where a group of 4 students as peers mutually engage in discussion from colonial history to environmental injustice, agricultural science, Mayan mathematics, and indigenous medicine.[36] The curriculum is designed in a way that empowers them to think critically and listen attentively. Henry Giroux's advice is relevant here: we should not be too "concerned with simply motivating students to learn, but rather with establishing the conditions of learning that enable students to locate themselves in history and to interrogate the adequacy of that location as both a pedagogical and political question."[37] Not only the classroom but also surrounding of the school, located as it was on a hill surrounded by a wide-open space, gave a sense that this was a place where all kinds of teaching and learning could occur.[38]

One of the most powerful teaching moments for us was when two senior students were showing their project on toilet construction. We were led up on a hill to see the eco-friendly toilet that they had built out of mud and straw only. "Eco-friendly" is an understatement. It was a divine (meaning the spirit-guided) invention that took the needs of planet earth as seriously as their own need for survival. Water is precious to all of us. But for them, located in a dry and

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[33] This is critical in protecting Mayan people's educational and cultural rights as a way of making room for an intercultural bilingual education (IBE). Ruth Moya Torres, "Indigenous Education and 'Living Well': An Alternative in the Midst of Crisis," in Lois Meyer and Menjamín Maldonado Alvarado, eds. *New World of Indigenous Resistance: Noam Chomsky and Voices from North, South, and Central America* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2010), 219.

[34] Compartmentalizing religion from culture, viewing other non-European religious traditions from the standard of European Christianity, only endorses Eurocentric Christian colonial desire of control and conquest. Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (Louisville: WJF, 2005), 161-162.

[35] bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as a Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 13-22. Later she further develops a pedagogy of hope in *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (London/New York: Routledge), 2003.

[36] Guillermo Chen Morales, "Repress Ideas to Consolidate Nation-States… or Re-Create Ways of Thinking to Strengthen Balance," in Lois Meyer and Menjamín Maldonado Alvarado, eds. *Noam Chomsky and Voices from North, South, and Central America* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2010), 229.

[37] Henry A. Giroux, *Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 182.

[38] It has a few vegetable gardens where students with teachers grow things for learning primarily but then used for feeding and fund-raising. It has a chicken and a pig farm where students are responsible to monitor and keep tending the animals. It has a clinic where sick children not only come to rest and heal but also all students learn their indigenous herb medicine.

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volcanic land, water simply cannot be wasted. Without using a single drop of water, they had designed the toilet in a way that would separate urine and feces, using lime to create a well-balanced compost. This compost, free of smell (magically!), was then used to fertilize the vegetables. It was an example of an embodied, holistic education rooted in religiously, spiritually and culturally hybrid traditions and derived from a "disciplined community life and (from) a concern for all creatures."[39]

The school was spearheaded to develop a pedagogical model of holistic education where all forms of life are respected. The whole cycle of life, from seed, to consumption, to compost, is well lived in this school. This is not only true for the biological life of the plants and animals but also applies to humans. Among the teaching staff, for example, is an intern who had just graduated from the school and was now focussing on becoming a teacher. There was also a veteran teacher who had retired as a principal from another school and then joined this school as a volunteer. The cycle of beginnings, endings and new beginnings was evident. Here a journey of education is circular where the past is never over, and the future is already here. The past, present, and future are actualized simultaneously; while the present is haunted by the (violent) past, the future is unfolding as a reality of hope today. We should not forget that they are the children who witnessed an entire generation of their community almost completely wiped out. They *are* the survivors of the genocide. Life is closely connected (or close) to death in this school. However, life beyond death is also tangibly felt and experienced. As the name of the foundation represents well, it is the New Hope, to be born again like a phoenix rising out of the ash. The school ignites the burning desire to create a space and reclaim it as "their" space. This is perhaps one of the most powerful ways to resist evil and overcome death. By "re-creating"[40] (rather than creating from nothing) a space of life, by building a life-sustaining, life-recycling, and life-thriving community, the violence is unmade, not tomorrow but at this very moment. It is where God dwells, continuing to journey with the new generation of learners and teachers, leaders and activists who faithfully carry on a life-giving journey on earth with God and with one another.

3. Further Thoughts on a Theology of Resistance for Religious Education in Unmaking Violence

From this physically and spiritually charged trip, do two further lessons emerge: faith matters in unmaking violence. Hear a Mayan Christian woman's faithful testimony: "it is better to die in struggles than live cowardly. Mother earth gives us life. We live by her. That is why we

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[39] Maria Harris and Gabriel Moran, *Reshaping Religious Education: Conversations on Contemporary Practice* (Louisville: WJK, 1998), 115.

[40] "re-creating" needs a further articulation. Guillermo Chen Morales, who was the director general of the New Hope Foundation, wrote the following: "We try not to reinvent the wheel, but rather to take the elements of innovative methodologies and adapt them to our contexts. That is why we are calling it 're-creation,' as this means 'take all the best' and insert it and adapt it to indigenous ways of thinking. We are not trying to be purists, rather, we look for the most pedagogical and communitarian forms which are still true to our indigenousness." See her "Repress Ideas to Consolidate Nation-States… or Re-Create Ways of Thinking to Strengthen Balance," in *New World of Indigenous Resistance*, 227.

resist. God gives us strength to continue in this struggle."[41] The word for "faith" in the Hebrew language is *emunah,* derived from *aman*, meaning 'to nourish.' From her testimony and this etymology, faith is not a doctrinal formula or an intellectual set of beliefs but a source of nourishment that feeds to resist for life.[42] Practice also matters. The practice enables us to form "the habits of heart and mind essential for creating and maintaining community."[43]

  With this faithful practice, and through the practice of faith, a theology of resistance becomes an agenda for religious education. The practice of remembrance is a form of critical pedagogy as it is concerned with inquiry of the past by posing the question, what might it mean to take the memories of others into our lives and so live as though the lives of others mattered. Caring for others is not only political and personal, but fundamentally pedagogical because "the touch of the past is an encounter with difficult knowledge and the welcome given to the memories of others as a teaching."[44] The critical pedagogy for religious education is a "dance of the spirit,"[45] together with the other, the community, and God. The theology of resistance witnessed and articulated here is not a neat and static subject matter done outside raw and messy daily realties. Rather it affirms a sense of "teaching as a sacramental act"[46] where generations of ordinary people dare to learn and teach what happened and how holy and precious they are. In this act, a theology of resistance is something that is tangled with and in touch with the sweat, laughter, and tears of those who struggle for life,[47] as it unfolds in building a relationship and reclaiming a space of and for life.

  While there are other things that also help create a theology of resistance, this paper has proposed three, remembrance, relationship-building, and reclaiming space, as essential elements to such a theology based upon and emerged from a particular reality in Guatemala. These elements are not simply concepts to speculate or think about. They need to be practiced as nourishing acts that undo violence for the sake of the communities' well-being. These are a theological imperative as God revealed in the lives of the people in Guatemala.

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[41] http://www.breakingthesilenceblog.com/general/2014-delegation-blog-march-15/ accessed June 25, 2014.

[42] http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Meditations/By_Faith/by_faith.html accessed July 10, 2014.

[43] Scott Russell Sanders, *Hunting for Hope,* in bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 196-197.

[44] Roger Simon, *The Touch of the Past: Remembrance, Learning and Ethics* (New York: Palgrave/MacMillan, 2005), 9-10.

[45] Maria Harris, *Dance of the Spirit: The Seven Steps of Women's Spirituality* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989).

[46] Mary Elizabeth Moore, *Teaching as a Sacramental Act* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2004).

[47] Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1986), 36.

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The Peace which Passes Understanding

Abstract

Christian Religious Educators seeking to inculcate peaceful virtues in Christians and to shape peaceful communities may find assistance through revisionist philosophical and theological anthropologies. These emerging portraits of human being give primacy to the insights and habits of the human body as a source for knowing while diminishing the role of self-conscious reasoning toward free decision-making. If knowledge is (once again) a bodily phenomenon then the Christian liturgy (once again) becomes relevant for Christian formation. This essay uses the occasion of All Saints worship to explore how and why Christ's Peace may find bodily expression in the bodies of worshippers and in the gathered worshipping assembly.

Introduction

Christians profess that Jesus Christ manifests peace. Declaring him "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:16) in the manner of Isaiah's suffering servant, they look to Christ as arbiter of multiple expressions of peace. Christ's gifts of peace include variously: a feeling of inward peace on the part of believers; a constellation of virtues including compassion, gentleness, kindness, etc. (Galatians 3: 23) that together characterize believers as peaceable beings; a set of practices or means of grace shared between neighbors including forgiveness, reconciliation, and the positive extension of Christ's peace; and even a politics, a set of social relations in which all of creation may flourish under Christ's just peace.[1] I propose to explore the phenomenon of Christ's peace as a gift and expression of Christian worship. I suggest that not only may worshippers receive Christ's gifts of peace in worship, as members of Christ's body they may embody and therefore incarnate dimensions of it. By "embody" I intend to signal my interest in human ways of knowing and acting that push beyond those traditionally described as "rationalist," "cognitivist," and "decisionist" in pursuit of an epistemological and anthropological account that attends to capacities extending beyond those to which human beings self-consciously attend. These include the powerful roles played by habituation, imagination, aesthetics, and the desires of the heart in our motivations and actions. I contend that Christian worship, because it operates within and upon these embodied realms of human

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[1] For theologies of ecclesial peace, see Hauerwas, S. (1991). *The Peaceable Kingdom.* South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press; Yoder, J. (1994). *The Politics of Jesus.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

that often surpass understanding, offers an essential zone for formation and transformation in Christ's peace.

I am not naïve, however. It is at once sociologically and theologically undeniable that Christians often fail to receive or practice the peace that Christ offers by way of the liturgy. Because it cannot escape the mixture of motivations resident in its human actors, liturgy historically has excluded or marginalized persons or reified unjust asymmetries of power.[2] Put differently, liturgy can do violence to worshippers.[3] Nevertheless, because God calls Christians to worship and promises to be present as they gather, the possibility exists to acknowledge and confess sin and to receive and practice peace as a worshipping assembly.

I construct this account by way of, first, a short yet remarkable liturgical case study followed by analysis of the motivations and actions of the worshippers and the liturgy depicted therein, then conclude by offering a few implications for the practice of Christian religious education.

Liturgical Case Study

In the late 1980's a certain pointy-headed associate pastor successfully lobbied to offer a first ever All Saints Worship in an otherwise pietistic, ardently non-liturgical, southern United Methodist congregation. Between invited relations of the honored dead and carry-overs from the Wednesday night fellowship supper crowd the sanctuary welcomed nearly 300 worshippers that night. The service opened with glorious singing of "For All the Saints" led by the processing choir. Scripture readings pertaining to the occasion included equally powerful eschatological imagery from the book of Revelation, the "cloud of witnesses" in Hebrews 12, and the recitation of the Apostle's Creed which of course pointedly affirms Christian belief in the "communion of the saints." The junior associate's boss delivered a sermon at once pastoral and catechetical. Steering clear of notions of saintly veneration likely to inflame Protestant iconoclasts, he focused instead upon Christian exemplars and the cloud of witnesses mystically gathered with the worshipping assembly. He also anticipated the rite of Holy Communion by gesturing to the table while evoking the biblical image of "heavenly banquet" (Luke 14:15-24; Isaiah 25:6). Following the sermon the names of the honored dead were read aloud solemnly and at a deliberate pace—each spoken name accompanied by the toll of a deep bell and lighting a votive candle. At this point, sighs, moans, and other gestures of grief began to break out in different pockets of the assembly. Public grieving spread as more names were called. Some worshippers including some children responded to the grieving with expressions implying fear and anxiety. Others, however, moved closer to the grievers even reaching over pews to touch or pat their backs or grasp their hands. This pattern of interaction intensified as worshippers came to the chancel to receive Holy Communion. Indeed, it seemed to be catching. In the aisles, in the pews, and even around the

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[2] See for example, Cavanaugh, W. (1998). *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics and the Body of Christ.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell or Proctor-Smith, M. (2000). *In Her Own Rite: Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition.* Memphis, TN: Order of St. Luke Publications.

[3] Here I wish to distinguish between violence as a result of human sin and what some would call the necessary violence endemic to the Eucharistic rite itself. I do not take up the latter subject here.

communion rail, worshippers spontaneously hugged, patted, whispered to, and laid hands on mourners. Parents offered gestures of love, then guided their children to do the same. As the service concluded, many worshippers continued to offer and receive gestures and words of compassion and peace.

The service stirs my own heart all these years later for at least two reasons. First, it evoked a range of powerful if sometimes contrasting emotions thereby sealing it in my memory forever. Second, it seemed at the time and even more so now an occasion where Christ's Body *embodied* the gift of peace for and with members of that Body. Peace was more than an idea; it was incarnate.

Analysis

I confess that "analysis" seems presumptuous in light of what I believe to have been the redeeming action of a loving and mysterious God. If believers received or practiced peace on that occasion it was a gift of grace and a foretaste of God's Realm. It cannot be reduced to any of the variety of psycho-social, scientific, or cultural explanations I may wish to employ. Yet the true mystery is that God would choose to lovingly create, redeem, and sustain beings and fashion them capable of responding to God's initiatives of grace. Hence the "how" of human response is not sacrosanct. Indeed, better understanding of how we may be empowered by God toward peaceful ends has never seemed more urgent.

New Portraits of Human Being and Human Knowing

Scientists, philosophers, and theologians curious about the nature of human being have discovered many points of convergence over the past two decades. Something like consensus exists for a description of humans as embodied animals who share a genetic legacy and many behavioral traits with other animals. Among these is a bias toward homeostasis and therefore toward life. Driven by hunger or fatigue, for example, the bodily organism is recruited and enacted to satisfy those needs thereby returning it to homeostasis. Importantly, neither the other animals nor humans require consciousness much less a process of rational decision-making on order to seek bodily equilibrium. Our bodies, in effect, do our thinking for us. This is not a novel insight. The philosopher mystic Pascal described what he called a "conatus" in human beings, the desire not only to be, but to be well.[4]

By linking desire with what we moderns call flourishing Pascal takes his place among a great many scholars ancient and contemporary convinced of the primary role of emotion in human social intercourse and therefore in efforts toward moral life. (Pascal is also reported to have quipped, "The heart has its reasons, of which reason knows nothing" though I have not located sourcing.) Building upon Pascal, Augustine, and others,

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[4] The view of *conatus* discussed here is developed in Groome, T. H. (1999). *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry.* Eugene, WA: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 28-29.

contemporary philosopher James K. A. Smith asserts even more forcefully that we human beings are "lovers" more than thinkers.[5]

Current neuroscience continues to uncover biological evidence to support this portrait. For example, it has established that emotion is a phenomenon of the embodied organism, not merely a will-o-the-wisp deriving from we know not where, or a vestigial relic from our pre-rational days. Instead we now know that emotion is constructed out of organismic processes including brain stem and other brain region activation, hormone secretion, blood flow, skin conductance, and respiration rates, plus the resulting "felt" (but not necessarily by consciousness) bodily postures.[6] In addition, brain science has shown that emotion may arise within and enact human beings into dispositions to responsive action without consulting the consciously reflective capacities of the brain.[7] (Reasons of the heart motivate our protective care for lost children in the Target aisles.) Further still, emotion is shown to be an interactive phenomenon. My emotional state results from being moved by some other. This other may include external stimuli--a child's gesture of love, the news of a friend's death--or internal ones--memories of persons, places, or events. Since emotion is interactive, prompted by some other, some scholars even take the additional step to claim that it is inter-relationally constituted. In other words, social intercourse may be described as an affective dance. In a conversation, for example, I am moving you as you are moving me causing emotion to arise out of our shared interaction. Embodied emotion, therefore, is increasingly understood to underlie human behaviors as diverse and important as parent/infant bonding and social contagion.[8]

In addition, attacks upon Cartesian dualistic ontology and Kantian "pure reason" grow in number and precision not least because of scientific recognition that human capacities traditionally linked to reasoned cognition (logic, dispassion, subject-object distinction, free will, etc.) all are inescapably woven through the brain's emotion systems. Even the Cartesian illusion that our minds are free from bodily constraint is an ironic instance of evolution's continued interest in a body minding brain.

Metaphors in and of the Body

Influenced by this portrait, pragmatist philosopher Mark Johnson offers an account of the bodily origins and importance of metaphor. Long regarded as mere linguistic decoration adorning "real" knowledge (read "reason") Johnson suggests that the antecedents of metaphor reside in the body's perceptual experience of its environment. Given the configuration of the body (typically an erect carriage featuring two pairs of extremities

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[5] Smith, J. K. (2009). *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 46-70.

[6] See for example, Damasio, A. (1995). *Descarte's Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain.* New York, NY: Penguin Books

[7] See for example LeDoux, J. (1998). *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life.* New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

[8] See Stern, D. (1985). *The Interpersonal World of the Infant: A View from Psychoanalysis and Developmental Psychology.* New York, NY: Basic Books. For a more theologically tuned reading see Harak, S. (2001). *Virtuous Passions: The Formation of Christian Charactr.* Cascade, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers.

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attached to a torso, a head extending from the top of the torso bearing forward facing eyes and nose, etc.) sensory-motor experience is shaped by these realities. For example, an infant will experience itself being lifted out of the crib into mother's or father's arms hundreds if not thousands of times. This repeated experience gives rise to what Johnson calls "image schemas" including, in this case, the "container" schema (in and out) and the "source-path-goal" schema (to and from).[9] These activation patterns becomes imprinted in the form of neural maps, and subsequent experience ("in the stroller," "out of the house") is structured by and strengthens these schemas. Johnson emphasizes that image schema are "preverbal and mostly non-conscious…."[10]

Johnson proceeds to show how the body's image schema ground figurative language including metaphor. "Falling *in* love" or baptismal "immersion *in* Christ" are not ex nihilo linguistic inventions of the human mind, they are instead imaginative extensions of the body's prior experience interpreted through its image schemas. Similarly, at All Saints, to receive the exhortation to "run the race set before us " and to intercede for blessings upon those "who have finished their course in faith" in order that they (and we) may join the "great cloud of witnesses" is to extend the container schema and the source/path/goal schema metaphorically. The deceased are at first perceived (and those who mourn them may perceive themselves) as "out;" out of presence, out of relationship or, even outside of belief. The "company" and "cloud" images evoke and invite the contrary sense of "in," however. This "in" sense is strengthened through performance of Holy Communion which explicitly is named as a context for communion with the saints. Similarly, death and mourning may be perceived as barriers to fulfillment of the source-path-goal schema. Again, however, images of completed "journey" or "race" invite bodily reinterpretation of bodily experience. The service performs a series of counter claims accompanied by counter emotions and counter gestures (more about this below). In effect it declares that the deceased are not gone they are present in the assembly—only now as members of the company of saints. Nor have they failed to reach their goal; they have finished the race and joined the cloud of witnesses. For Johnson, because the origins of metaphors are bodily, it is in the bodies of those who experience them that they are "comprehended." In this case mourners may find themselves strangely moved by metaphor-induced feelings of reassurance, peace and hope in the midst of their lament.

Imitation and Formation of the Body

What about the gestures of compassion and peace the service prompted? Practical theologian Warren Brown is among those investigating the significance of mimesis for forming Christian character. Its biblical mandate not withstanding (I Corinthians 11:1), imitation has been devalued in a culture of self-authorizing individualism. More often than not imitation is qualified by the words "mere" or "cheap." Yet as many have noted, infants employ imitation to recruit the affections of their caregivers. According to Brown et al., "[t]he recognition of self-other equivalences is seen as the primary means by which we relate to and understand other humans—a precondition for development, not the

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[9] Johnson, M. (2007). *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 142-144.
[10] *Ibid.,* 144.

outcome of it."[11] Nor do humans abandon their penchant for imitation in adulthood. Neuroimaging studies demonstrate that certain motor neurons are activated when persons perform a task or assume a bodily posture. These same neurons also are activated when persons observe others perform tasks and assume postures.[12]

This "as if" phenomenon assists our understanding of what took place in the All Saints worship. When worshippers detected others in the assembly grieving, they registered similar body states consistent with pain and loss. Indeed a number of worshippers wept in solidarity with (imitation of?) their grieving brothers and sisters. Encounters with the suffering of others also induce empathy, however, and at least some worshippers reached out with gestures of compassion and love to those they knew to be suffering. What could account for these gestures? One possibility is that they too had experienced the loss of loved ones and felt the accompanying grief. Perhaps they also recalled how gestures of love and compassion from others had helped them endure their suffering. In addition, they may have been motivated by their Christian convictions, including in part by newly reactivated by the metaphors of eschatological hope. Put differently, we might assume that at least some in the sanctuary were exemplary and mature Christians and responded accordingly.

Not everyone in the assembly shared this set of life experiences, convictions, and virtues, however, yet by the conclusion of the service nearly all became involved. How to account for the rest? Brown, channeling Schleiermacher, offers a possible explanation: *"…action within groups strengthens the intensity of the benevolent motivations and sentiments of each individual in the group."* [13] In other words, through mimesis a contagion of goodness swept through the assembly. By way of non-conscious bodily imitation, many persons were being formed into the practices and affections of Christian life.

Ritualizing Bodies

What about the liturgy itself? How did its structure and trajectory influence its human participants? Here I offer only a few exploratory remarks. All Saints dares to tell an important truth about human beings—we all suffer; we all die. At the same time it audaciously juxtaposes human pathos to resurrection hope. Hence it invites the re-narration and re-interpretation of human experience. It does more than *tell* the story for internal consumption, however. With crucial support from poetic language and ritual symbols it *performs* that story. The spoken names, tolling bell and lighted candles purposefully locate assembled bodies in close proximity to death, a space most would prefer to avoid. In response, the church also ritualizes (bodily) its eschatological hopes. It sings "For All the Saints" in a major key not to deny the reality of death but to contradict its finality. Scriptures burst with life-giving metaphors and sermon proclaims the good news of Jesus as risen. The rite of Holy Communion invites persons to journey physically from their place of mourning to a table promising life, then taste and see this

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[11] Garrels, S., Reimer, K., & Brown, W. (2013). Redeeming Imitation: Virtue Formation by Memetic Compassion in Communities. In G. Stassen, R. Petersen, & T. Norton, *Formation for Life: Just Peacemaking and 21rst Century Discipleship.* Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 46.

[12] *ibid.,* 45-46.

[13] *ibid*, 47. Authors' italics.

living reality enacted. Through its thanksgiving prayer the meal is characterized as a feast in communion with the saints and amidst a great cloud of witnesses. Jesus Christ is praised as paschal lamb and resurrected, *living* host of this meal, the One through whom Christian community is constituted across space and time . Bodily gestures of affection and peace shared with other pilgrims en route to and from the table strengthen and confirm this hopeful reality. And it was *real*, not pretend. Ontologically speaking, Christ's Body was made manifest. It was constituted and caught in the act of participating in God's redemption of the world

Implications for Christian Religious Education

Evidence continues to mount suggesting how and why liturgical action forms persons and communities. Religious educators, long known for their faithful creativity, can assist congregations with liturgical design that seeks to enact the truths about God and the truths about human beings (and, indeed, all of creation), including especially their sufferings, longings, and hopes. In addition, awakened to significance of aesthetics for shaping faithful life, religious educators will invite persons to develop these capacities within themselves; to learn to create and appreciate figurative language; to sound the polyvalent depths of ritual symbols, to make or appreciate music, drama, and visual art; and to imagine personal and communal stories in light of the stories of God. In this case the educator is after more than deepened artistic appreciation. She is also seeking to create the conditions where persons may attend to the usually tacit, ordinarily non-conscious, and always bodily operations of meaning-making. As with all of God's gifts, peace runs through the body.

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Church and the Unmaking of Violence
in the Experience of Those with Disabilities

Abstract

Violence comes in many forms for people with disabilities. It arrives in unwelcomed looks, unsolicited touches and unwanted taunts, name calling, and discrimination. The church has a role to unmake the violent climate surrounding all created in the image of God, in particular, those with disabilities. This paper will address the role of the church in the violent worlds of those with disabilities from the perspectives of practical theology and Anabaptism. It is a task to be carried out from the pulpit, Sunday school classes, small groups, and community involvement.

"I have been concerned in recent years about war and peace. I am troubled by the wall that separates the powerful from the powerless. We are in a dangerous time when wars can break out and kill many. This leads me to ask, 'What is the role of our communities in this wounded world?' This question leads me to think about the cry of people with disabilities."[1] Jean Vanier wrote these words in response to a call for conversation around reconciliation. Being who he is, Jean Vanier naturally threw open the gates for the inclusion of all, including people with disabilities.

While the scope of this paper is not military conflict, it is looking at a war of sorts that is waged all around the world, in every community. Every day, people around the world are locked in battle being abused and victimized at the hands of violent perpetrators. This battle is often hidden in plain sight. It takes place in homes with trusted caregivers. My context has primarily been that of working with adolescents. In developing a response for unmaking violence in the worlds of adolescents, a process for the entire church was created. The ecclesial principles offered transcend any age group. What then is the role of our Christian communities in the wounded worlds of friends with disabilities indeed?

Statistics Regarding Abuse
Violence and abuse are realities in our world. In the United States in 2012, 678,810 unique children were substantiated as victims of abuse.[2] This is in distinction with the 3.8 million reports of abuse occurred in the United States (individual children may have multiple reports of abuse). For 2012, the unique victim rate works out to be 9.2 victims per 1,000 children in the population. This does not include the number of victims for whom no reporting took place.

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[1] Hauwerwas, Stanley and Jean Vanier. *Living Gently in a Violent World: the prophetic witness of weakness.* (Downers Grove, Il., IVP: 2008), p. 59.
[2] Department of Health and Human Services, *Child Maltreatment.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 2012, xi.

The good news is there has been a decrease in percentage of children being abused in recent years.[3] 2010 ushered in the reauthorization of The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), (42 U.S.C. §5101), where the existing definition of child abuse and neglect was retained: "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act, which presents an imminent risk of serious harm."[4] The four categories accepted by most states are as follows: physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and neglect.

As terrible as the rates of abuse are in the general population, the rate of abuse dramatically increases when one or more disabilities are present with an individual. Sullivan and Knutson set the standard for conversations regarding the prevalence of abuse within populations accounting for disability. Their first study occurred in 1998 in a hospital setting.[5] They found those with a disability were three times as likely to experience abuse as a typical child. Critiques of this study suggested the sample population was skewed, being a population already requiring medical attention. Addressing this critique, their subsequent study drew from the general population in a community.[6] With a sample size over 50,000, they found a 9% prevalence rate of abuse among non-disabled children, compared to a rate of 31% for disabled children. Therefore, children with impairments were 3.4 times more likely to be maltreated than those without.[7] The numbers are staggering. A child with a disability is more than three times as likely to experience violence in the forms of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, as well as neglect. This does not begin to address the violence experienced regularly in the form of unwelcomed looks, unsolicited touches, taunts, name calling, and discrimination.

The role of Christian communities
The unmaking of violence demands a multifaceted approach. For the Christian, this unmaking of violence, or peacemaking, is the core of the gospel. It is the hallmark of Jesus' presence with His disciples and so, too, should it be the hallmark of the church.[8] The role of the Christian community is to intentionally take steps toward the unmaking of violence. Peacemaking demands that we address how to help restore those who have been violated. Yet it is not just about those who are helped. Those who enter into such sacred work will be changed themselves. Peacemaking also demands that we speak out and act out so that others are not newly violated.

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[3] Department of Health and Human Services, ii.

[4] Ibid., ix.
For a look at the full report see http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment.

[5] P.M. Sullivan & J.F. Knutson, "The association between child maltreatment and disabilities in a hospital-based epidemiological study," *Child Abuse and Neglect* vol. 22, 1998, 271-288.

[6] P.M. Sullivan & J.F. Knutson, "Maltreatment and disabilities: a population based epidemiological study," *Child Abuse and Neglect* vol. 24, 2000, 1257-1273.

[7] K. Stalker & K. McArthur, "Child abuse, child protection and disabled children : a review of recent research," *Child Abuse Review*, vol. 21, 2012, 32.

[8] C. Norman Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord: Christology from a Disciple's Perspective.* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1990), 240.

Finally, peacemaking requires that we are present for victims and offenders, realizing all have fallen short of the glory of God. Just as Jesus did not retaliate after being crucified on the cross, we too are to imitate and offer restoration even in the face of the most egregious offense and violence. Offering restoration is not the same as condoning a violent act. Consequences for violent actions are appropriate. Even still, proclaiming the prophetic call for the church as peacemakers is the true and right action.

Restoration: an Anabaptist response to violence.
We need to admit that we have not seen what is right in front of us. We need to open our eyes and ears to abuse and violence in our communities for people with disabilities. Those most impacted within the community for those with disabilities must have their stories heard. Once we are aware of their often violent world, we can advocate for change. Too often we stop at advocacy for the abused. Prevention too is a vital part of peacemaking. Finally, restoration is the unique privilege of the church calling for restoration of the individual as well as the community.

Witness: What it means to be human
How we decide what it means to be human helps to unpack the acceptance of violent behavior. Richard Dawkins recently tweeted that the only ethical choice a pregnant woman has upon learning her fetus has Down's syndrome is to abort.[9] While Dawkins followed up his tweet with a longer nuanced response, he ends in the same place: people with disabilities bring suffering for themselves and others.[10] He contends they are a liability on society. While not everyone agrees that those with disabilities are to be killed, they are still often seen as less than human. Additionally, the inability or reduced ability to articulate abuse they have experienced is viewed as an open door for those looking for victims.

The Christian community should offer an embodied theology. This theology articulates clearly the full humanity of those with disabilities, including their disabilities. In so doing it undoes a Docetic view where those with disabilities are seen as only appearing human, but are, in fact, sub-human, unworthy of the same rights and dignity offered to their typical peers. A theological anthropology that is anything less than inclusive of *all* people paves the way for violence. A theological anthropology must be an embodied theology where the body is viewed as unified, inseparable from the soul for a human to exist.

Embodied theology is critiqued as being an obstacle to fellowship with God. The critique says when we retain our identity via our particularities, ability included, we sublimate God's work in our lives. The rallying cry of this perspective is Galatians 3:28 where Paul declares 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.' Peter Rollins explains: 'This is not an expression of 'both/and,' in which we retain our identity when located in the new community of believers, but rather a neither/nor,' where we put aside those identities…what if the church Paul envisages in Galatians

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[9] Richard Dawkins. "Abortion & Down Syndrome: An Apology for the Letting Slip the Dogs of Twitterwar." Richard Dawkins Foundation. https://richarddawkins.net/2014/08/abortion-down-syndrome-an-apology-for-letting-slip-the-dogs-of-twitterwar/, (accessed on 13 September 2014).
[10] Dawkins, "Abortion and Down Syndrome"

is one that calls into question the socio-symbolic identity of his readers'?[11] Rollins expresses concern that such an idea does violence to our particularity. But for Rollins, this violence is warranted and he believes were we to hold our particularities more loosely and realize they ultimately are to be released, the violence shifts focus to the injustices in the world.

This notion of sublimating all for a primary identity in Christ sounds so Christian! The difficulty is it also tells people it simply does not matter that God took the time to make you as you are: short/tall, dark or light, male or female, able bodied or disabled, that we are all just indiscriminate reflections of Christ. Rollins grounds this in kenosis, the theological term referring to "the 'becoming nothing' of Jesus in his life as a servant, as one who stood outside the power structures of his age."[12] He invites Christians into corporate worship as a kenotic movement "where people are invited to suspend their interpretations of the world."[13] While this thought is admirable, the elimination of particularities stems from a privileged position.[14] People with disabilities are daily reminded this world was not created for them. There is no illusion of privilege. Buildings are inaccessible, documents difficult or impossible to fill out, transportation blocked; the environment itself communicates that this world is for the typically abled. There is no room not to think about the particularity which they inhabit. For those with disabilities, the disability is both too important and not important enough to define them. It is an element of who they are but it is indeed an element. It cannot be cast aside without denying who they are.

Embodied theology must also be lived out, requiring actual, real time interactions with one another. It must be more than creedal statements or vague declarations. The church needs more than proximity to those with disabilities for violence to be prevented. Arne Vetlesen argues, "there is no necessary correlation between human proximity and moral conduct…Proximity interacts with a number of factors; it does not by itself bring about, does not by itself account for, moral conduct or lack of it."[15] We in the church must not only talk about including others, we must actually do so. Miroslav Volf discusses the inclusion of others at length in *Exclusion and Embrace.* As we seek to live an inclusive embodied theology we must understand "the will to give ourselves to others and 'welcome' them, to readjust our identities to make space for them, is prior to any judgment about others, except that of identifying them in their humanity."[16] Moving relationships from hypothetical declarations to proximity to embrace is a process but one necessary to unmake violence. Further, Volf assumes "that the struggle against deception, injustice, and violence is indispensable" as the will to embrace becomes a priority.[17]

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[11] Peter Rollins, "The Wordly Theology of Emerging Christianity,*" Church in the Present Tense: a candid look at what's emerging*, Kevin Corcoran ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2011), 25.
[12] Rollins, 26.
[13] Ibid., 26.
[14] Amy Jacober "Adolescent Identity Development," in *Christian Youth Work in Theory and Practice: a handbook,* edited by Sally Nash and Jo Whitehead (London: SCM Press, 2014), 93.
[15] Arne Johan Vetlesen, *Perception, Empathy, and Judgment: an inquiry into the preconditions of moral performance,* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1994), 275.
[16] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 29.
[17] Volf, 29.

The move from proximity to embrace establishes reciprocal relationships where those with disabilities aren't just tolerated but truly integrated. Their stories and testimonies both influence, and are influenced by, the life of the community. We must listen to the stories of friends with disabilities. Embrace may be seen when the testimony offered by a person with a disability is claimed as part of the community's testimony, rather than something outside of the community. Testimony is believed and not dismissed. The one giving and the ones receiving the testimony must reflect, and be changed as a result of the power of their story. The stories of those closest to people with disabilities also need to be heard and woven into the community. The depth of love, commitment, heartache, alienation, and tenacity remind the community not only that they are needed in the lives of others but they may too draw strength and be changed. It is in the testimonies, the witness of those close by that personal connections take place for many within the Christian community.

Advocate: To Speak for another
Few people would say they are comfortable with a teenager with Down's syndrome being raped but would not be moved to take action toward prevention. Once they know a teenager with Down's syndrome however, hear her story, and embrace her in community, her witness has the potential to change everything. Advocacy for one individual impacts circumstances for all. The advocacy the church is willing to do for one of her own, has the power to change the attitudes and values of numerous people. Advocacy for one you know is often the starting point.

What happens when I have no personal connection? When violence is not committed against me or someone I know? Listening is the first step in engaging when you are not personally impacted; allowing this to shape you. As embrace takes place, advocating for peace in the lives of people with disabilities. This advocacy needs to come from the church as a whole, including those directly and indirectly impacted by disability. The presence of the gospel requires the presence of peace. Biblical peace or shalom is much more robust than the absence of conflict. Perry Yoder offers a useful paradigm in which shalom requires three elements; 1) physical well being, including adequate food, shelter, clothing, and wealth, 2) a right relationship between and among people, and 3) the acquisition of virtue especially honesty and moral integrity.[18] Peace is not a passive state of being. It is a volitional act. It brings about restoration through means of justice. "God's justice makes things right by transforming the status quo of need and oppression into a situation where things are as they should be… peacemaking means working for the realization of shalom justice which is necessary for shalom."[19] "Justice in the sense of shalom presupposes God's intent for the community or society. It is in community where the weak are to be strengthened by the strong. It is in community where those who lack are provided for by those with plenty. It is the ultimate community to be restored to right relationship with God."[20]

Prevent: To Deny Opportunity for future abuse
Prevention means speaking out before anything happens. It means saying, from the pulpit, in

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[18] Perry Yoder, *Shalom: The Bible's Word for Salvation, Justice and Peace* (Winnepeg, MB: Faith and Life Press, 1987), 130.
[19] Yoder, 34.
[20] Amy Jacober, *A Practical Theology of Youth* Ministry (PhD dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2003), 219.

Bible study, songs, and blogs that abuse is unacceptable. The way of Jesus is an active peacemaking. It means empowering potential victims to know they do not deserve to be treated in violent ways. It means letting potential offenders know violent actions toward anyone, people with disabilities included, are unacceptable. It means getting involved with our communities, being active in policymaking that protects the human dignity of all. Peacemaking is an active process. "Some are still concerned that injustice may flourish until forceful action is taken and are not yet fully persuaded that nonviolent intervention is as effective as its proponents claim. Others till confuse pacifism with "passivism."[21] If shalom, as described by Yoder, is to take place it must be intentional. The final four steps of Glen Stassen's seminal work *Just Peacemaking* offers pragmatic insight.[22] In the first Stassen says we must "seek human rights and justice for all, especially the powerless, without double standards. The lack of human rights is itself the absence of peace, holistically understood as shalom."[23] Violence comes when human rights have been ignored or deprived. Secondly, he cites "the need for realistic acknowledgement of the vicious cycles we are caught up in, and in our need to participate in a realistic peacemaking process."[24] The third step is "instead of judgmental propaganda, we can acknowledge to others that we have caused hurt and want to take actions to do better."[25] Stassen's final step is to "participate in groups with accurate information and a voice in policy-making."[26] Each makes a little move toward unmaking violence.

Restore: To Make Whole Again
Restoration is a necessary step in making peace. This restoration manifests in our relationship with God, our relationships with others, and in the restoration of our very identities. Victims of violence need restoration on multiple levels. Foremost, they need their own wholeness restored and a reminder of their worth and dignity as human beings. They also need restoration to take place between themselves and God. The church is the tangible reminder for victims of violence that God is on the side of the disenfranchised and oppressed. The church should be the one place where there is no doubt that anyone of any ability will find embrace and community.

The goal of justice too can be that of restoration. While justice is more often known as retributive, attributive, or distributive, there is another option. Restorative justice holds that victims and offenders have the possibility of transformation in their lives. "Retributive theory believes pain will vindicate, but in practice that is often counterproductive for both the victim and offender. Restorative justice theory…argues that what truly vindicates is acknowledgement of victims' harms and needs, combined with an effort to encourage offenders to take responsibility, make right the wrongs, and address the cause of their behavior. By addressing this need for vindication in a positive way, restorative justice has the potential to affirm both victim

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[21] Stuart Murray, *The Naked Anabaptist : the bare essentials of a radical faith* (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2010), 128.

[22] The first three steps of Stassen's peacemaking process are focused on interaction with offenders and / or the international community. They are less directly applicable in this situation.

[23] Glen Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: transformed initiatives for justice and peace.* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 103.

[24] Stassen, 104.

[25] Ibid., 107.

[26] Ibid., 109.

and offender and to help transform their lives."[27] Holocaust survivor David Gil set his work about restoration in the realm of policy. He believed if Christians would actually make peace as Jesus did, restoration would be inevitable. Gil argues "Were critical consciousness to spread widely among significant majorities of people, from local to global levels, humankind could eliminate prevailing conditions of injustice and oppression."[28] This means there will be moments of extremely difficult terrain to navigate. There is a high rate of correlation *and* causation between those who have been abused and then become abusers themselves. In this sense they are both victim and offender. In some cases, the community must navigate the process of restoration including consequences.

Conclusion
Even in the unmaking of various types of violence, we ourselves may do violence if we do not witness the abuse of, and advocate for, our friends with special needs. Their lives are fraught with violence in overt and subtle ways. Even when we accept them into our communities, we must open our eyes wider and unstop our ears to see and hear the abuse in which they live. Then, when we have become witnesses, we can begin to unmake violence in their context with them. Because in order to unmake violence everywhere, we must include those who literally may not be able to speak for themselves.

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[27] Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice* (Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 2002), 59.
[28] David Gil, *Confronting Injustice and Oppression: concepts and strategies for social workers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 49.

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Re-membering the Body of Christ
Dis-membering the Pornographic Body: A Ritualistic Approach to Religious Education for Empathy Through the Body of Christ in Contrast to the Pornographic Body

Abstract   This paper seeks to answer how religious educators could contribute to educating empathy. Approaching the Body of Christ and the Pornographic Body from the perspective of ritual studies, I first argue, following Susan Griffin and others, that while pornography is a ritual which tends to reduce its' viewers' empathetic attitudes toward other bodies, the Eucharist is a starkly contrastive ritual in the sense that participating in it would increase empathy toward one another, thereby reducing violence of whatever forms, let alone sexual one. Building on this contrastive framework between the pornographic body and the body of Christ, I will finally explore how participating in the Eucharist could cultivate empathetic attitudes among its participants.

Introduction

This paper argues that, from the perspective of ritual, while watching pornography tends to reduce its viewers' empathy toward other bodies (especially those of women), participating in the Eucharist runs counter to that effect, i.e., increasing empathy toward other bodies. Overall, the paper is divided into three parts: The first part aims to show how pornography as a ritual brings about the empathy-reducing effects on its viewers, whereas the second part contends that the Eucharist is a ritual that images God, whose Incarnation in Jesus Christ means God's empathizing with humanity, naturally calling for God's people to be more empathetic with others. In the last part, the paper ends with suggesting how participating in the Eucharist could be geared toward its original intent of empathizing with the suffering members of humanity.

Pornography as Empathy-Reducing Ritual

Pornography as Dehumanizing Ritual
Much social-scientific research tends to find out that pornography dehumanizes and degrades the body, primarily that of woman. According to the studies conducted in the 70s and 80s, D. Zillman reports that men who were continually exposed to pornography were more inclined to agree with statements such as "A man should find them, fool them, fuck them, and forget them," "A woman does not mean no unless she slaps you," and "If they are old enough to bleed, they are old enough to butcher."[1] In more recent studies of

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[1]. D. Zillman, "Effects of Prolonged Consumption of Pornography," in *Pornography: Research Advances and Policy Considerations.*, ed. D. Zillman and J. Bryant (Hillsdale, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1989), 155.

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contemporary pornography called *gonzo*, more degrading acts of women's bodies, are becoming increasingly more common.[2]

Worse yet, what such degrading acts have in common is that there is an element of body-punishing, and the female performers in these films are more often than not being called "cunts, whores, sluts, cumdumpsters, beavers, and so on."[3] The reason such strategy is adopted is that once woman's humanness is not recognized, their bodies are no longer recognized as human bodies, which now hold little values as human bodies worthy of dignity and respect, resulting in a sort of the *disappearance* of their bodies.[4]

Although this is not to conclusively corroborate the direct correlation between pornography and violence, one thing that has to be taken account into for every such research is that pornography is a set of moving, or still, images, and it is well-recognized among scholars that images are powerful enough to affect the viewers' lives.[5] In this regard, one could still argue quite persuasively that pornography has a degrading element about women's bodies.

Torture and Pornography

Now that I have identified the degrading and dehumanizing elements toward women's bodies in contemporary pornographic images, what kind of influence would pornography have on its viewers, and under which mechanism? William T. Cavanaugh's insights into the body as the *ritual* site is quite helpful in this regard, "for in torture the body of the victim is the *ritual* site where the state's power is manifested in its most awesome form."[6] Just as Cavanaugh calls the body the *ritual* site where the state's power is manifested in its most awesome form through its imagination[7], Susan Griffin also understands the pornographic body in the context of ritual: "For above all, pornography is ritual. It is an enacted drama that is laden with meaning, which imparts a vision of the world. The altar for the ritual is a woman's body. And the ritual which is carried out on this altar is the desecration of flesh. Here, what is sacred within the body is degraded."[8] At this point, an interesting parallel is formed between Cavanaugh and Griffin. Namely,

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[2]. Dines gives a detailed description of how degrading the contemporary pornography has become. I have intentionally omitted some of the most graphic acts that are commonly enacted in pornography due to its extremely graphic nature. For more descriptions, see Dines' book *Pornland*.

[3]. Gail Dines, *Porland: How Porn has hijacked our Sexuality* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2013), 64.

[4]. Ibid.

[5]. James K.A. Smith's description of the 'religion of the local shopping mall' in his *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), provides a good example of how images lead people to imitate what are presented:"Unlike the flattened depictions of saints one might find in stained-glass windows, here is an array of three-dimensional icons adorned in garb that-as with all iconography-inspires us to be imitators of these examples. These statues and icons embody for us concrete images of "the good life." Here is a religious proclamation that does not traffic in abstracted ideals or rules or doctrines, but rather offers to the imagination pictures and statues and moving images. While other religions are promising salvation through the thin, dry media of books and messages, this new global religion is offering embodied pictures of the redeemed that invite us to imagine ourselves in their shoes-to imagine ourselves otherwise, and thus to willingly submit to the disciplines that produce the saints evoked in the icons." This is also my argument that will be made later in this paper.

[6]. William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1998), 30.

[7]. Ibid.

[8]. Susan Griffin, *Pornography and Silence*. (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publisher, 1981).

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Cavanaugh's torture and Griffin's pornography, both as rituals, operate under a similar mechanism to each other: "torturers (the pornographer) humiliate the victim (woman and her body), exploit his(her) human weakness through the mechanism of pain, until he(she) does take on the role of filth, confessing his(her) lowliness."[9] Cavanaugh stresses the fact that the tortured eventually give in to the new reality pictured by the imagination of the state, conceding that they are lowly and filthy, while in reality they are not. Likewise, the female pornographic performers, by being called whores, cunts, and all kinds of degrading nicknames, might as well concede to another reality where they are treated just as lowly and filthy as the tortured in Cavanaugh.

In all these, the ritualistic nature of torture and pornography enlists its victims to another reality by having them *perform* that reality. This is why Griffin calls pornography an enacted *drama*, for in such drama through performance an embodiment of certain values takes place, and Dines argues from her interviews with people that men watching porn tend to imitate how women and their bodies are treated in pornography upon their girlfriends or partners, eventually resulting in men's "find(ing) it increasingly difficult to separate the two [the body of their girlfriend and the porn woman's body]."[10] This way the viewers of pornography also *perform* the imagination of the pornographer, thereby participating in the ritual of pornography, if you will. Again, this does not necessarily mean that men watching porn act violently toward their girlfriends when they have sex; still, it is likely that "pornographic images create a world that is at best inhospitable to women, and at worst dangerous to their physical and emotional well-being."[11]

Dissolving of Empathy

Now that I have looked into the nature of pornography as body-degrading ritual for its performers and viewers alike, I am ready to argue that pornography's violent treatment of the body results in less empathetic attitudes toward human bodies by making those bodies *disappear*. In the case of Cavanaugh, the victims' bodies no longer belong to the victims themselves, but they are the possessions of the state, so "the state seized bodies and made them emit signs, play roles in a drama, speak the regime's words in order to make ritually present the omnipotence of the state."[12] In this way, the bodies of the tortured had disappeared by having turned into mere state property. There is no human autonomy and dignity with these bodies; therefore, these are not human bodies, at least in the eyes of the state. For Griffin, such confiscating of bodies as objects also happen in pornography, for "she is *a thing*"; therefore, her body is doubtless a thing also,[13] with which Dines, as has been shown above, cannot agree more.[14]

Hence, when the body *disappears*, violence against it seems to be made easier. However, in terms of education and formation, how do we teach against this? It is at this

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[9]. parenthesis added to represent Griffin's understanding of pornography as ritual.

[10]. Dines, *Pornland*. 91. Although I only quoted how this primarily affects men, since the vast majority of pornographic films still portray men's overpowering women, Dines also notes that women are increasingly becoming the active viewers of pornography.

[11]. Ibid., 85.

[12]. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist.*, 70.

[13]. Griffin, *Pornography and Silence*, 33.

[14]. See footnote 17

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juncture that Catholic mystic Edith Stein sheds an interesting light on the relationship between the body and empathy. Namely, empathy is possible only through the body. For the purpose of this paper, this might convey that when the body *disappears*, meaning that people perceive human bodies no longer as such, then empathy toward those with the disappeared bodies also tend to decrease. Inversely, when the body appears, empathy is produced. To begin with, Stein defines empathy in the following: "Empathy, which we examined and sought to describe, is the experience of foreign consciousness."[15] In order to experience foreign consciousness, Stein emphasizes the existence of I as subject. "The experience which an "I" as such has of another "I" as such looks like this.

Such experience of foreign consciousness, however, cannot happen except in the following two dimensions: *communal* and *bodily*. First, empathy is communal in that "the subject of empathizing experience... is not the subject of empathizing, but another."[16] Second, empathy is *bodily* in that both "I" and "other person" need mediating "bodies" in order for empathy to be possible. For example, "He who does not see that another is cold by his 'goose flesh' or his blue nose, having first to consider that this discomfort he feels is indeed a 'chilliness,' must be suffering from."[17] In this light, the Eucharist, as communal-bodily ritual, is an excellent candidate for cultivating empathy, and that is where I am headed in the next section.

Eucharist as God-imaging, Empathy-Cultivating Ritual

Having examined what pornography as ritual does to its performers as well as its viewers, namely, reducing empathy for other human beings by treating their bodies no longer as such, I am proposing that the Eucharist is a starkly contrastive ritual in the sense that participating in it would increase empathy toward one another, thereby reducing violence of whatever forms, let alone sexual one. First, I will argue that the Eucharist is a God-imaging ritual, in the sense that God's salvific works in Christ, beginning with the Incarnation, are re-enacted as an invitation to all the participants; second, participation in the Eucharist will increase empathy among its participants.

Eucharist as God-imaging Ritual
At its root, the Eucharist is thoroughly Trinitarian. While it is Jesus Christ whose flesh and blood is shared among the participants, the sender (God the Father) and the sanctifier (the Holy Spirit) are equally at work. While Jesus' earthly life, including his crucifixion and resurrection, has revealed God's self-giving to us, the intention of Jesus' institution of the Eucharist is perhaps best expressed in his own words, "Do this in remembrance of me."[18] In other words, not only is the Eucharist thoroughly Trinitarian, but also it is an act of remembering all the salvific works of the Triune God. Here the original word of "remembrance," argues Joel Green, is directly calling for some sort of action in response to what is being remembered.

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[15]. Edith Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy* (Washington, D.C.: ICS Publications, 1989), 11.
[16]. Ibid., 10.
[17]. Ibid., 61.
[18]. New Revised Standard Bible.

The notion of remembrance is pivotal to the celebration of the Passover and cannot be limited to the idea of cognitive recall of a prior occurrence. In the biblical tradition, cognitive (or affective) recall is often triggered by verbal communication for that purpose, and this provides the impetus for some response or action. In a related sense, "remembrance" is often employed with the sense of "the effect of the recollection of the past for present or future benefit."[19]

Put differently, in order for the Eucharistic participants to be faithful to "remembering" Jesus' self-giving, they cannot help responding to Jesus with their whole persons, for Jesus' self-giving was the giving of Jesus' whole person. This may also shed light on the nature of the Eucharist as imaging who God is, for the Scripture bears witness to Jesus' being "the image of the invisible God."[20] If the Eucharist is intended to be a ritual for which Jesus instituted as the "remembrance" of his whole person and work, and if Jesus is, as the Scripture testifies, the image of the invisible God, then it would not be too much to say that the Eucharist is a God-imaging ritual. In other words, Christ came on earth as the image of the invisible God, and the Eucharist is Christ-instituted ritual that would fully convey who Christ is and what Christ still does to and for the world in the context of the triune divine life, to which all the Eucharistic participants are perennially invited.

Now, while this invitation is *spiritual* in nature, its mode of invitation does not neglect the *physical*; rather, it cannot be done apart from the physical, for Jesus urged all his followers to eat and drink his flesh and blood, i.e., bread and wine. Here I will argue that the body of Christ appears as a spectacle in the Eucharist, resulting in the divine empathy for humanity.

Eucharist as Empathy-Cultivating Ritual

In undertaking his erudite yet practical exposition of the sacramental theology and spirituality, Alexander Schmemann begins with the simple axiom which he borrowed from Ludwig Feuerbach, "Man is what he eats,"[21] for "man must eat in order to live; he must take the world into his body and transform it into himself, into flesh and blood. He is indeed that which he eats, and the whole world is presented as one all-embracing banquet table for man."[22] Here, in terms of what is happening to the person who eats, eating symbolizes two things: disappearance of the eaten, and union between the eater and the eaten. In this respect, eating in the Eucharist might well have been understood among pagans as cannibalistic (and therefore violent) when it was first instituted among the early Christians. However, just because bread and wine symbolized as Jesus' flesh and blood are consumed by the Eucharistic participants, this does not mean that Jesus' body would *disappear* in the

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[19]. Joel Green, *The Gospel of Luke.* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 762.
[20]. New Revised Standard Bible.
[21]. Ibid., 1. Many theologians and religion scholars also begin from this particular axiom in their explorations of the relationship between food, the Eucharist, and life. For further inquiry besides Schmemann's book, see Norman Wirzba's book *Food and Faith*, which was previously quoted. Also, see Angel F. Mendez-Montoya, *The Theology of Food: Eating and the Eucharist*, (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Co., 2012), and Ann W. Astell, *Eating Beauty: The Eucharist and the Spiritual Arts of the Middle Ages.*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).
[22]. Ibid.

sense I have argued above. Rather, Jesus' body appears in the bodies of the Eucharistic participants. Regarding this, Ann W. Astell makes an interesting observation on the differences between cannibalism and Jesus' offering of his body.

> While cannibalism eats for the negation of the other, Jesus' offering his flesh and blood would not result in the negation of any party. This is because the eating and drinking of Jesus' flesh and blood is not one-way, but two-ways: "the human communicant eats God, and God eats him or her to achieve a mutual in-one-anotherness, which is the precondition for *emphatic understanding*," for "whereas cannibalism aims at the loss of the Other(either through the Other's absolute destruction or through his absorption into the eater), Communion aims at the loss of the "I" in either the "you" or the "we.""[23]

When the life of Christ enter those of the Eucharistic participants as their own, it is the body of Christ that the participants are now showing to the world as a kind of spectacle, both individually and corporately. With regard to this, Cavanaugh spoke of martyrdom as an example of this spectacle, for martyrs follow the way of Christ, thus revealing to the world the body of Christ.[24] Likewise, he argues that the Eucharist does the same as martyrdom by means of mentioning a threefold distinction of Christ's body, i.e., how the body of Christ has *appeared* in the world: 1) the historical body, meaning the physical body of Jesus of Nazareth; 2) the sacramental body, or Christ as present in the Eucharistic elements; 3) the ecclesial body, that is, the church.[25] What these three distinctions of the body of Christ commonly assume is the sheer physicality of such body, and when the body as physicality appears, readers cannot help being reminded of the earlier points of Edith Stein, who argues that "empathy is *bodily* in that both "I" and "other person" need mediating "bodies" in order for empathy to be possible."[26] At this point, astute readers should notice that this has everything to do with God's intention in the Incarnation of Christ.

When God-self sends Christ in to the world, Scripture testifies God's intention of doing so would be "we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin."[27] In other words, when Jesus put on the human body, part of the divine intention consists in God's putting God-self in the shoes of human life, for having a body is absolutely necessary for God to empathize with humanity, in all her pain, joy, agony, and etc. The Eucharist is a ritual through which people are turning themselves in to be part of the body of Christ, with full of empathy for the world, let alone for the members of his body. On the one hand, this is why Apostle Paul states in 1 Corinthians with regarding to having empathy amongst the members of the body, "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if

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[23]. Ibid, 11.

[24]. Cavanaugh also spoke of the differences between martyrdom and torture as revealing whose story it retells, either that of Christ or of the state. For more explanation, see Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist*, 58-68.

[25]. Ibid., 212.

[26]. See the previous explanation on Edith Stein in page 13.

[27]. New Revised Standard Version.

one member is honored, all rejoice together."[28] On the other, empathizing with Christ as part of his body means for Christians empathizing with whatever Christ has sympathy for, i.e., this world. Incidentally, this becomes a very effective antidote to the effects of pornography as having little empathy toward other bodies.

Participating in the Eucharist as Empathy-Cultivating Formation

In this last section, I will suggest two possible directions in order for the Eucharist to play the role of empathy-cultivating formation. First, through the Eucharistic participation we need to focus upon training our *desires* for empathy. Second, the Eucharistic participation should pay closer attention to what Jesus' Incarnation means for its participants.

First off, approaching the Eucharist as empathy-cultivating formation may not mean that the Eucharist is some kind of wonder drug; Rather, a proper perspective on the Eucharistic possibility of educating for empathy would be, as Cavanaugh shrewdly points out, *disciplined practices*. St. Cyprian speaks of Christian *disciplina* as "inscribing the body so as to resist the encroachment of worldly powers against the church,"[29] which, according to James K. A. Smith, cannot be imagined apart from the training of desires, for humans are shaped according to what they love, and the ritualistic training of desire is one of the important means of religious education.[30] For the ritualistic formation as religious education has much to do with forming our desires so as to channel them to a certain direction.   Smith describes how ritualistic formation happens in terms of training human desire.

> Liturgies-whether "sacred" or "secular"-shape and constitute our identities by forming our most fundamental desires and our most basic attunement to the world. In short, liturgies make us certain kinds of people, and what defines us is what we *love*. They do this because we are the sorts of animals whose orientation to the world is shaped from the body up more than from the head down. Liturgies aim our love to different ends precisely by training our hearts through our *bodies*. They prime us to approach the world in a certain way, to value certain things, to aim for certain goals, to pursue certain dreams, to work together on certain projects.[31]

Not only is this true of the Eucharist, but also of pornography. In fact, as has been made explicit, the desires formed through viewing and performing pornography are very self-centered, taking little of other bodies, and paying attention to gratifying the desires of the self, thus atomistic and un-empathetic. On the contrary, the desires formed through the

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[28]. New Revised Standard Version.

[29]. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist*, 237.

[30]. Mary Elizabeth Moore's *Teaching as a Sacramental Act* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrims Press, 2004) addresses the relationship between worship and religious education. This book would be quite helpful for whoever is interested in the matrix of worship and education.

[31]. James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 25.

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Eucharistic participation are, among other things, empathetic, which needs to be highlighted more. While this paper would not go into specific pedagogical know-how, the implications for the Eucharistic pedagogy of desire are open to further reflection.

Second, the Eucharistic participation should be attentive to Jesus' Incarnation. This tendency of neglecting Jesus' Incarnation is, according to Catherine LaCugna, is inherent in the church's historical treatment of the humanness of Jesus. LaCugna analyzes the church's putting less and less emphasis on the humanity of Jesus in order to heighten up his divinity, saying, "As the mediatory place of Christ in his human nature became too doctrinally problematic to retain, and as the distinction between God and Christ became merely academic, veneration of the saints increased dramatically, since they in their humanity could provide the necessary bridge between us and God."[32] Unless the bodily, human nature of Christ is posited in healthy tension with his divine nature consistently in the Eucharist, the participants are not likely to learn to meditate on what it means for God to enter into the physical world with physical body, one of whose implications would be God's empathy for this world, let alone their own empathy as followers of God-became-human. Besides empathy, the doctrine of Incarnation performed in the Eucharist is open to cultivating so many other Christian virtues, and I believe that more theologians and religious educators should delve into what it means for God to become human in the context of the twenty-first century. As a novice researcher, I will also join those who study the dynamic between doctrine and liturgy for education.

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[32]. Catherine LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*. (New York, NY: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 127.

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THE LITURGICAL INTERSECTION OF HARM AND HEALING: THE PROBLEMS OF NECESSARY AND UNNECESSARY LITURGICAL VIOLENCE AND THEIR UNMAKING THROUGH LITURGICAL HEALING

Factoring pervasive violence into already existing conversations about the structural and interpersonal ways in which liturgy has had a destructive impact on liturgical participants, religious communities, and the surrounding world can lead to a more careful and precise treatment of liturgical violence. Rather than working toward the impossible ideal of the absence of violence within liturgy, violence must be carefully critiqued and watchfully monitored. This essay will suggest that violence, while having the potential to be unnecessary, senseless, and unjust, is also absolutely necessary and essential to the liturgical event.

This essay will propose that there are two primary types of violence that are potentially present in liturgical events: necessary and unnecessary, and it will explore the theological intersections of these forces. Moving from the problem of liturgical violence to theological inquiry, this essay will primarily employ a literature-based and constructive method. Sources from philosophy, theology and anthropology will provide a foundation for defining and exploring liturgical violence.

A History of Violence

During the late twentieth century, shifts in culture and the arts led to the "worship wars."[1] The term is quite fascinating in relationship to liturgical violence. Certainly no blood was shed in these recent North American, ecclesial conflicts, yet the popular use of "worship wars" to speak of these events reveals an astute awareness of the bloodless violence that was done. These "wars" frequently led to interpersonal and communal violence, and in an intense way, worship has been and continues to be a frequently contested site of bloodless violence.

Another aspect of liturgical violence, which has come under scrutiny, is the potential for liturgy to be complicit in and even a source of harmfully violent structures and destructive paradigms. Feminist critiques of patriarchal language, male hierarchies, and male-dominated theology have resisted the liturgical potential to assist in the oppression of women. The past and the present provide examples of how liturgy has served both as an affirmation of male domination and as a source of patriarchal power and authority.

Marjorie Procter-Smith illustrates this powerfully. She begins her influential book, *In Her Own Rite,* by quoting Adrienne Rich's well-known poem, "The Images."[2] The poem grapples with the ways in which the arts can "translate violence"[3] into something aesthetically pleasing. Procter-Smith then asks the question, "Does the liturgy "translate

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[1] While the term may be a recent creation, the phenomena, which it is used to describe, most certainly is not. Joseph Herl treats the musical worship conflicts of early Lutheranism in: Herl, Joseph. *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism Choir, Congregation, and Three Centuries of Conflict.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

[2] Procter-Smith, Marjorie. *In Her Own Rite: Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990, 1.

[3] Rich, Adrienne. *A Wild Patience Has Taken Me This Far: Poems, 1978-1981.* New York: Norton, 1981, 1.

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violence" into beautiful forms disguising its danger for women?"[4] Procter-Smith's answer to this question is affirmative. Liturgy can be a beautiful and compelling means of maintaining oppressive relationships and structures.

Liturgical rituals also have the potential to create boundaries which dehumanize those who are at the margins. Nancy Eiesland shares how the eucharist can be "a ritual of exclusion and degradation"[5] for disabled persons. A community's concept of normativity is deeply embedded in their liturgical rituals, thus the rituals can isolate those who are not "normal." In the case of Eiesland, the eucharist has the potential to become the embodiment of an ideology of the able-bodied, so those who were disabled or differently abled were potentially dangerous and confounding. The perspectives of those who have experienced harmful liturgical violence must lead to examining to what degree violence pervades liturgy.[6]

The Problem of Pervasive Violence

In the work of Jacques Derrida violence has an ontological character. Of particular interest is his treatment of violence within his analysis of hospitality in *Of Hospitality*. In this work he addresses what he calls "the law of absolute hospitality."[7] True hospitality welcomes the stranger into the presence of one's family and community with complete openness and generosity. Such hospitality is provided without questions and without reserve. Anything and everything must be open and available to the stranger.

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[4] Procter-Smith. *In Her Own Rite*, 2.
[5] Eiesland, Nancy. *The Disabled God: Toward a Liberatory Theology of Disability*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994., 113.
[6] These analyses are drawn from a paper, "When Liturgy Causes Suffering: The Problem of Liturgical Violence and the Possibility of Liturgical Redemption," presented at the Duke Graduate Conference in Theology on October 4th, 2014.
[7] Derrida, Jacques, and Anne Dufourmantelle. *Of Hospitality*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2000, 25.

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However, Derrida recognizes that such hospitality does not and should not exist in this world. Hospitality occurs in brokenness and finitude, and it has corresponding limitations. Derrida writes, "…but since there is also no hospitality without finitude, sovereignty can only be exercised by filtering, choosing, and thus excluding, and doing violence."[8] What most individuals and churches would reckon to be hospitality is actually a form of violence. This violence is varied, but it begins with the requirement that the foreigner speak into the language of the host. For Derrida, hospitality and power are linked. As soon as the foreigner intrudes on the host's power, they become threatening, and this influences the host's decision to offer hospitality. Any decision to withhold hospitality also becomes a means of excluding and doing violence.

Not only is violence a reality of human existence, violence also pervades social structures and hierarchies. James Cone's work on violence takes this pervasive nature into account. He writes, "Injustice in any form is violence, and violence is found everywhere there are people."[9] For Cone, violence is the "violation of personhood"[10] in which one's heritage and culture are considered worthless or even abhorrent.

For those who have been forcibly inserted into a harmfully violent social system or had a harmfully violent social structure imposed upon them, violence is absolutely essential to existence. Only through violence is self-defense or revolution possible. Cone asserts that people whose social agency has been violently removed have a choice. They are compelled to either choose to assent to the oppressor's violence or to choose their

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[8] Derrida and Dufourmantelle. *Of Hospitality*, 55.
[9] Cone, James H. 1995. "In Search of a Definition of Violence." *Church and Society* 85, no. 3:5-7. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials,* EBSCO*host* (accessed September 15, 2014), 5.
[10] Ibid., 6.

own violence. The oppressor's violence will consume the oppressed, but the violence of the oppressed has the potential to provide self-defense and revolution.

Revolutionary violence has the potential to result in the creation of a new society in which the oppressed are liberated. Since the oppressed are forced to choose between their own violence or the oppressor's violence, the problem of violence cannot be interpreted as violence versus nonviolence. The dilemma is one of determining the necessary degree and forms of violence required for self-defense and revolution,[11] and Cone asserts that the answer to this problem must be provided by the oppressed.

Within the work of Derrida and Cone is a great deal of ambiguity regarding violence. Violence does not necessarily result in death though it is destructive. Violence also potentially leads to life or to both life and death. For both, violence to varied degrees is absolutely essential to the protection of the vulnerable. Within radical hospitality, the oppressed would be compelled to welcome the oppressor, which would leave the oppressed at risk and ultimately unwelcome. For the oppressed, violence is absolutely essential to life.

Within this framework of pervasive violence, nonviolence is an illusion, and it is a particularly dangerous one for the oppressed. Any possibility for survival and freedom lies in self-defense and revolution. Anything else will result in the oppressed becoming complicit in the violence of the oppressor, and in Derrida's thinking, the infliction and reception of violence pervade human experience.

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[11] This is the basic argument of Moltmann upon whose work Cone is building in: Cone, James H. 1977. "Black theology on revolution, violence, and reconciliation." *Christian declaration on human rights*, 64-76. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCO*host* (accessed September 15, 2014).

Within the work of Derrida and Cone exists opportunity to expand the scope of violence in relationship to liturgy. If indeed violence is pervasive and has the potential to be necessary or unnecessary, violent liturgy may not be an unworthy anomaly from pure, "nonviolent" liturgy. Liturgical scholars must instead account for the ways in which liturgy does violence both necessarily and unnecessarily. Moving beyond the question of violent or nonviolent, liturgical theology must critique how and to whom liturgies do violence. "Within the framework of pervasive violence, the pressing issue for liturgical theology and practice is not the removal of violence but the practice of violent liturgy in such a way that participants are healed and liberated."[12]

From this survey, a working definition of liturgical violence can begin to take shape. Liturgical violence is embodied in actions or symbols that leaves behind spiritual, emotional, or physical suffering, trauma, or destruction to institutions, ideologies, communities, and individuals. In this definition liturgical violence may have both positive and negative ethical values, thus a key concern in regard to liturgical violence is to determine the ethical value of the violence being done.

Necessary and Unnecessary Liturgical Violence

For the sake of this essay, liturgical violence will be valued in two distinct categories: necessary and unnecessary. To speak of necessary liturgical violence has two elements. The first facet of necessary violence is that it is unavoidable as a part of the human condition. As the act of a community, liturgy will always encounter the conflict of wills and other sources of violence, and the inherent ontological violence of the human condition inevitably shapes the liturgical experience.

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[12] These analyses are drawn from: "When Liturgy Causes Suffering: The Problem of Liturgical Violence and the Possibility of Liturgical Redemption," presented at the Duke Graduate Conference in Theology on October 4th, 2014.

The second aspect of liturgical violence is that violence is an essential part of liturgy that embodies values which come into conflict with the status quo. If liturgy is to liberate the oppressed, the ideologies and practices of the oppressor must be rejected. Practices and perspectives of the status quo will potentially be isolated and destroyed.[13] An example of necessary liturgical violence is contained within healing, which will be explored later.

Catherine Bell's work on political ritual in *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* provides insights into how liturgy can do unnecessary violence to participants.[14] Through her work, political power and physical violence can be connected to political rituals. Through rituals, those people with political and ritual power present a compelling view of social solidarity and display the compatibility of this solidarity with the society's cosmological understanding of the world. Rituals are used to convince a society or group of people that the interests of the powerful reflect the greater social interests and are cosmologically appropriate even though they quite possibly are not.

As a source of power, rituals are perhaps the most effective means of creating and maintaining power. Unlike violence, ritual reinforces a structure in which rebellion can seem unnatural and even undesirable. The immense potential of political ritual is in the

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[13] A treatment of necessary violence must carefully examine the ethical implications. The necessary violence, which this essay seeks to address, does not cover the physical injury of persons. However, it would be overly simplistic to state that physical violence is never truly necessary. Such an example could be a sit-in on private property. While the common term for such an action is "nonviolence", such an action is physically violent in that it involves the bodily intrusion of another's space in order to compel the destruction of an undesirable practice or belief. In relationship to liturgy, it must be noted that the use of bodies can be violent even without bloodshed. Might a liturgy emerging from social concern employ bodies in a way that does violence to an unjust institution or ideal? This is reminiscent of a Eucharistic chapel service at Union Theological Seminary in response to the second Iraq War. Various students were strewn across the floor of the chapel with bloodstains, lying as if dead. At one point, during the processional, a bloody body was drug down the aisle by the leg. As participants received Communion, they had to walk across the bodies.

[14] Bell, Catherine. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

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subtle and holistic creation of hierarchies and power differentials of which the participants are likely not aware. Masquerading behind illusions of social cohesion, cosmological appropriateness and exterior authority, these rituals shape those who participate in a profound but often unseen manner.

In her essay "Reorganizing Violence: The Intersection Between Liturgy and Domestic Violence," Marjorie Procter-Smith examines this subtle and violent power of liturgy. She suggests that the use of male-dominated texts, forms, and gestures have the capacity to, "disguise and mystify domestic violence and its roots, making the abuse seem not only acceptable, but even divinely sanctioned." The impact of this violence has been very harmful for women. She writes, "…because liturgy (again, like language) shapes us gradually and in tiny increments, words and gestures which are used regularly and repeatedly, although appearing small, have a powerful effect."[15] Unnecessary liturgical violence can be subtle but profoundly harmful.

The Violence of Liturgical Healing

Liturgical healing is an example of necessary liturgical violence, and it can have many meanings.[16] From the perspective of ritual theory, it can be said that liturgy has the potential to help individuals reach wholeness with their cosmological understanding and cultural and social environment.[17] In a theological perspective, liturgical healing is the transformation that occurs when participants encounter God in liturgy. Humans are highly complex, and the scope of human need reflects this. A holistic understanding of

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[15] Procter-Smith, Marjorie. 1987. "Reorganizing victimization : the intersection between liturgy and domestic violence." *Perkins Journal* 40, no. 4: 17-27. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials*, EBSCO *host* (accessed May 25th, 2014), 18.

[16] Much of what has been labeled "healing" that occurs in liturgical settings is actually oppressive and potentially harmful; however, this essay will employ the term with a fuller definition.

[17] This definition evokes the work of Catherine Bell.

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liturgical healing must address both the body and soul, and healing is the progression toward wholeness.

Liturgical healing requires a concern for the pain, brokenness, and trauma of an individual or community, and it is an expression of hope for a more complete future. For a liturgical ritual to be truly healing, before it is celebrated it must be preceded with the question, "What needs to be healed?" This is the foundation for a healing ritual, and the end result of a healing liturgy should be a ritual that reflects the needs of those who require healing.

Liturgical healing of both the body and the soul is inherently violent. Physical healing brought about in or through a liturgical experience could result in the death of harmful biological organisms, and healing always involves the negation of or resistance to the forces of death as embodied in brokenness and harm. Within spiritual, emotional, and psychological healing, violence is also a factor. Something is being destroyed. Liturgical healing is violence for the good of those in need of healing.

If liturgical healing implies an empowering concern for the good of those in need, what is implied in liturgies containing unnecessary and harmful liturgical violence? Unjust liturgical violence minimizes concern for the potential of an individual. An individual's or community's worth stands in direct relationship to the needs or whims of a person or an institution. It is hard to imagine an unnecessarily violent liturgy beginning with the question, "For what do you need healing?" Unnecessarily violent liturgies do not empower the individual or the community; rather, they subject a person or a group of people to the violent liturgical actions and priorities of another. From an educational

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standpoint, unnecessary violent liturgies have a pedagogical role of teaching communities and individuals lessons of oppression, exploitation, and dehumanization.[18]

Liturgical healing, an expression of necessary liturgical violence, and liturgical harm, an expression of unnecessary liturgical violence, stand in stark contrast to each other. Each have the potential to undermine the other. If liturgical healing were to be inserted into an unnecessarily violent liturgical environment, it could theoretically have the potential to subvert and even completely erode the postures and values present in that liturgical environment. The opposite is true as well.

Engaging Liturgical Harm and Healing

To speak of healing is to implicitly speak of harm. If harm were to be destroyed, healing would vanish as a powerful force immediately upon the achievement of wholeness, for without harm, healing would be unnecessary. In the same sense, without healing, harm as a destructive force would consume all things to the point when it would be extinguished. Harm and healing must be held in dynamic tension with one another.

Liturgical healing requires us to acknowledge harm inflicted on persons, communities, and the world by the powers and principalities of this world both within liturgy and outside the church. Liturgical healing is not simply the grand gesture of a nonviolent church toward a harmfully violent world. The liturgical potential for liberative violence stands in direct relationship to and in tension with the liturgical potential to do harmful violence in numerous ways.

To speak of necessary liturgical violence in relationship to healing is at least partially to speak about the dynamic process whereby a community can be renewed. As the people of God work toward the liberation of the oppressed, necessary violence will

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[18] This analysis of healing is drawn from: Wymer. "When Liturgy Causes Suffering," 2014.

ensue. Necessary violence will occur in a community amidst the tensions of normal communal life. Healing liturgies provide ways of reconciling and transforming. Liturgical healing is a constructive force whereby a church can survive being destroyed by necessary and unnecessary violence.

Liturgical healing exists in stark contrast with the destructive force evidenced in unnecessary liturgical violence. The theory and practice of liturgical healing has the potential to radically subvert unnecessary liturgical and secular violence. The subjugated stance of unnecessary violent liturgy cannot exist simultaneously with the liberated stance of the necessary violence of liturgical healing. The healing empowerment experienced in liturgy has the potential undermine experiences of subjugation in the world. Healing implicitly and explicitly acknowledges a fuller and healthier potential. Liturgical healing is intrinsically a statement of value. From an educational perspective, it can be said that liturgies of healing have the pedagogical effect of teaching an individual or community their true value and helping them achieve wholeness.

Toward Safe(r) Liturgy

Awareness of the tension between healing and harm within liturgy provides a fuller understanding of both the situation and the priority of healing rituals that bring individuals and communities toward spiritual, physical, and social wholeness. Healing is not a luxury merely to be celebrated at moments of perceived need. It is an absolutely essential force to the life and renewal of the Christian church. As such it should be an always-present theme and dynamic in liturgical theory and practice.

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To recognize violence as a necessary force in the world is an act of humility, for Christians are just as finite and earthbound as the rest of the world.[19] To begin to think about the ways in which our liturgies do violence is essential to uncovering the ways in which they do violence to persons, communities, and God unnecessarily. Truly open conversations about the violence embedded in liturgy have the potential to lead to the empowerment of those who have experienced unnecessary violence in the church and the world.

If indeed violence is pervasive, then the problem of violence within Christian communities must press at the focus, degree, and manner of violence. To what forces, values, and structures is the church doing violence? How does this violence impact both the oppressed and the oppressor? The illusion of nonviolence is not an option. The oppressed cry out for justice. To be "nonviolent" would be to forsake them in their great need and to be complicit in the violence done to them.[20]

Conclusion

All Christian worship can cause necessary and unnecessary violence, and all Christian worship has the potential to harm or to heal. Out of this awareness must arise an intentional emphasis upon healing as a liturgical theme and dynamic, this realization may help the Church to move beyond the illusion of nonviolence to grappling with and naming the precise ways in which our liturgy destroys in both necessary and unnecessary ways.

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[19] These suggestions are closely drawn from: Wymer. "When Liturgy Causes Suffering." 2014.

[20] Perhaps the relatively simultaneous emergence during the latter half of the twentieth century both of awareness of the ways in which women and others have been violently impacted by liturgy and of interest in healing liturgies is no coincidence at all. Might liberation and healing be wound up together?

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Community Organizing and Trauma Healing: The Power of Storytelling and Social Action

Abstract

Telling one's own personal narrative can be a liberative experience that shapes one's future encounter with the world and with others. However, the creation of and participation in intentional spaces for storytelling are often privileged experiences, because many lived realities create unreachable stories. Traumatic experiences, for example, cause the body to react in a way that minimalizes the formulation and expression of narrative, ultimately affecting the traumatized individuals ability to make the experience apart of their story. Because learning to story tell and participation in social action are recognized as aspects of trauma healing, this paper suggests that participation in community organizing initiatives provides an outlet for the healing of trauma. Because of a model that seeks out relational conversation, empowerment, and social advocacy, community organizing creates a challenging yet hopeful experience of transformation and healing for survivors of trauma.

Humans are storytelling creatures. We make sense of who we are and our place in this world by creating narratives of our experience. When we have the opportunity to develop and share our own narrative, we begin to discover our deepest passions, our greatest desires, and even our fears. The metacognition that storytelling inspires often culminates in personal calls to action. Moreover, in the creation of a space where we can authentically tell our stories and sincerely listen to the stories of others, we learn to celebrate the dignity and worth that resides in every individual. However, in a world that seems to overwhelm our souls with violence, pain, and heartache, where is an outlet for healing? Where is the escape? In the midst of suffering and injustice, faith based community organizing provides an outlet that creates opportunities for trauma healing. Through the power of storytelling in the community-organizing model, a call to action is cultivated that ultimately becomes crucial for the healing of trauma.

Because of the transformative power found in listening to and telling stories, exploring one particular narrative is exemplary and foundational for understanding the notion of community organizing as a means of trauma healing. December 20, 1993 marks a heartbreaking and life-changing moment for Clementina "Tina" Chery of Dorchester, Massachusetts, as it was the day in which she lost her eldest son to gang violence. On his way to a Christmas celebration with the group *Teens Against Gang Violence*, an initiative that he was deeply committed to, Louis D. Brown lost his life in the cross fires of a gang shooting. As a young man who was committed to the development of his community for peace and nonviolence, Tina knew that she had to honor the memory of her son as well as continue the mission that he diligently worked for

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in his short life. In 1994, the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute was created to be a "center of healing, teaching, and learning for families dealing with murder, trauma, grief and loss."[1]

The Peace Institute works to organize the local community around issues of violence as well as with government agencies and NGO's to promote education and policy advocacy on multiple levels. Founded and staffed by families who have been impacted by violence, the Institute works to see families through the pain, grief, and trauma of violence in ways that they "begin to advocate for themselves and others."[2] The Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, created as a result of Tina's story, helps people articulate their own stories and join a movement that is greater than their personal experience. The Louis D. Brown Institute is a community organizing initiative that promotes storytelling and action, ultimately creating space for healing.

Although the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute story in itself seems to express the relationship between community organizing and trauma healing, unpacking an organizing model and trauma studies and their relationship to a greater conversation in religious education creates even deeper connections. For the purposes of understanding the role of *faith-based* community organizing in trauma healing, analyzing portions of the PICO Network model, specifically one to one conversations and group sharing, is most applicable. The model begins with a trained organizer, who is passionate about issues of justice and community development, having one to one conversations, or relational conversations, with members of the community. In these conversations, the organizer asks questions of intrigue, questions of courage, questions of heartache, and questions of challenge, all in hopes of understanding the relationship of the individual to the community and their desire to be a part of change. One to one conversations are meant to be a way for organizers to hear the stories of the individuals in the community. In the gathering of these narratives, the organizer builds up the importance of storytelling and develops leaders who can make a collective narrative.

After the organizer has taken the time to be present to the stories of members in the community via one to one conversations, they bring those conversation partners into a larger dialogue with each other. A space is created for members of the community to share stories of concern and hope for their community through continued conversation. Neighbors who may or may not have encountered one another before are faced with their individual stories as well as the stories of their community. If done well, with patience and perseverance, the group's storytelling process has the potential to incite action, which continues the organizing model as shown below. If intentional time is taken for community members to hear the personal experiences of their neighbors, both successes and struggles, how can an authentic community not act in the name of justice? The sustainability of social action in the community is based on the narratives that are developed and shared in the first portion of the model. Without creating intentional space for *authentic* relationship building, it is easy for actors in the community to forget their connectedness and relationality, which are significant pieces of developing communities that are places of healing for *all*.

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[1] "Our Mission," Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. Accessed December 10, 2013. http://www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org/content/our-mission.
[2] "Our Story," Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. Accessed December 11, 2013. http://www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org/content/our-story.

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How does the opportunity for narrative sharing and social action in the organizing model create space for trauma healing? Reflection on the work of trauma studies expresses the multilevel relationship and provides both depth and breadth to answer this question. In her iconic book *Trauma and Recovery* Judith Herman wrote, "Remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of the individual victim."[4] Herman's words express the importance of narrative in healing from a traumatic experience. As meaning making individuals that seek to understand our lived experiences, we turn to our ability to narrate in order to recall, remember, and incorporate events that shake our self-identity into our understanding of the world. The intentional space created for one to one conversation and listening and sharing of concerns is a prime opportunity in the model to share and tell stories.

However, as organizers and participants in organizing initiatives are made aware of the possibilities for healing, it is important to note how trauma studies also provides a challenging lens into the effectiveness of the narrative sharing portion of the model for those living in the aftermath of trauma. In the wake of a traumatic event there is a disconnection "from what one knows to be true and safe in the world."[5] This disconnection often results in the inability to articulate the event and make it apart of one's larger narrative. Serene Jones, author of *Trauma and Grace*, wrote, "When we are overwhelmed, what fails us most profoundly is our capacity to use language."[6] Trauma disables normal systems of response that give people a sense of control. In the overwhelming of these systems, the body can react in a variety of ways, including but not limited to hyperarousal, intrusion, and constriction. When the body enters a constant state of alertness and is in protection mode, it has moved into a state of hyperarousal. Minute stimuli can incite fear and destroy the nervous system. Intrusion is a result of the return of the traumatic experience into every day lived experience. Any sense of normality freezes in the wake of trauma, because the experience continuously interrupts the individual in both a sleep and alert

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[3] "PICO Model," Accessed on December 12, 2013, http://www.piconetwork.org/about/model.

[4] Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 1.

[5] Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 4.

[6] Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 29.

state. Finally, with the break of normality from the intrusion of the traumatic experience, there is an alteration in the sense of time. The world begins to slow and there is a constriction, or numbing, of lived experience.[7]

Although storytelling through the organizing model has the potential to help give language to a traumatic experience, organizers must be aware of the dangers caused by retriggering that are made possible by pushing for a concise story too quickly. What role does the community organizing model and organizer play in creating a space for individuals living through the somatic affects of trauma? If the ability to story one's life is missing due to a traumatic experience, can and how does organizing remain a means of trauma healing? Herman refers to the process of narrative sharing in trauma healing as "reconstructing the story." In the reconstruction of the story, the traumatic memory is transformed into the survivor's life story.[8] In the one-on-one, relational, conversation portion of the model the organizer becomes a witness to the story, or "the blank screen on which the event comes to be inscribed for the first time."[9] As the story surfaces, the witness, or organizer, holds space for both the words and even the silence that comes with articulating one's story after trauma. The witness takes a journey with the storyteller on uncharted territory of trauma that fragments language, unravels agency, and creates a sense of isolation. According to Dori Laub, this is a journey that "the survivor cannot traverse or return from alone," making a case for the development of deep connections during one to one conversations over time. [10]

In the development of genuine and sincere relationships through one to one conversations, the organizer leaves an open invitation for each community member to join the larger conversation about their hopes and dreams for the community. Through relationship building the organizer highlights and celebrates the dignity of each voice and creates space for further conversation amongst neighbors. The hope in community group conversation is that the people of the community will decide together what kind of community they wish to create and develop. Together they challenge, dream, and act against injustices that keep all individuals from thriving and flourishing. In this time of dreaming, powerful and positive relationships are built, which create a sense of safety for traumatized individuals that often feel isolated and alone with their trauma.

According to the lens of trauma studies, the joining of social action provides an even greater chance of healing. Herman believes there is a significant minority who feel called to engage in the wider world as a result of their traumatic experience. "These survivors recognize a political and religious dimension in their misfortune and discover that they can transform the meaning of their personal tragedy by making it the basis for social action."[11] Social action offers a survivor the power that draws from their own initiative and energy, and it creates an alliance with a group of likeminded people that share a purpose. The building of positive relationships is a crucial step in the creation of safety after a traumatic experience. Social action for healing can take shape in many ways, but many survivors find energy in helping those who have been

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[7] Herman, 35-38.

[8] Herman, 176.

[9] Laub, Dori, "Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening," in *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History,* written by Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman, 57-74 (New York: Routledge, 1992), 57.

[10] Laub, 58-59.

[11] Herman, 207.

similarly traumatized.[12] With this learning from trauma studies, the story of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute becomes even more powerful. By calling on families who have been victims of gun violence to join the initiative, the Peace Institute offers a means of healing for them through narrative sharing and social action.

If there is a transformative power in community organizing models that can help create communities of trauma healing, what is the significance of this conversation for religious education? Faith communities across the United States are joining organizing initiatives as a means of living into their theological commitments. Faith based organizing models, like PICO, are founded on the notion that the world's diverse faith traditions have the ability to unite rather than divide because of their commitments to standing against injustice.[13] Religion is playing a significant role in the social action that communities are participating in. If religious education seeks to be a liberative window for the transformation of individuals and communities, the conversation must include the commitments that faith communities are making to community development/enrichment/engagement through community organizing initiatives.

Community organizing is a call to seek justice, equality, and hope for the future. Many faith based community organizations turn to the wisdom of Amos 5:24, "But let justice roll down like a river, righteousness like a never failing stream," as they seek to gain faithful leaders for action from the Christian tradition. However, the theological call of community organizing, and ultimately trauma healing, is much more expansive than what Amos provides. Religious education has a significant role in helping articulate the deep theological commitments of community organizing because of the potential for liberation and transformation in the initiatives. The conversation around community organizing and trauma raises ecclesial questions that have the potential to shift or transform one's understanding of "being church".

From Sallie McFague's theology of creation as God's body to the African theology of Ubuntu or Martin Luther King's understanding of beloved community, there are multiple theological arguments that support participation in community organizing. In response to Augustine's comment regarding God in the world, "Since nothing that is could exist without You, You must in some way be all that is," McFague makes the claim that Christians should attend to the world *as* God's body.[14] It is in God's nature to be embodied in the world and that is the nature in which we live and move. Christians understand the God-world relationship through the incarnation; therefore, creation must be "like" incarnation. God is not only the source of existence but all are born into God.[15] From the understanding of the world as God's body, people of faith are called to an intricate care of creation. It calls for a protection that runs deeper than stewardship. Creation as God's body is a call to focus on the neighbor and neighborhood—a call to develop an understanding of how we exist relationally in the world together. "We meet God in the world and especially in the flesh of the world—in feeding the hungry and healing the sick."[16] Can faith communities live fully into McFague's understanding of the God-world relationship if their conversations do not include traumatized individuals' experiences? Arguably, no. How can

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[12] Herman, 208.

[13] "PICO Values," Pico National Network: Unlocking the Power of People. Accessed September 7, 2014. http://www.piconetwork.org/about/values

[14] Sallie McFague, "Is God in Charge?" in Essentials of Christian Theology, ed. by William C. Platcher. (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press), 110.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid, 110.

community-organizing initiatives shift faith communities' lens of caring wholly for members of their community?

Community organizing provides a channel for living out this theology. Both storytelling and social action allow for the creation of relationships of mutuality and care for the dignity and worth of individual in which God is fully present—a central theme for McFague. In the call to seek justice for our neighbor, a theology of a God who is fully present *as* the world prevents apathy in the care of every aspect of creation. Joining an organizing initiative with people who are committed to their care and the naming of their worth can be a powerful and transformative experience for a traumatized individual.

This same care and dignity for humanity is evident in the African theology of Ubuntu, which states, "Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others."[17] In this relational understanding of the world, our humanity does not exist without living in relationship with others. The way in which we encounter others in this world develops our own identity and makes us the people that we are today. The theology of Ubuntu calls us to listen for understanding to others as well as speak the truth in love. Community organizing is centered on the development of relationships in a way that creates a genuine inquiry towards one's neighbors. Living into this theology supports the creation of positive relationships that are crucial to trauma healing. According to the community-organizing model, the work of justice cannot be done alone but must be done in community. The social change that is desired by a community is bound in its ability to articulate the stories of one another in a way that seeks change in a broken system, which can only be done by recognizing the sacredness of individuals.

There are deep theological resonances for faith communities who take on commitments to community organizing initiatives that work on issues like homelessness, poverty, violence, and education. There is a genuine care for the individual that comes from working closely with organizing initiatives. The work of organizing is messy, difficult, and by no means easy, but there is an ecclesial stake in the conversation, which should generate discussion in the field of religious education. If churches, looking specifically from the lens of Christianity, are to seek the "shalom of the city"[18], and can begin doing this by joining organizing initiatives, how must they understand trauma in their work? The theological commitments under which churches do the work of justice are reasoning enough to be equipped with an understanding of trauma studies. In order to be a place of healing and transformation, a place where individuals can thrive and flourish, churches must understand what the traumatized individual needs. The community-organizing model provides a foundation for the conversation—a safe place to tell one's story, opportunity to regain agency through action, and the formation of powerful relationships.

The community-organizing model is not just a means of systemic change. Faith based community organizing should be recognized as an opportunity for traumatized individuals to thrive and flourish. In the promotion of storytelling in the organizing model, traumatized individuals are given a place to articulate their experience to a group of people that they form genuine relationships with over time. They are also given a channel for social action that can provide a sense of purpose despite the traumatic experience. Moreover, the call to community

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[17] Michael Battle, *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu* (Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1997), 39.

[18] Jer. 29:7 (NIV)

organizing is not an empty call. The theology of community organizing creates an open invitation for healing to traumatized individuals. A God who is believed to be present in the workings of the world incites action from organizers against injustice, action against systems that create and perpetuate traumatic experiences. When organizers live into this theology, trauma survivors are shown the possibilities of an alternate lived experience—one that embraces the reality of trauma and works to transform it. Community organizing is a form a trauma healing, because it is a call of accompaniment with the broken and the hurt that is ultimately acted out in the care of all of creation, in the care of God's own body, through narrative and social action.

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Which existential concerns are found in autobiographical expressions of school shooters prior to their crime?

Abstract

One of the few recurring characteristics in school shooters' stories is their expression of existential concerns and questions. Many discuss their hatred of the world and existential loneliness in their manifestos, suicide letters, diary entries or social media updates. These expressions – called leaking – are made during the planning period preceding their deed. They are not only important in terms of prevention, but also help us understand strong layers of meaning in this seemingly irrational and psychopathological behavior. This study involves a narrative analysis of the existential issues in personal expressions of school shooters to shed more light on the existential dimension of their motive. We select six cases (seven school shooters) from known school shootings based on available material and variation in educational context, perpetrator characteristics, and impact.
Keywords: School shooting, existential concerns, leaking, motive school shooter

Introduction

Since the end of the twentieth century many hundreds of mostly young people have died in school shootings. The social impact is enormous. Traumatized children, parents and teachers wonder why tragedies like these can happen and how one can prevent these crimes. In recent years, researchers have approached this issue solely from their own fields like sociology, psychology, criminology or medicine (Harding, Fox et al. 2002)[1]. However, school shootings arise from a number of different risk factors (Robertz, 2004; Newman et al., 2005; Henry, 2009)[2]. Unfortunately, studying isolated factors like bullying or violent computer games as a cause of school shootings does not give reliable answers but leads to a narrowed perspective of the problem and possible polarization in the discussion about prevention.
To create a broader view of the problem an international overview of research, cases studies and concepts for prevention was published in 2013. It forms a collection of the latest empirical findings and theoretical concepts and claims to "turn attention to the violence-affirming setting in its entirety" including socialization, institutional circumstances of school

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[1] Harding, D. J., Fox, C., & Metha, J. D. (2002). Studying rare events through qualitative case studies: lessons from a study of rampage school shootings. *Sociological Methods & Research, 31*, 174-216.

[2] Robertz, J. (2004). *School shootings.* Frankfurt: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft.
Newman, K. (2005). *Rampage. The social roots of school shootings.* New York: Basic.
Henry, S. (2009). School violence beyond Columbine: A complex problem in need of an interdisciplinary analysis. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 52, 1246-1265.
Böckler, N., Seeger, T., & Sitzer, P. (2013). School Shootings: Conceptual Framework and International Empirical Trends. In N. Böckler, T. Seeger, P. Sitzer, W. Heitmeyer, (Eds.). *School Shootings: International Research, Case Studies, and Concepts for Prevention* (pp. 1-27). New York: Springer.

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life and biographical, psychodynamic background (Böckler, Seeger, et al., 2013). In our opinion one aspect is missing in this overview: the existential concerns the perpetrators experience prior to their crime. The aim of the present paper is to complement the overview by analyzing existential concerns in autobiographic expressions of school shooters prior to their crime. The research question of this study is: Which existential concerns are found in autobiographical expressions of school shooters prior to their crime? Studying the perpetrators' existential concerns contributes to an understanding of their motives. These concerns can be found in documents like suicide letters or manifestos, created by the perpetrators during the phase of planning their deed.

Leaking

A number of researchers argue that a shooting is always planned (O'Toole, 2002; Vossekuil, 2002; Robertz, 2004)[3] and during this period the perpetrator almost always announces his plans. This is called leaking. Most perpetrators express their thoughts, feelings and plans via e.g. videos, suicide letters, comments on social media like Facebook, graffiti, or essays. These expressions contain statements about existential themes like life and death, love and hate, isolation and the struggle with their identity, which can help us to understand the crux of their motives.

Arguably, violence by adolescents can be linked to behavioral, biological and social circumstances like playing violent video games, prefrontal deficits, influence of family and social environment (Fryxell and Smith, 2000)[4], social disintegration and a systematic loss of control (Heitmeyer, Böckler & Seeger, 2013)[5]. Considering the nature of these factors, one could assume that the cause of violent behavior is a deficiency in the perpetrator's life (Carlson, 2003). But existentialists like Hegel and Sartre identify violence as an existential need. Violence, they suggest, helps to overcome limits which frustrate personal freedom and meaningful actions (Stigliano, 1983; Diamond, 1996)[6]. This is not an excuse but a recognition that violence, in some cases, provides an existential reward (Carlson, 2003)[7]. The underlying existential concerns of school shooters can tell more about the existential reward the perpetrators are aiming for and how this concerns affect the motives for this violent act. However, so far no research addressing these existential concerns could be found.

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[3] O'Toole, M. E. (2002). FBI Expert Says School Shooters Always Give Hints About Plan. *Psychiatric News,* 2-36.
Vossekuil, B. (2002). T*he final report and findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the prevention of school attacks in the United States.* Darby: Diane Publishing.
Robertz, J. (2004). *School shootings.* Frankfurt: Verlag für Polizeiwissenschaft.

[4] Fryxell, D., & Smith, D. C. (2000). Personal, Social, and Family Characteristics of Angry Students. *Professional School Counseling, 4* (2), 86-94.

[5] Heitmeyer, W., Böckler, N., & Seeger, T. (2013). Social Disintegration, Loss of Control, and School Shootings. In N. Böckler, T. Seeger, P. Sitzer, W. Heitmeyer, (Eds.). *School Shootings: International Research, Case Studies, and Concepts for Prevention* (pp. 27-54). New York: Springer.

[6] Stigliano, T. (1983). Jean-Paul Sartre on Understanding Violence. *Crime and Social Justice (19) Crisis in Theory and Social Policy, pp. 52-64.*
Diamond, S. A., (1996). *Anger, Madness, and the Daimonic: The Psychological Genesis of Violence, Evil and Creativity.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

[7] Carlson, L. A. (2003). Existential theory: Helping school counselors attend to youth at risk for violence. *Professional school counseling*, *6*, 310-315.

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Five existential concerns

Existential concerns, as addressed in this article, are related to the view of life and death, the freedom of the individual and the responsibility for one's actions, the awareness that one is fundamentally alone and the problem of meaning (Yalom, 1980)[8]. Ernest Becker (1973) [9] argues that the fear of death is the foundation of all existential concerns. He states that the fear of losing our own life makes us use violence against others. By killing others we create an illusion of being invulnerable. This is an attempt to deny the reality that we are mortal. Consequently, a school shooting can be an expression of the perpetrator's existential concerns.

Based on Yalom, Koole, Greenberg, and Pyszczynski (2006)[10] state that the five major existential concerns are: death, isolation, identity, freedom and meaning. These originate from the knowledge that death is inescapable, that identity, beliefs and values are uncertain, that the array of choices one has is flustering and that essentially everyone is alone. Although these concerns are traditionally discussed in the field of philosophy, Koole et al. (2006) empirically investigate the role these concerns play in psychological functioning, to understand how these issues affect human behavior and experience. In fact, Koole (2008)[11] states that "existential concerns are a major force in human behavior, and that ignoring these concerns only serves to deepen the psychological conflicts that are associated with them". Experimental studies point out that those existential concerns have an immense influence on people's emotions, thoughts and deeds (Koole et al., 2006). The question addressed in our study is what – if any – role these concerns play in the lives of school shooters prior to their deed.

Figure 1: The five existential concerns and the existential problems they represent (Koole, Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 2006)

Existential Concerns	Existential Problem
Death	Psychological conflict between mortality and the desire to live forever
Isolation	Conflict between the wish to be connected to others and experiences of rejection; realization that one's subjective experience of reality can never be fully shared
Identity	A clear sense of who one is and how one fits into the world versus uncertainties because of conflicts between self-aspects, unclear boundaries between self and non-self, or limited self-insight
Freedom	Experience of free will versus external forces that impact behavior and the burden of responsibility for one's choices in response to a complex array of alternatives
Meaning	Desire to believe life is meaningful versus events and experiences that appear random or inconsistent with one's bases of meaning

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[8] Yalom, I. (1980). *Existential psychotherapy.* New York: Basic Books.

[9] Becker, E. (1973). *The denial of death.* New York: Free Press Paperback.

[10] Koole, S., Greenberg, J., & Pyszczynski, T. (2006). Introducing science to the psychology of the soul: Experimental existential psychology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 212-216.

[11] Koole, S. (2008, November 4). *Existential Psychology.* Retrieved from: http://www.researchgate.net/publication/228014843_Existential_Psychology/file/9fcfd5049e4e768b50.pdf

3

Method

Selected school shooters
To answer the research question the contents of perpetrators' original statements referring to the planned shooting were analyzed. Firstly, a number of school shooters were selected. Given the small number of potential cases, we opted for theoretical selection to maximize heterogeneity. We selected cases based on differing contexts of the educational system; differences in age and social circumstances of the perpetrator; the impact (number of deaths) of the deed and the quantity of trustworthy material we could find.

Selected materials
Original documents and videos in English and German were used because crucial information could get lost in translation from other languages we are not familiar with. The selection was restricted to documents and videos which the perpetrators had produced themselves prior to the shooting and which had a direct reference to the crime. Unless otherwise stated, all original expressions of the school shooters and transcriptions of their videos come from Peter Langman's website www.schoolshooters.info.[12] We translated documents written in German.

Figure 2: Selected school shooters and materials

Name	Age	Incident	Impact	Material
1 Luke Woodham	16	Mississippi, USA: 1st October 1997, Pearl High School, Pearl	Kills his mother and two students at school; Serving three life terms and an additional 140 years in prison	Several writings: 4 pages
2 "Kip" Kipland Kinkel	15	Oregon, USA: 21st May 1998, Thurston High School, Springfield	After killing his parents he kills two people at school; serving a 111-year sentence without parole	Journal, essay: 5.5 pages
3 Eric Harris 4 Dylan Klebold	18 17	Colorado, USA: 20th April 1999, Columbine High School, Columbine	13 people killed, shooters commit suicide	Journal, writings in school planner: Harris 2,5 pages; Klebold 3,5 pages
5 Sebastian Bosse	18	Germany, Europe: 20th November 2006, Geschwister Scholl Schule, Emsdetten	5 people injured by firearm, many more by smoke bombs, shooter commits suicide	Suicide note: 3 pages
6 Seung-Hui Cho	23	Virginia, USA: 16th April 2007, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg	32 people killed, shooter commits suicide	Manifesto: 9 pages
7 Pekka-Eric Auvinen	18	Finland, Europe: 7th November 2007, Jokela High School, Tuusula	8 people killed, shooter commits suicide	3 online documents, confession video: 9,5 pages

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[12]Dr. Langman is a psychologist and the author of *Why Kids Kill: Inside the Minds of School Shooters* (2010). He is a sought-after expert on the psychology of youths who commit rampage school shootings. All the material on his website appear to be trustworthy.

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The five existential concerns in the texts
For the data analysis the five existential concerns are used as categories to analyze the text. The subcategories were developed in an inductive way. For example, the expressions *I want to die* or *I will kill myself* are found in the texts and therefore the subcategory suicide was attached to the category death. This leads to the following list of subcategories:
* Death: murder, suicide and mortality
* Isolation: feeling outcast, loneliness, rejection
* Identity: I-see-myself, you-see-me, I-see-you, I-want-to-be
* Freedom: responsibility, free will
* Meaning: hope, faith, purpose
The documents were analyzed per case and all together.

Quantitative Content Analyses

To analyze the expressions methods of quantitative content analyses (Bortz & Döring, 2006) [13] were used.
Frequency analysis
We looked at how frequent existential concerns occurred in the texts. This led to an assessment of the relative importance of the various concerns for the perpetrators. The following categories are used: Top frequency (TF) when a concern is found more than 60%; high frequency (HF) for occurrences between 41%-60%; medium frequency (MF) 21%-40%; low frequency (LF) 1%-20%.
Valence analysis
We analyzed how the existential concerns were valued in the text. The range was positive, negative, and neutral.
Pattern analysis
Finally, we analyzed which existential concerns occurred together more frequently than others in individual cases and in the cases together.

Results

The analysis of the autobiographical documents shows clearly that school shooters experience acute existential concerns. Two existential concerns are found in every case: death and identity. Isolation is found in five cases. Notably, expressions of feeling isolated are always expressed very emotional and strong. In most cases the shooters feel superior and are frustrated that no one else seems to acknowledge their superiority. They feel rejected and do not know how to cope with that. Meaning, also found in five cases, is mostly expressed as a disappointment in reality and life. 'Normal' life - school, work, having a family - is meaningless to them.
The results are presented per existential concern and in the pattern they arise.

Death
Death is found in all documents and always in a top frequency except in Sebastian Bosse's text, where death is found in a low frequency. Suicide and murder are related to death in all cases. In four cases the concept of mortality is mentioned. A positive value is assigned to

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[13] Bortz, J., & Döring, N. (2006). Quantitative Methode der Dataerhebung. In J. Bortz, & N. & Döring, *Forschungsmethoden und Evaluation für Human- und Sozialwissenschaftler* (pp. 137-293). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.

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murder in all cases. Murder is seen as a way of being more powerful than others and of being able to choose who will live and who will die. Auvinen says in his video manifesto: "I, as a natural selector, will eliminate all who I see unfit, disgraces of human race and failures of natural selection." Suicide is also valued as positive in all cases, as a way of ending suffering. However, suicide is also valued as negative in three cases in the form of feeling sorry for the pain caused to family and friends. Mortality is found in four cases and has a neutral value.

Isolation

Isolation is found in a text in five cases and is then always used with top frequency. In all these cases the perpetrators feel lonely, rejected and treated like outcasts. In each of the cases isolation is valued negatively. The perpetrators point out that isolation is one motive for their deed. All feel that they are being treated as outcasts by other students, teachers and society. Woodham writes that "no one ever truly loved me. No one ever truly cared about me. (…) And all throughout my life I was ridiculed. Always beaten, always hated".

Identity

As with the concern about death, all perpetrators discuss concerns over identity in their writings. In five cases the concern occurs with a top frequency, once with a high frequency and once in a low frequency. Six perpetrators mention how they are seen by others and all discuss how they see themselves. In three cases there is an expression of who-I-want-to-be but notably all perpetrators express who or what they do not want to be.
Interestingly, the shooters have a positive self-image except Kinkel and Woodham. Kinkel writes "I don't know who I am. I want to be something I can never be. I try so hard every day. But in the end, I hate myself for what I've become." In all the other cases the perpetrators feel superior to others and emphasize that they are very different from other people. This difference is always seen as positive because they disregard others and feel that they are superior. Their feelings of superiority lead in four cases to expressions of feeling God-like. The latter point is expressed by Auvinen by saying: "compared to you retarded masses, I am actually godlike."

Freedom

Freedom is discussed in the expressions of four shooters, twice in medium frequency, once in low frequency, and once in high frequency. It takes the form of, for example, a feeling that their personal freedom is in conflict with the demands of society. Freedom itself is always valued as a positive thing, but it is often accompanied by the negative restriction of freedom. Bosse writes: "I am free! No one has the right to interfere in my life, and if someone does so anyway then he has to accept the consequences!".

Meaning

Meaning is discussed in five cases, twice in medium frequency, twice in low frequency, and once in a top frequency. One could argue that death, identity, isolation and freedom are also related to meaning and therefore that these percentages are inaccurate. However, we choose to look at the existential concern of meaning separately and as defined by Yalom (1980): the wish that life is meaningful versus the experience that some events are inconsistent with their bases of meaning. In all five cases meaning is valued as negative. The perpetrators are disappointed in the reality of life. In two cases meaning is also valued as neutral. For example, Auvinen argues that "life is just a meaningless coincidence".

Pattern

Overall, death/identity and death/isolation are most frequently combined. The perpetrators

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see themselves as avenging angels, killing others because they are tormenting people like them. They feel often unloved and singled out and as revenge they fantasize about murder.

Figure 3: Most combined existential concerns per case

School shooter	Most combined existential concerns
Woodham	Death-isolation; death-identity
Kinkel	Death-isolation
Harris	Death-identity
Klebold	Death-isolation; death-identity
Bosse	Meaning-freedom; death-meaning
Cho	Death-isolation; death-identity
Auvinen	Death-identity

Conclusion

Considering all cases in this study it is clear that existential concerns play an important role in the life of the perpetrators and presumably in the development of a school shooting. Apparently, to them their life's do not live up to the standard set by their role models. The perpetrators seem to consider their deed meaningful. Like an avenging angel or superhero, they take revenge for injustice, rejection and bullying. Because they feel superior, they argue that they have the right to kill inferiors. The narcissistic self-image - feeling God-like - combined with rejection or insults leads to a high level of aggression towards the source of complaint. Notably, under the same circumstances low self-esteem does not lead to that kind of aggression (Bushman and Baumeister, 1998)[14]. One has to consider that many adolescents have a favorable self-image but cope with insult without becoming school shooters. However, in the studied cases, a sense of isolation combined with narcissistic traits amplifies the development of aggression against the sources of the insult and rejection. The shooters find it unbearable that other people question their identity by not acknowledging their superiority. Defending their superiority, they want to demonstrate their power by choosing who may live and who has to die. These boys hold the whole world – and their world at this point is mostly their school - responsible for their existential concerns and consequently kill students and teachers.

Discussion

One element that has not been addressed so far is the fact that all perpetrators in this study are male. That is not a random choice but based on the statistic that school shooters are principally boys. Psychologists and psychiatrics claim that boys experience a crisis in current society (Pollack, 2001; Kindlon and Thomson, 2000; Dykstra, Cole & Capps, 2009)[15]. Especially in Western society - school shootings are primarily a Western phenomenon - boys

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[14] Bushman, B. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (1998). Threatened egotism, narcissism, self-esteem, and direct and displaced aggression: Does self-love or self-hate lead to violence? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75* (1), 219-229.

[15] Pollack, W.S. & Shuster, T. (2001). *Real Boys' Voices.* New York: Penguin Books.
Kindlon, D., & Thompson, M. (2000). *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys.* New York: Ballantine Books.
Dykstra, R., Cole, A., & Capps, D. (2009). *Losers, loners en rebellen: Hoe tienerjongens zich ontwikkelen* (pp. 115-149). Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok.

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struggle with feelings of isolation, frustration and the inability to handle their emotions (Pollack, 1998)[16]. Walter Wink (1992)[17] argues that the idea that violence solves all conflicts is a powerful myth of the modern Western world.

Many expressions in the documents reveal that the perpetrators feel God-like when fantasizing about murdering people. They claim that with their deed they do what God should have done, killing inferiors. Justifying the shooting as an act of freeing the world from evil or inferior people is found in all the documents in some way. These boys use violence to feel superior and powerful, like the role models society creates. Society defines what a 'real man' should be and from a young age male heroes are presented as victorious because of violence.

The desire of being superior of the school shooters versus the impossibility to meet with Western male role models, leads to struggles like *I feel lonely*, *no one understands me*, *there is no real purpose in life*, *I am outcast*. To get redeemed from these struggles and to feel superior and powerful some boys reach out to extreme violence.

In the light of preventing school shootings one must address the existential concerns of young people. Society has to examine its ways of legitimizing male violence. Schools must play a role in a nonviolent education where students learn how to express their feelings. They need to have room for existential questions and staff who can teach how to approach these issues. Teachers, coaches, parents, and all others who interact with young people must be able to give them the needed empathy and attention so their existential concerns do not go undetected like they did in the cases of these school shooters.

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[16] Pollack, W.S. (1998). *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood.* New York: Penguin Books.

[17] Wink, W. (1992). *Engaging the powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*. Minneapolis: Fortress.

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Harrowing of Hell
A Decolonial Interreligious Pedagogy in Response to Gang Violence

Abstract

When shots ring out in the darkness is the sacred present? If interreligious educators are going to respond gang violence in a transformative way, the conversation needs to be reframed about how community members, theologians and most importantly the individuals themselves, speak/listen about the tragic events that occur in our neighborhoods. The paper examines gang violence with special attention to the practices of a particular local community and provides a decolonial interreligious pedagogy as a model for working alongside gang affiliated youth who have experienced overwhelming traumas.

Introduction

When shots ring out in the darkness is the sacred present? Violence is the lived reality for gang affiliated youth who live and die by the power and fear of physical violence.[1] If religious educators are going to respond to these young people in a transformative way, the conversation needs to be reframed around how community members, theologians and most importantly the individuals themselves, speak/listen about the tragic events that occur in our neighborhoods, looking specifically to the lost, subjugated and colonized practices of the community. Much ink has been spilled in texts on the topic of gang and youth violence, while more blood continues to be spilled on the streets of our neighborhoods. In an attempt to bring more light than heat to this conversation, this paper moves from the traditional way of speaking to and about this community – intervening/preventing violent acts through examining the people and reasons behind these acts – to one that attempts to understand the trauma experienced by these young people as the disruption of the narratives, lives, identities, communities and theologies of those who experience the realities of violence. The paper offers a first hand account and contextual understanding from which to view this ongoing conversation of violence, trauma and religious education. The paper examines how trauma theory can inform theologians and religious educators to account for those who have survived extreme violence. The paper addresses their experience of fragmentation and disruption of the problem-answer, life-death, and redemptive narratives that are so prevalent in responding to trauma. Further, the paper gestures towards decolonizing religious education, suggesting that exploring the lost, subjugated and oppressed religious practices can be acts of healing.

Gang Affiliation in a Community: An Overview

One afternoon, I geared up to go to the mall with a set of friends. I put on my JJ Stokes, 49er football jersey, pulled my extra-wide corduroy pants just high enough on my legs to be considered pants and not knee pads, passed the belt through the belt buckle with my last initial in old English on it, draped the remainder of the belt down over my leg and set out to join my homies. After a few hours of cruising the mall on foot, we stepped out to go home. BWAP!

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[1] Throughout the paper I will use the term "gang affiliated youth" to describe these young people. I use this term instead of gang member, violent youth, assault victims/perpetrators, etc., precisely because affiliation, as I see it, allows for a more expansive view of the group that witnesses or experiences gang violence and trauma.

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BWAP! One of my friends, Jesse, was shot twice in the chest. Our clothing matched from head to toe, same jersey, same pants, same belt … save the stains of blood on his jersey.

Practical theologian Evelyn Parker notes that movies like *American History X, America Me* and *Boyz in da Hood* are good examples of how the American public views and stereotypes African American and Latin@ gangs.[2] For many people, pop-culture provides the definitions and images of a gang members and violent youth. Parker troubles these understandings by first examining the definition of the term *gang*. She claims that the definition most often quoted form Malcolm Klein's *Street Gangs and Street Workers* as "any denotable adolescent group of youngsters who: (a) are generally perceived as distinct aggregation by others in their neighborhood; (b) recognize themselves as a denotable group (almost invariably with a group name) and (c) have been involved in a sufficient number of delinquent incidents to call forth a consistent negative response from neighborhood residents and/or enforcement agencies."[3] The National Youth Gang Survey adds a gang has "three or more members, generally aged 12–24; members share an identity, typically linked to a name, and often other symbols; members view themselves as a gang, and they are recognized by others as a gang; the group has some permanence and a degree of organization; the group is involved in an elevated level of criminal activity."[4] This definition, according to Parker, does not take serious issues of race, ethnicity, class, gender and religious beliefs regarding youth gangs. Looking at Salinas, these factors cannot be ignored.

In Salinas the Latin@ community constitutes nearly 75% of the total population and gang violence is a way of life for more than 3,000 of our city's 150,000 citizens.[5] What the US Census Bureau does not indicate is the territorial boundaries of the sixteen youth gangs and the two prison gangs located in Salinas. A special crime report released by the Salinas Police Department in 2010 asserted that 91% of all homicides are gang related. Of these crimes, the report noted, "68% of the suspects of violent crime were 24 years and younger, 92% of these suspects were Hispanic."[6] These largely Latin@ gangs either identify with Norteño (Northerners who identify with the color red and the number XIV, 14, symbolizing the 14th letter in the alphabet, N) or Sureño (Southerners who identify with the color blue, the number XIII, 13 symbolizing the 13th letter in the alphabet, M, signifying the Mexican Mafia, also known as *La Eme*).[7] While Salinas's gang population largely identifies as Norteño, the rise of Sureño members and subsequent territorial changes have increased the amount of violence. The introductions of MS-13 (Mara Salvatrucha – mostly Salvadoran-Americans, but also other national and first generation Central American undocumented peoples) into communities in and around Salinas are not only shifting these territorial boundaries, but are also troubling power

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[2] Evelyn Parker, "Hungry for Honor: Children in Violent Youth Gangs," *Interpretation* (April 2001): 150.

[3] Mark Klein, *Street Gangs and Street Workers* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), quoted in I. A. Spergel, *Youth Gang Problem: A Community Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 22.

[4] National Youth Gang Survey Analysis, "Defining Gangs and Designating Gang Membership," *National Gang Center*, Accessed October 23, 2011: http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Survey-Analysis/Defining-Gangs.

[5] US Census Bureau Data, Accessed August 27, 2014, http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/0664224.html.

[6] Police Chief Louis Fetherolf, "Report to the Community July 2010," Accessed October 10, 2011, http://www.salinaspd.com/pdf/ReportCommunity2010.pdf.

[7] FBI Report on *2011 National Gang Threat Assessment,* Accessed September 1, 2014. http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2011/october/gangs_102011.

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dynamics in the region.[8] Race, ethnicity, nationality, class are all key indicators of how borders are being defined. Regardless of identification however, the trauma experienced by the community challenges religious educators to take serious the insights of trauma research.

Trauma Theory-ology

Trembling and bewildered, I ran away from the mall. I said nothing for I was afraid. I still can see the stains on Jesse's jersey from where the bullets entered his chest. Every time I put my running shoes on, I am preparing to run from the violence.[9]

It is from this experience and these violent images that I investigate the insights by theologians engaged in trauma theory.[10] Theologians such as Serene Jones, Wendy Farley, Phillis Sheppard and Shelly Rambo are at the forefront of this expanding field. These theologians reflect on how theological texts, practices and traditions may inform or transform the lives of victims of trauma. Trauma theory, as these theologians articulate it, provides a timely reworking of the current models and modes of approaching gang-affiliated youth. Trauma theory for those responding to gang and youth violence reorients us to the disruption that moments of extreme violence or the threat of violence causes to one's personal, communal and theological narratives.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV defines traumatic events as the real or imagined threat of "…actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others" and a typical response to such events as an "intense fear helplessness or horror."[11] As a result, trauma most often focuses on the specific wound(s) remaining after the event or events have past. Therefore, under this threat and fear, trauma is often "expressed in terms of what exceeds categories of comprehension of what exceeds the human capacity to take in and process the external world."[12] For communities where youth and gang violence is so prevalent, Serene Jones claims it is essential to become aware of how "such an experience shifts how one thinks about language and silence, how one understand the workings of memory, how one assesses the instability of reason and the fragility of our capacity to will and to act, how one grapples with the fragmentation of perception and the quick

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[8] FBI Report in 2008,"The MS-13 Threat: A National Assessment." Published on January 14, 2008. Accessed July 15, 2014, http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2008/january/ms13_011408 .

[9] Adapted from Mark 16: 8. "And they went out, and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them: and they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid."

[10] I have neither the expertise nor the space to develop a history of the field of trauma theory. However, I offer resources through qualified professionals and my own exposure to a variety of trauma texts that have been instrumental in my understanding of trauma. Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 1992); Babette Rothschild, *The Body Remembers: The Psychophysiology of Trauma and Trauma Treatment* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 2000); Bessel A. van der Kolk, ed. *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Psychological and Biological Sequelae* (Washington D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, 1984).

[11] *DSM IV- Sourcebook*, ed. by Thomas Widiger (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1994), 431. One important note is that diagnosis of trauma will also include 'dreams' as ways of expressing the traumatic events. Within my own Latin@ community, dreams provide a more familiar way of discussing these events, than perhaps rational discourse often affords. Laura Rendón's work, located towards the end of the paper in particular makes use of dreams as a way of educating the community.

[12] Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010), 4.

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disintegration of order, and how once conceives of imagination, recognizing that at any moment haunting, shadowy scenes of violence can disrupt it, twist it, and shut it down."[13]

Similarly, Shelly Rambo claims that trauma theory provides a reworking of theological practice. She claims that trauma theory points to an uncovering of a middle discourse, which "resists the redemptive gloss that can often be placed, harmfully, over experiences of suffering and to orient us differently to the death-life narrative at the heart of the Christian tradition…Without witnessing to what does not go away, to what remains, theology fails to provide a sufficient account of redemption."[14] Trauma theory accounts for the middle discourse, in doctrinal terms, the *Harrowing of Hell*.[15] Following Hans Urs von Balthasar, Rambo claims that in the aftermath of the Cross, Christ does not descend into Hell on Holy Saturday and redeem all of its inhabitants. Jesus does not call to life those that are held captive in the depths of Hell. There is no victory over death on Holy Saturday. There is only a life not discernible by conceivable frameworks of understanding. For witnesses of trauma, Rambo points to what remains in the aftermath of the traumatic experience. This remaining is not always redemptive or life-giving, but instead is what she defines as Spirit. The Spirit remains with the victims of traumatic experiences, who are either living in or continuing to be haunted by the traumatic experience(s). This relates to the community in Salinas I have been walking alongside; however, it is not the Christian Hell that our youth are living in or even a category they are using to reflect on theologically. When the *tlamatiquetl*, or local leader, performs the burial ceremony, it is precisely in a recovery of ancient Nahuatl mythical and religious narratives that death is cast. In Nahuatl traditions and in the understanding of this community, it is the person's death, which marks where their soul will go – *mictlan*, the underworld if the death was a good death. If it is a violent or premature death, our tradition implies they might haunt the community.[16]

What trauma theory and theology is keen to point out in both the work of Jones and Rambo is that the traumatic experience causes a sense of fragmentation in one's understanding of their communities, their religious, familial and personal narrative, their sense of safety and their understanding of theology. Most importantly, they both suggest that there is a harrowing 'spirit' following the violence. It is this harrowing 'spirit' that religious educators are being called to address. A new approach to gang-affiliated violence will be suggested with attention paid to the liminal space between life and death. It is here where a decolonial interreligious pedagogy is needed.

Towards a Decolonial Interreligious Pedagogy

A Rosary said for Jesse. A Vigil in his honor. An altar of Mary with Jesse's picture constructed. Offerings given. A tlamatiquetl provides smoke, releasing Jesse. I left my Jersey at

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[13] Serene Jones, *Trauma and Grace: Theology in a Ruptured World* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 11.

[14] Shelly Rambo, *Spirit and Trauma*, 8.

[15] This Harrowing of Hell is developed theologically from the Apostles Creed: "I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; *he descended into Hell*; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."

[16] Because of the way the community views and works through death, specifics of how community members interpret and recover Nahuatl traditions will remain undisclosed, in keeping with the wishes of the community members with whom I have been working.

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the Altar, not knowing why I had put it on in the first place. I saw our shared history rising and disappearing in the smoke, not knowing whether he would venture to mictlan or continue to haunt our fragmented reality.

Traditionally, the literature on gang and youth violence asks the question "why do people join a gang in *our* neighborhood?"[17] Evelyn Parker pushes religious educators to move beyond the why question. Here, the hope is that religious educators might begin to look at methods and practices of healing for the deep wounds that gang-affiliated youth experience. While very little has been written with regards to religious education and decolonial theory, what has been written is in relation to biblical pedagogy and biblical interpretation. This work provides keen insights for the sort of recovery of healing practices the community needs. For example, Boyung Lee in "When the Text is the Problem: A Postcolonial Approach to Biblical Pedagogy," examines the use of a hermeneutics of decolonization. Lee pays particular attention to "the expansion of Western imperialism, which is one of Western Christianity's attendant spirits."[18] By noting how the tradition came to be in this space – Western Christianity's attendant spirits' – decolonizing religious education becomes a transformative act, not only for acknowledging that colonial violence happened in the community, but also continues to epistemologically fragment the local and communal narrative. Walter Mignolo suggests "decolonization of knowledge shall be understood in the constant double movement of unveiling the geo-political location of theology, secular philosophy and scientific reason and simultaneously affirming the modes and principles of knowledge that have been denied by the rhetoric of Christianization, civilization, progress, development, market democracy."[19] This work of decolonizing knowledge opens the door to the local knowledges that religious educators can leverage to heal communities and individuals.

Knowledge generation as a political act, or more precisely, a geo-political act, in religious education is not new. Thomas Groome defines political in terms of the Greek *politike* meaning the art of "*enabling the shared life of citizens*."[20] The political beginnings of knowledge for Groome are traced in Christian religious education from Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, through the European Enlightenment to today. By introducing decolonial discourse, religious education might trace a different epistemological history – at least in the to acknowledge those mythical and religious realities of the context from which I am writing – that offers a more expansive and inclusive pedagogical impetus for enabling the shared life of the community. Following Mignolo once again, this knowledge generation "is a story that does not begin in Greece; or, if you wish, has two beginnings, one in Greece and the other in the less known memoires of millions of people in the Caribbean and the Atlantic coast, and better known memories (although not as well known as the Greek legacies) in the Andes and in Mesoamerica."[21] Pointing out the need to identify other knowledges that exist or that have been subjugated under the weight of colonization is not just to show that religious education has played a part in subjugating local and indigenous knowledges and people. Rather, the purpose is to show that drawing on the local

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[17] Martine Jankowski, *Islands in the Street: Gangs and American Urban Society* (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1991), 40-47.

[18] Boyung Lee, "When the Text is the Problem: A Postcolonial Approach to Biblical Pedagogy," *Religious Education,* 102, 1 (Winter 2007), 46.

[19] Walter Mignolo, "Delinking," *Cultural Studies*, 21, no. 2 (2007): 463.

[20] Thomas Groome, *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastor Ministry* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1998), 12.

[21] Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 17.

histories, local practices and religiosity of the people for healing after traumatic violence could be a faithful act of religious educators.

Conclusion

Though much of what is located in this paper draws on the work of Christian religious educators, there are a few insights/adaptations that make up the interreligious pedagogy for the population in Salinas. This pedagogy comes from the work with local leaders in the community and working with formerly gang-affiliated persons with the sole intent of addressing he experience and witness to trauma. Drawing on Evelyn Parker's work, the recommendations for an interreligious pedagogy are

1) Alternative forms of ministry,
2) Working with community partners, and,
3) Focusing on individual transformation through communal practices.

Parker suggests that programs designed to empower youth can provide alternative spaces for them to congregate.[22] Because these young people are surviving both psychologically and perhaps even physically between life and death, religious educators are beginning to imagine new ways of offering healing to these individuals. One example of moving beyond work and towards an interreligious pedagogy is recognizing that ministry is not just drawing on the Christian practice. Rather, one can draw on those religious practices of healing that are infused with a sense of decolonial recovery and draw on the subjugated knowledges of the community. As noted above in the story about Jesse, a local *tlamatiquetl* or person of knowledge, offered a Nahuatl practice of transition Jesse (and the community) into death.

Second, Parker suggests that working with government and other non-profit agencies is one way congregations can get involved in responding to gang and youth violence. The civic responses are often made through the judicial and other social services. While these outlets offer healing of sorts, as noted earlier, are typically responses to gang affiliated youth as a *problem*. Alternative community partners in Salinas would be the local community groups that have their own "healing circles." Here they offer the healing practices of our ancestors and attempt to recover ancient Aztec healing practices. These "healing circles" meet in community centers or in local homes and reflect the desire of a community to address and heal its own wounds.

Third, Parker suggests that congregations should focus on an individual's transformation, paying attention to the *somebodyness* of the individual. Following Jacquelyn Grant she claims "to be somebody is to be human," and that these young people need to be recognized as humans too.[23] This focus on individual transformation is also where interreligious practices come into play. By asserting a recovery of one's ancestry and harkening back to lost or subjugated practices, individuals are able to recover a sense of self. For victims of trauma, such recovery is important as they attempt to piece together lost or broken narratives. More importantly, spiritual and religious practices in the aftermath of trauma reflect the shared histories and needs of the local community. Laura Rendón notes the importance of recognizing Aztec spiritual practices that also served as education practices. She calls upon educators to become "spiritual warriors," and to be guides that can "breathe through the cracks of our open hearts. And may our collective breath be the vision of a transformative dream of education that speaks the language of heart and

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[22] Parker, "Hungry for Honor," 160.

[23] Parker, "Hungry for Honor," 160. C.f. Jacqueline Grant, "A Theological Framework," in *Working with Black Youth*, ed. C. Foster and G. Shockley (Nashville: Abington Press, 1989), 69.

mind and the truth of wholeness, harmony, social justice, and liberation."[24] An interreligious pedagogy calls upon religious educators not only breathe life into the fragmented narratives of gang-affiliated youth and the communities that experience gang violence – as Ehecatl breathes life into the void – but also challenges religious educators to know the spiritual practices of the community and how to leverage those practices to serve personal transformation for those who are trying to heal from deep wounds.

In the Harrowing of Hell,
 The Church wears the blood stained jersey of Jesse.
  On Holy Saturday I enter mictlan,
   And my stainless jersey rattles in its shackles.
    Longing to be free.

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[24] Laura Rendón, *Sentipensante (Sensing/Thinking) Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice, and Liberation* (Sterling: Stylus Publishing, LLC., 2008), 151.

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"Mourn First:" Interrupting and Unlearning Violence
Through Community Practices of Lament

Abstract

This paper examines the theological and pedagogical significance of communal practices of lament that emerge from communities wounded by ongoing violence. Utilizing as a case study the Good Friday Neighborhood Way of the Cross at St. Mary of the Angels Parish in Roxbury, MA, I propose the dynamics of a "practice of lament" and examine the ways in which such practices educate for nonviolence, as persons and communities on the margins become agents in mourning, naming, and ultimately transforming violent realities.

I. Introduction

On a chilly April morning, a crowd sets out from St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Parish in the urban Boston neighborhood of Roxbury. They are Hispanic, African-American, Caribbean, white; first-generation immigrant and fourth-generation Bostonian. Some push strollers and bicycles; one walks a dog. Cars reluctantly come to halt after fruitless attempts to circumvent the crowd spilling unapologetically into both lanes of Homestead Street. The mournful notes of a traditional Spanish-language hymn of lament fill the streets. Leading the procession is a middle-aged Puerto Rican man, silently carrying a large cross on his shoulder.

It is Good Friday, and the community of St. Mary's is walking the *Via Crucis* – the Way of the Cross.[1] In this procession, there are no "passion play" costumes, only a cross. The fourteen stations are not pictures or statues but places: street-corners, storefronts, and sidewalks throughout the community where, during the year prior, life, death, and resurrection have

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[1] The ritual is a contextualized version of the Stations of the Cross, the traditional Roman Catholic Lenten devotion in which a series of fourteen stations mark successive points along Jesus' journey to his death on the cross in the Gospels. In their earliest form, the Stations originated as a medieval Franciscan devotional for Christian on pilgrimage to Jerusalem – a way of remembering Jesus' passion and death by ritually retracing his steps. The division and codification of fourteen "official" stations developed during eighteenth century. The walls of most Roman Catholic churches bear some depiction of the fourteen stations, typically in the form of artist renderings or small sculptures. Sometimes, the stations are translated into performance in the form of so-called "passion plays," in which groups of faithful, often children, dramatically reenact the final hours of Jesus' life, culminating with his death on the cross.

contended and comingled. The ritual was begun around three decades ago by members of area parishes during a period of intense gang violence and has continued annually ever since. Beginning and ending at St. Mary's and taking a different route every year, the procession moves throughout the streets, stopping for prayer at sites of the neighborhood's own passion: the site of a massive fire in a low-income housing complex; the intersection where gang violence cut short another young life; the parking lot the local YMCA where mentors have, in concrete ways, become instruments of resurrection in the community. The ritual has served in ways both symbolic and practical to interrupt cycles of violence in the Egleston Square community.

In this paper, I examine the theological and pedagogical significance of practices of lament that emerge from communities wounded by ongoing violence. In such situations, violent acts are often reacted to (through, for example, incarceration, retaliation, police brutality, white flight, neighborhood divestment, etc.) but less often reflected upon. Even more rarely do members of affected communities become agents in processes of naming, mourning, and ultimately transforming situations and systems of injustice. I suggest that practices of lament play a critical pedagogical role in communities where violence is prevalent, and that such practices, when they are public and emerge from lived experience, function as interruptive in such contexts. I identify three dimensions of such practices: naming pain and protesting injustice, envisioning hope, and engaging in transformative praxis. To ground and illustrate this dynamic, I turn attention to the Good Friday Neighborhood Way of the Cross at St. Mary of the Angels.

II.   Lamentations: From Text to Practice

In contemporary Western societies, where pain is treated as an individual, private experience, we must be reminded that pain is also a fundamentally social phenomenon.[2] If pain is not fundamentally social, then lament – the expression of grief over pain or loss – does not need to be "practiced," at least not communally or collectively. If pain is social, however, the loss of lament in public life, as Walter Brueggemenn argues, is indeed a costly one and recovery is in order.[3]

Harvey Cox argues invites us to turn attention to the book of Lamentations, a "shockingly current text"[4] about how a community deals with the memory of individual and collective trauma.[5] Its attention to the shared, communal dimensions of grief, trauma, and healing suggests a foundation for the elaboration of the dynamics of shared practices of lament. The meaning of this evocative text, Cox argues, is not uncovered through the objective, emotionally detached process of historical-critical investigation. Rather, the text "speaks" when readers/hearers enter

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[2] It should be noted, too, that this privatization and "sanitization" of pain is especially characteristic of white, middle class experience in the United States. Through the dominant lens, vocalized emotion and "messy" grief is suspect, especially when it comes from women and persons of color.

[3] Walter Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 3 (1986), 64.

[4] Harvey Cox, in Cox and Stephanie Paulsell, *Lamentations and the Song of Songs* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 4. In this text, Cox and Paulsell engage in theological reflection in conversation with these works, not in biblical exegesis.

[5] Ibid., 6

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into and participate in the drama of the lament – when, in conversation with the text, one listens, feels, remembers, cries.[6] Lament, in other words, should be practiced.

In her study in aesthetics and ethics focusing on the Mural Arts Project in Philadelphia, Maureen O'Connell advances a conceptual bridge between lament as encountered scripturally and historically, as in the book of Lamentations and the Psalms, to lament as publically and communally performed in ways that include and surpass the linguistic. O'Connell defines lament as an act of truth-telling that evokes social consciousness and moral responsibility and opens a public space for transformative compassion. Lament conveys "the *groaning and suffering* of a people, 'sometimes too deep for words' (Rom 8:23 and 26)."[7] O'Connell, like Cox, emphasizes the necessarily shared, public dimension of lament. Thus, laments are communal, spiritual practices that express simultaneous separation from and desire for reunion with God. They express "an acute sense that it need not be, and… public demands that their circumstances be changed."[8] Because lament is public, it possesses a prophetic and interruptive character. The act of naming, mourning, and ultimately transforming unjust realities becomes a critical source of moral agency and subjecthood, particularly for those dehumanized by injustice.[9] As public testimony, lament also represents an important redistribution of power not only between petitioner (whose claim is legitimized) and God (who risks a response) but also between parties within a society. Brueggemann argues that when cries of pain and demands for justice are erased from the public's senses, such pleas lose their claim on public consciousness and such questions no longer implicate civic and religious authorities.[10] For persons and societies, there is something deeply at stake in the practice of lament.

III.   Dimensions of Lament

Bringing insights that emerge from examining the role of lament in Christian tradition into conversation with practices of mourning that arise from the lived experience of individuals and communities victimized by systems of injustice in today's world, three dimensions of such practices emerge: communities publically name past and present injustices and speak/perform words of truth against such injustices,[11] envision hope at the site of this naming, and engage in transformative moral action in service of a humanizing vision of life together.

a. *Dimension One: Naming Pain and Protesting Injustice*

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[6] Ibid., 19

[7] Maureen H. O'Connell, *If These Walls Could Talk: Community Muralism and the Beauty of Justice* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012), 188.

[8] O'Connell, 189

[9] O'Connell, 189

[10] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 64

[11] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th Anniversary Edition (New York: Continuum, 2000), 87.

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Lament necessarily begins with the naming of pain by victims and those close to them. Will Morales, former high-profile member of a powerful Egleston gang,[12] recalled the way in which Fr. Jack Roussin, then pastor of St. Mary's, encouraged him to practice lament:

> When the guys were thinking about retaliating [against a gang-related killing], and just going all out, and figuring, hey, my boy gave his life for us, we should give our life up for him and make a sacrifice, it was Fr. Jack who… was able to convince them to mourn first. He was just saying that you're skipping the mourning process. 'Cuz he knew that if they mourned, and they experienced loss, then something might inhibit that thought process about what their next steps are gonna be. So he was trying to get them to start thinking about mourning first. It's a practice that I tend to use nowadays [with young men at the YMCA], because it's what I remember.[13]

For Morales, the act of mourning functioned as interruptive to the cycle of violence and retaliation. To name pain is to dwell, momentarily, in the reality of loss. As Cox notes, "people cannot jump immediately to the task of rebuilding their lives or their cities after a disaster without a period in which they acknowledge the full scale and import of what they have lost."[14] When mourning is the result of injustice, to name loss is also to expose and decry oppressive social structures, especially those of racism and poverty, which operate insidiously to normalize and concretize such cycles of loss in communities like Egleston Square. Thus, the expression of mourning must always also be a protest against structures of sin that are its root cause.

b. *Dimension Two: Envisioning Hope*

Mourning occasions sustained presence to that which should not be. Because the act of naming is an act of recognition, it is also an act of hope, a beginning to imagine what should be. The radical "no" to present evil invites and implies a hopeful "yes" to a humanizing vision wherein this present evil is subverted. One of the distinguishing features of the Psalms of lament is the movement from expressing pain to envisioning hope.[15] These Psalms are filled with examples of this at-first-inexplicable jump from visceral cries of anguish to praise of God. Psalm 22 serves as a clear example:

> *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*
> *Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?...*
>
> *Yet you are holy,*
> *enthroned on the praises of Israel.*
> *In you our ancestors trusted;*

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[12] After serving seven years in prison on drug trafficking charges and turning his life around, Morales currently works as the Executive Director of the Egleston Square YMCA. Now a public figure in the community, Morales is comfortable with the use of his name in this paper.
[13] Interview with William Morales
[14] Cox, 133
[15] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 57

they trusted, and you delivered them. (NRSV 22:1, 3-4)[16]

Neither the cries of anguish nor the concluding praise can be understood apart from one another. The lament, which bespeaks both remembrance and expectation of God's salvific intervention, gives cause and context to the words of praise.[17] And yet the God portrayed in Lamentations – Cox puts it bluntly – is "not the smiling superhelper who will lift us from our worries."[18] God is praised as the one in whom, despite apparent silence in the face of continued human suffering, God's chosen ones choose to hope. In this way, praise is as much about memory as it is about expectation: *it was you who took me from the womb*; *it was you who delivered our ancestors; it is you who heard my cries.*

Popular images of social action often conceptualize it as the natural overflow of indignation: "We're mad as hell and we're not going to take it anymore!" But lament invites us to pause between mourning and action in a middle space: the space of hope, perhaps even praise. It is here that a community is re-membered to itself. Hope expressed in and awakened by praise entails self-definition, self-articulation, a definitive reclamation of the community's belovedness by God. Thus, "[laments] are often not couched in logic or even in the language of the dominant culture in order to protect the depth or loss they convey from easy explanation or from being too quickly vanquished from the public consciousness."[19] The embodied, constructive work of praise, self-remembrance, and the naming of reasons for hope must precede action, or else such action emerges from a community still defined by, if against, the words and categories of what Brueggemann calls the royal or dominant consciousness.[20] As Will Morales so clearly perceived, there is an intimate relationship between the way we mourn loss and the way we ultimately respond to it. We cannot move directly from "My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?" to action, or else the acts that flow from mourning will be acts of desperation and revenge. If action is to transform cycles of violence rather than perpetuate them, then envisioning and sharing past and present hopes is critical as lament is practiced.

c. *Dimension Three: Engaging in Transformative Praxis*

At the end of his analysis, Cox wonders: "After reading Lamentations, one cannot help wondering: What happened next? How did this wounded city pull itself together?" "Perhaps in the end," he conjectures, "Lamentations set the stage for what is to follow—the insistence by the prophets Amos and Jeremiah on equity and justice, the vision of a beloved community spelled out by the Sermon on the Mount and by the New Jerusalem envisioned in the book of Revelation."[21] It is here that we are moved to what Fr. Bryan Massingale calls "risky speech and increasingly bold actions that seek to redress the evils that so shock and offend me."[22]

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[16] Readers of this paper are encouraged to read Psalm 22 in its entirety.
[17] Brueggemann, "The Costly Loss of Lament," 58
[18] Cox, 5
[19] O'Connell, 190
[20] In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* Paulo Freire makes a similar point by distinguishing between subjects, "those who know and act," from objects, "which are known and acted upon." See translator's note, Introduction to 30th Anniversary Edition, 36.
[21] Cox, 141
[22] Massingale, cited in O'Connell, 190

Transformative action is the natural overflow of initial processes of naming and unmasking unjust realities and envisioning more hopeful and humanizing ones.[23]

IV.   Walking the Neighborhood Way of the Cross: The Streets of Egleston Square

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Egleston Square neighborhood became virtually synonymous with gang violence in Boston. The gangs emerged out an urban environment defined by poverty, unemployment, and poor education.[24] It was within this milieu of gun violence, gang territorialism, and cheap crack cocaine that Fr. Jack Roussin ministered.[25] Fr. Jack believed in what one parishioner called "shoe leather ministry."[26] He cultivated deep and unconventional relationships with the gang members who would deal drugs in Egleston Square. "He was always reaching out to us not by inviting us to the church but by really bringing the church to the corner," Morales recalled. "He developed a deep relationship with some of the most hardcore guys in this block. And they all had his respect. They're like, 'If he says something, we respect it.'"[27]

It was during those years that the Good Friday ritual came into the form it continues to take. By tracing the intertwined histories of the neighborhood and the Neighborhood Way of the Cross, it is clear that the ritual evolved as practice of lament in Roxbury. All three dimensions are illustrated in the practice:

Naming Pain, Protesting Injustice. In the walking, stopping, and praying of the Way of the Cross, the violence that characterizes the present is publically named, mourned, and protested – not only the more obvious scourges of gang violence and drug trafficking, but also the more frequently ignored violences which insidiously function to concretize the urban status quo: racism, municipal neglect, incarceration, poor education, domestic violence, gentrification, poor health care access, and more. In the words of Bradford Hinze, laments "bring public expression to those very fears and terrors that have been denied so long and surpassed so deeply that we do not know they are there."[28] Exposing such systems and cycles by bringing the cross to sites where they have manifested themselves as acts of violence and desperation, the ritual becomes a powerful act of truth-telling, opening up a space for the hope-filled envisioning of "what should be" in the context of the community.

Envisioning Hope. During the Way of the Cross, the streets of Egleston Square become a shared vernacular in which the history of the parish and neighborhood as well as the Christian

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[23] We can recall here Paulo Freire's understanding of praxis as "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it."

[24] According to 1990 Census data, in the Greater Egleston Square community, 32% of youth in the largely African American and Hispanic area lived in poverty. At 9.2%, the unemployment rate in Egleston was considerably higher than the state average, and nearly half of the adults living in Egleston (47%) did not hold a high school diploma. 1990 also marked the apex of Boston's gang epidemic: 73 young people were murdered in the city that year, a staggering 230 percent increase over a three-year period (Lanfer, 90).

[25] Roussin was Parish Administrator and later Pastor of St. Mary of the Angels from 1976 to 1992.

[26] Interview 14

[27] Interview with William Morales

[28] Bradford Hinze, cited in O'Connell, 192

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passion narrative are both translated, remembered, and shared. The abundant living text of the ritual is composed in a dual vernacular – that of the Gospel, and that of the streets themselves – disclosing a surplus of interpretations that cannot be contained or comprehensively articulated.[29] Footsteps ritually reclaim and transfigure streets marred by violence, mapping them into the contours of a sacred topography beyond which lies the uncharted but promised hope of resurrection. The ritual provides a space for the ongoing, public construction and reconstruction of a communal narrative – or counter-narrative – in which private experiences of suffering and hope are folded into and juxtaposed against the paradigmatic sacred story of the Christian faith community. Recalling the words of Brueggemann, the ritual represents a temporary but important subversion and redistribution of typical power relations: streets marked by gang- and drug-related violence and patrolled unceasingly by police cars are reclaimed, subverting what Karen Mary Davalos calls the "architecture of domination,"[30] thus becoming a source of shared identity and revealing Egleston Square as a privileged *locus theologicus* for a community on the social and ecclesial margins of Boston. This hope is illustrated in the inclusion within the Stations of the ritual spaces not only of crucifixion but also of resurrection: the community development coalition, the healthcare agency for the homeless, the neighborhood bilingual school which not only educated several generations of Roxbury children but also represented one of few safe spaces during the violence of the 1980s and 90s.

    Engaging in Transformative Praxis. The Neighborhood Way of the Cross ritual has served in ways both symbolic and concrete to interrupt cycles of violence in the Egleston Square community and has long worked in tandem with efforts by other local churches as well as public officials and civic organizations towards transforming cycles of violence. Interviews reveal the conviction on the part of many in and around the community that the annual practice is among the neighborhood's most powerful teaching tools in the ongoing struggle to educate for peace and nonviolence in Egleston Square. Gerd Baumann highlights the capacity of ritual not only to reflect or reinforce existing social structures, as many ritual theorists have contended, but also to tend toward cultural and social change.[31] The Way of the Cross, as a ritual of transformation, functions in a way that implicates both community "insiders" (parishioners, neighborhood residents, local police) and "outsiders" (members of the broader Boston community, elected state and local government officials) in the work of constructing a more just and hope-filled future for Egleston Square.[32]

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[29] See David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 1981).

[30] Karen Mary Davalos, "'The Real Way of Praying:' The Via Crucis, *Mexicano* Sacred Space, and the Architecture of Domination," in *Horizons of the Sacred: Mexican Traditions in U.S. Catholicism.* Edited by Timothy Matovina and Gary Riebe-Estrella (New York: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[31] Gerd Baumann, "Ritual Implicates 'Others:' Rereading Durkheim in a Plural Society," in *Understanding Ritual*, edited by Daniel De Coppet (London: Routlage, 1992), 97-116.

[32] Throughout its history, the ritual's public character has served to highlight places in the community in need of prayer and action: the Egleston branch of the Boston Library slated for closure, the local YMCA targeted for relocation, even the parish itself, which was identified for closure during a wave of Boston parish shutterings in 2004. (All three remained open, some would say miraculously). The ritual can also be viewed as affecting transformation *within* the parish community. St. Mary of the Angels is a parish wherein distinct English-speaking and

O'Connell notes, "Laments heal precisely because they leave some wounds open so that their pain might prick the public consciousness and stir people to action."[33] It is these open wounds that, in each of our communities, continue to invite and demand a response. May we recognize that the call to action that these wounds awakens in us is, first and foremost, a call to mourn – to publically, communally, and boldly practice lament.

Spanish-speaking communities coexist. While St. Mary's undoubtedly falls on the more integrationist end of the spectrum – most committees include representatives from both linguistic communities, and most nonliturgical events at the parish are bilingual – the ritual also functions in a smaller but no less important way as an instrument of peacebuilding between distinct cultural and linguistic communities within the parish. While a thorough examination of the intra-parochial significance of the ritual lies beyond the scope of the present paper, many parishioners interviewed noted that the Way of the Cross served as an important site of crossing cultural, linguistic, and class borders that exist within the parish community.

[33] O'Connell, 193

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"We Teach Our Children to See a Human Being There": Women's Formal and Informal Religious Education Work in Transforming Religious Conflict in Indonesia

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Introduction: Women as Peacebuilders

"Kill or be killed, that was the situation we faced. We did not want to die. So we killed." Such words were spoken to me repeatedly in interviews with a wide range of people--pastors, students, drivers, farmers, mothers--all living in the aftermath of the violent religious conflicts taking place across Indonesia over the past two decades. Indonesia, a religiously and ethnically diverse archipelago nation in Southeast Asia, has become the site of continuing violent conflicts between Christians and Muslims. Thankfully, today in many areas much of the overt violence has subsided, although flare-ups continue across the country and some areas continue to be hot spots for ongoing fighting. Renewed fighting is kept in check in post-conflict areas, in part, by agreements hammered out between traditional community elders, religious leaders, and government officials.

Such "official" peace processes and negotiated settlements are important for bringing an end to fighting. But *peacebuilding,* the work of building relational and structural conditions that make it possible for those who have been at war with one another to live together peaceably over the long term, does not happen merely through the signing of agreements at a negotiating table. Peacebuilding takes place through ongoing, everyday practices that create the conditions for positive, non-violent coexistence. As Sadako Ogata observes, : [xiv] "In situations of internal conflict, peace agreements sometimes succeed in stopping wars but rarely achieve the building of real peace. Peace must be built from the ground up… ." In this paper, I explore strategies used by women peacebuilders in post-conflict areas of Indonesia.

Along with other scholars interested in religious conflict and peacebuilding work, I have observed that women, while frequently absent or excluded from formal peace negotiations, nevertheless often play key roles in their communities as peacebuilders (Kuehnast, Oudratt, and Hernes, 2011; Kaufman and Williams, 2010). International recognition of the significance of women's experiences and perspectives in spite of their exclusion from formal peace processes, and their invisibility in publically acknowledged work of peacebuilding, led to the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, calling for greater participation of women in addressing conflict and in post-conflict peace work. The resolution also calls for greater protection of women from sexual violence in and in the aftermath of conflict. In spite of this international consensus of the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding, many of their contributions remain undervalued.

Nevertheless, women continue to work for peace, in the midst of and in the aftermath of violent conflict. The work of education, both formal and informal, comprises a primary platform for women's peacebuilding work in various contexts around the globe. The importance of women's peacebuilding through education was demonstrated again when, in 2014, I traveled to Indonesia for the purpose of meeting with and learning about this work across a variety of post-conflict communities. There, I both witnessed, and heard stories of, women's educational work for peace in places of religious conflict. My larger study is based on ethnographic interviews with women from four post-conflict areas, conducted in Indonesia during May-July 2014. In this

paper, I focus on the peacebuilding practices of some women in the Moluccas, a group of islands to the north and east of Java that have been home to some of the most destructive fighting between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia.

The Face of Violent Religious Conflict in Indonesia

Pastor Jerda Djawa[1] serves a Christian congregation on the island of Halmahera in the predominantly Muslim province of North Moluccu. Halmahera became the site of some of the nation's most intense and violent conflict between 1999 and 2002, after Muslim communities reacted to a suspicious letter that reportedly called for Christians to purge the area of Muslims, and Christians responded in kind. By focusing attention upon religious identity per se, these precipitating events effectively turned what had been viewed primarily as a tension between ethnically diverse groups into a religious conflict. The result of the violence in Halmahera was severe: more than 200,000 people were displaced from their homes, with thousands of others loosing their lives in the fighting. For two years, Pastor Jerda and her congregation lived in the midst of this war zone that was Halmahera: "I was with them, I was there. I looked with them (she pauses, crying). I looked with my eyes, I felt in my heart what they saw and felt. We ran together, we hid together in ditches. My people and I, we would sleep in the day and we stayed awake at night because we had to. In war, we had to worry that someone might attack us at any time."

Families in Halmahera became desperate for food and security amid the conflict. Pastor Jerda described with anguished voice how some even gave their daughters to soldiers in the military in exchange for rice and promises of protection: "Halmahera is very fertile, and [ordinarily] it's not hard to get some food. You can go to the forest and find food, and also you can go to the sea and you can find some fish. Something like that. But during the conflict you cannot go to sea, you cannot go to the forest. It is too dangerous and the land is destroyed. So you have to buy everything. And if you have no money… if there is no money…(her voice dropped off). After a pause I asked gently, "Then you cannot survive because you have nothing?" "That's right," she replied, "Nothing but your daughters."

Further to the south, Pastor Susanna leads a congregation in a mountainous area near Ambon City. There, in 2000 as conflict spread through Ambon, thirty-five youth died when the church was burned in an attack. "The conflict began, and everyone scattered fast. At this time some houses were burned, and Muslim and Christian people suddenly were fighting each other. Before, we lived together and loved each other. Now suddenly we were fighting… Everyday there was fighting-- bombs, people taking guns to their churches, constantly people were killed.

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[1] This and other interviews took place using a combination of *Bahasa Indonesia* and English, assisted by an interpreter, and each interview was recorded with the permission of the narrator. In accordance with Virginia Theological Seminary's institutional review policies for research ethics, each participant also had the opportunity to state whether she preferred to have her identity disguised and/or be identified with a pseudonym in my use of the interviews for the research. Interestingly, all participants in the interviews said they preferred that their actual names be used, many of them adding, "because I am telling you a true story, so of course you can use my name with it." Participants were invited to identify any parts of the conversation they wished to exclude from the research, and received information for follow-up contact concerning their interviews.

Especially the elderly who could not run away, many of them died because they could not move fast to escape the fighting."

Throughout the conflict, though many people fled the area, Pastor Susanna stayed with her remaining congregation, imploring those who remained not to participate in acts of retaliatory violence. "I asked people to not kill and I asked them to forgive others. In Ambon there are people, Christians, who killed Muslims but after that they made a confession and asked for forgiveness. Then they would go out and kill again--and come back and ask [for forgiveness] again. I could not condone it. But I understand it. They do this because if you don't kill, you will be killed."

I interject at this point, "It must be hard to counsel your congregation members not to kill under those circumstances. But it sounds like you still disagreed with their choice to fight, and kept telling them to stop." "Yes," she replied. "It was very hard for me. But I still said to them, 'Don't kill.' I must teach this way with what I do and also with my words because it is a principle of my faith that we do not kill. "

The narratives of these two women church leaders underscore the complexity of Indonesia's religious violence. It is a context in which pastors opposed to violence by Christians found themselves challenged to hold to their principled positions of non-revenge in the desperation of a "kill or be killed" reality. Families struggling to survive created a questionable future life for themselves and an unbearable present for their daughters when they used one form of violence to protect themselves from another by making young women into sexual commodities for the sake of security and food. Fighting took place between two groups identified on the basis of their religions, and yet for whom other identity-elements such as ethnicity, and other (geo-political, economic) factors such as migration and external provocation, just as clearly were in play. These conflicts involved gender-based violence and food scarcity, organized conflict provocateurs from outside, and longstanding resentments between villages. Clearly there exists no singular way to name or understand these conflicts, which draws into question the common nomenclature labeling them "religious."

Everyday Religion, Everyday Peacebuilding

Recent developments in conflict and peace studies emphasize the multifaceted nature of nearly all violent conflict between religiously identified groups, to the point of drawing into question whether it is even appropriate to refer to these conflicts as religious. Conflicts are generally named religious when the identity boundaries defining contending parties is expressed in terms of their religion, representing a narrowing of identities to this single representation. On the one hand, few of these violent occurrences happen over doctrinal disagreements or matters of religious substance as such. Instead, situations of economic disparity, ethnic tensions, land rights, or migration usually underlie these fights. In many instances in Indonesia, reports of outside groups sent in by the military to instigate violent conflict by manipulating religious identities, put the responsibility for these conflicts in the hands of distant others who stand to benefit from such turmoil. There is no question that "non-religious" underlying sources of conflict give shape to Indonesia's internal violence. In an important sense it therefore is logical to say that Indonesia's many internal conflicts between Christian and Muslim groups are not actually religious conflicts per se.

But, on the other hand, those involved in Indonesia's internal violent fights unhesitatingly categorize the contending groups in terms of their religious identities, as do many outside observers who see that the conflicts occur principally between one group recognized as Christian

and another as Muslim. One of the lasting effects of the conflicts in the Moluccas has been the segregation of Muslims and Christians who formerly lived side by side. Beyond the geographical segregation is the co-occurring problem of narrowed identities wherein all matters of difference and distinction between groups come to be categorized in religious terms.

Is it then accurate to suggest that these conflicts "are not really religious," if those engaged in them as violent actors bear these religious identities, and even understand what they are doing in terms of religion? People with whom I spoke did not say that they were fighting because of the oppressive economic conditions or because of forced migration. They said things like, "I was fighting for Jesus," or "I wanted to defend my religion." They saw themselves engaging in the conflict *as a Christian or as a Muslim* specifically struggling against another who was identified on the basis of their being religiously different. Many of these conflict actors named other elements along with religion, leading me to wager the claim that Indonesia's violent conflicts, in addition to being about discrimination and economic disparity, migration and other political/social/economic phenomena, also are religious in nature, in this broader sense.

I base such a claim in part upon a distinction between religion understood as a system of doctrine to which one gives cognitive assent, and religion understood as a set of everyday life practices that embody a worldview and constitute a way of life. Sociologist Meredith McGuire (2008, p. 12) uses the term "lived religion" to refer to "how religion and spirituality are practiced, experienced, and expressed by ordinary people (rather than official spokespersons) in the context of their everyday lives." Lived religion refers to the way people "make space for God" in their everyday lives, infusing ordinary events with sacred meaning in ways that defy attempts to "structure religion out of the social system… or keep religion tightly bounded within it…(Williams, 2010, pp. 257-258). In this perspective, one is not being religious in one particular instance (such as when praying) but not in another (such as when eating without any explicit religious thematizing attached to the occasion). Instead of understanding religion as a separate component of human life and action that remains distinct from other aspects of everyday life, lived religion defines the religious as that engagement with sacred dimensions of life which finds expression in the everyday experience of people. Such a perspective hold particular salience in Indonesia, where the overt presence of religious language and practice are commonplace across all life domains, even in government.

A "lived religion" framework highlights practices shaped by and giving shape to a larger, often implicit worldview in which persons are situated in their everyday lives, that participates in comprising identity. McGuire (2008, p. 187) suggests, "When we focus on lived religion, we come to a more useful perspective on people's individual uses of religious and other cultural resources for their self-identities and commitments." Even this way of describing religion remains mired, however, in a (North American/Western) notion that to be distinctive from another person (religiously or otherwise) means exercising one's *individuality*. In the context of Indonesian cultural norms, as is the case with many other non-Western cultural groups, religion operates less as a "resource" to be "used" for individual self-expression, than as an integrated aspect of one's formation/being into particular ways of personhood that are always already communal.

Indonesia is a complex, vast archipelago nation of diverse religions in which religious life is not separated from other life-domains. Thus, while it has become popular for conflict analysts to claim that religious conflicts are only marginally focused on religion per se, such frameworks too narrowly construe religion as doctrine, and sees religious affiliation through a North American lens as an acquired or voluntary identity held by an individual. Such a perspective

misunderstands the centrality and deep integration of everyday religion in the lives and practices of people and communities in southeast Asian contexts such as Indonesia. When conflict becomes a feature of daily life, and people "make space for God" across the domains of their daily lives, then even conflict becomes a site imbued with religious meaning. From an everyday, lived religion perspective, then, Indonesia's internal violent conflicts are necessarily religious-- even as they also involve many other factors.

<u>Everyday Conflict Transformation Practices: Women's Educational Work</u>

Beyond providing a more useful way to conceptualize Indonesia's internal violent conflicts, might the paradigm of everyday or "lived religion" also offer a more helpful approach to thinking about education for conflict transformation there? An everyday, lived religion-approach to conflict transformation education would be one that understands such education taking place not only in the formal teaching and learning experiences in which the explicit curriculum focuses attention on specifically religious subject matter in the service of conflict transformation, but also in everyday, informal contexts where teaching and learning takes place as an embedded aspect of everyday life. Such a perspective embodies Lave and Wenger's (1991) Vygotskian notion of "situated learning," emphasizing learning as something that continually goes on in situations outside of schooling, as people learn and participate in the activities of their cultural communities. Barbara Rogoff (2003) similarly suggests the inseparability of culture and biology in human development, as apprenticeship in practice, or guided participation in the practices and expectations of cultural communities, operates as a primary site for education.

Indonesian women, because of their maternal and educational roles in the lives of children, often are in positions to carry out such everyday education by guiding children's participation in practices of daily living. Ana, who currently lives in the US, worked in Ambon as a nurse before deciding to leave in 2011 because of a recurrence of conflict in her area. She spoke about how she regularly took her children and their friends with her to the market, where they met and came to know the children of Muslim women who were vendors there. "My children watch everything. They are smart, they notice. And what they noticed was that we treat everyone with the same respect, both the Muslim sellers and the Christian ones. The children sometimes played with their children, they came to know Muslim children that way. It's only a small thing, you might think. But I get them to bring their friends along with us, so that the circle is a little larger. What I am trying to do is to teach them that Muslim children and other people are human like they are. If someone they meet and understand as a human being with feelings and loved ones, if that person is (seen as being) the same, like me, then it is more difficult to make them into an enemy. So first we must teach them to see a human being there, and not a 'thing.' God made all of us to live in peace."

In the everyday activity of household marketing, Ana strategically engaged in education for peacebuilding with her own children and their friends. Is it religious education? Working from the standpoint of everyday religion, it is clear that for Ana the marketplace is a not a space from which God is somehow excluded. In fact, in the very activity of encounter with religiously "other" Muslim children and adults there, Ana invokes religious meaning: "God mad all of us to live in peace." While this kind of education, situated in the context of Ana's everyday religion, of course is not a self-sufficient, stand-alone curriculum of religious education, it nevertheless is one important way Ana apprentices children in the faith practices of getting along with Muslim neighbors and of peacebuilding.

Another example of women's uses of informal and everyday educational methods for peacebuilding is Pastor Jerda's "*taman baca* " or "house for reading," in Halmahera. Pastor Jerda lives in what she calls a "mixed" housing development, populated by both Muslim and Christian families. She and her husband purchased a small house there in addition to the one they live in, to use as a space where women and children in that area could come together. "It is a 'reading zone'. There, they can come to read any kind of book we have, and we will have story reading times with the children, and they will get used to being around each other because they will come for the joy of the books. It is a simple thing to do, faithful for us [Christians] and for them [Muslims] to come together in harmony. So maybe it can help when tensions go up again, that we have been together in this way."

Although the idea of the *taman baca* is not original with Pastor Jerda (there are several such spaces being established across the country), she decided to create one for her neighborhood. Her initial concern was to empower women to be less isolated, as a way of addressing the rampant violence against women that exists in the aftermath of the conflicts there. Realizing that women will come together around activities for their children, she also recognized the relative scarcity of books in her area of Halmahera but how valuable reading books was for her own children. She decided she wanted to share books for children as a way to empower women, and then she began to see the possibilities for connections between people across religious differences through children's activities around books.

Culture, Community, and Informal Education for Peace

Neither of the two examples of women's peacebuilding practices above (marketing and taman baca) involve formal schooling, but both are important opportunities for building peace through education that fit well within their cultural contexts. The American educator Jerome Bruner once noted that "... schooling is only one small part of how the culture inducts the young into its canonical ways. Indeed, schooling may even be at odds with a culture's other ways of inducting the young into the requirements of communal living" (1996: ix). Not surprisingly, some of the strongest sites for women's peacebuilding work through religious education in Indonesia happen at this informal level of education, and involves children.

The terminology of "informal education" should not be taken to mean that such education is casual or insignificant in relation to conflict. Ana and Jerda both make clear that their actions are quite intentional and planful. And while they may not be consciously aware of it, behind their informal educational work they each operate out of a particular theory of peacebuilding, known as the contact hypothesis. The contact hypothesis posits that increased neutral or positive contact between groups increases tolerance and cooperation, and decreases the likelihood of conflict. While not without its critics, the contact hypothesis underlies many highly sophisticated, formal educational interventions. Ana and Jerda, in their everyday, small-scale methods of creating conditions for peace, instantiate their belief that if Christians and Muslims come into contact with each other in everyday activities like marketing or enjoying books where they can establish positive, mutually respectful relationships, they are less likely to engage in conflict.

Informal educators may not articulate why they believe their actions lend themselves to peacebuilding, and they may not have a specific, systematic teaching plan. But as cross cultural psychologist and educator Pierre Dasan writes, "informal" does not mean unstructured and haphazard: " ... there is distinctly an informal pedagogy, although it often remains implicit and even those who practice it are not conscious of it. ... [I]n contrast to schooling, (informal education) is in essence adapted to the local cultural system, which it tends to perpetuate." Dasan

2008, p. 27). He goes on to identify some key characteristics of informal education that help explain its fit in many traditional societies: it can be offered everywhere at any time; it emphasizes cooperation rather than competition and as such, all participants are allowed to be successful at it (as opposed to the elitism of schooling); parents and elders play important roles; it is broad, including moral and spiritual realms; and it is embedded in everyday life (Dasan, 2008, pp. 26-27).

Ana and Jerda embody many of these characteristics in their strategic informal educational practices. While some might wonder whether the informal education practices of Jerda and Ana actually constitute *religious* education practices as such, given the Indonesian social and cultural context of deep integration between religious identity and consciousness with everyday life, there is no way to "extract" religion from education for peacebuilding in their activities.

In fact, the informal educational strategies of Ana and Jerda bear similarities to what Goedroen Juchtmans describes in her analysis of Dutch women as "ritual experts" in the context of their roles organizing the everyday rituals of family life, passing on their faith as "mediators between the sacred and the everyday," in ways that stress practical, embodied knowing rather than second-order discourse about religious ideas (Juchtmans, 2012). Current North American discourse about religious education, in an effort to correct a previous era's excesses of so-called socialization models of religious education, often emphasizes the necessity for learning of using religious/theological vocabulary, and in fact tends to make this cognitive-verbal expression of faith ideas the definition and condition of being Christian (Smith 2005; cf. Osmer, 1997). While there certainly is an important place for "naming and claiming" in explicit theological language one's faith perspectives, Juchtmans' work is suggestive for the Indonesian context, in which everyday lived religion organically integrates what one *knows* religiously with how one *participates and practices* faith in the community as people go about their day to day living.

Dihyatun Masquon Ahmad, writing about a type of Islamic boarding school known as the *pondok pesantren* that is one of Indonesia's oldest institutions of education, reinforces this idea concerning informal education's power. Ahmad notes that in Indonesia while the madrasah provides a good context for formal Islamic education, the pondok pensantren can go further because its boarding-school setting allows for religious education within everyday life beyond the classroom:

> Students [in the madrasah] may be properly taught in the class but what happens outside the class is beyond the system. The *madrasah* is precisely like the modern school system and is not able to inculcate other Islamic teachings that are not covered by the *madrasah* curriculum. The positive aspect of the *pondok pesantren* was to be found in its boarding system where non-formal and informal education and activities can be carried out within the spirit and limits of Islam. (Ahmad, 2012, p. 67)

Ahmad, like Juchtmans above, places a clear value on the kind of education that best takes place through informal modes of teaching and learning, for religious education in a world of violent conflict. Given Indonesia's numerous religious conflicts, such informal practices may in fact be among the most important forms of religious education offered.

Classrooms and Commissions

Of course *formal* modes of religious education remains a useful context for such peacebuilding education to happen too. The Indonesian religious education landscape offers

numerous sites for formal education, particularly since religious education is required by the government in the schools. Formal spaces for religious education such as Islamic madrasah or Christian parochial schools are numerous, and would appear to be ideal sites for teaching peacebuilding by teaching religious practices that contribute to peace, and by teaching about other religions themselves. Similarly, church-based education such as Sunday schools or other church education programs also promote peacebuilding in Indonesia, and women often provide the leadership for such ventures.

One example of a church-based, formal education program in which women and men advocate for peace in Indonesia concerns a recent curriculum re-design of children's Sunday school materials. After the horrendous violence in Ambon, the Protestant Church in the Moluccas (Gereja Protestan Maluku, or GPM) re-wrote its children's *Sekolah Minggu* (Sunday school) curricula to include an emphasis upon religious pluralism and living together across religious differences as a tenet of Christian faith. The theme in this curriculum is "God is good for all creation." One program conducted by the synod and focused on children takes place on National Children's Day, each July 23, when children of all religions gather in Ambon for sports, arts, and cultural activities. In addition to such children's programs, in at the 2010 assembly, the chairperson of the GPM identified peacebuilding as the five-year theme for the church's work moving forward, providing resources for pastors to preach "peace sermons" in their congregations across the region. The GPM's center for theological education, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku (UKIM), established a Center for Peace Studies as did many other university theology programs.[2] Additionally, at the level of university teacher education (in particular, the training of teachers of religious education), some programs have begun featuring experiential encounters between Muslims and Christians combined with formal teaching about the faith of the religiously other group.

Pastor Susanna coordinates educational programs for the synod focused on peacebuilding and trauma healing. One of these programs, referred to locally as "Live-In," involves youth and adults in living for several days in the homes of Muslim families, and Muslim families similarly spend time residing with a Christian family. The host families are carefully chosen and prepared for these visits, expressing their willingness to answer any questions about their practices as they provide hospitality for "the religious other" in their homes. Following the live-in period there is an intensive de-briefing and classroom learning time.

"It might not sound like a very difficult thing to outsiders," Pastor Susanna states. "But those who lived through the conflicts here find it hard to go into the home of people who have killed their families and burned their churches. Almost always they do not sleep the first night because they are afraid. But those who stay with it can be transformed by the experience." Pastor Susanna notes that currently, the formal educational emphasis in the synod is on the development of programs equipping pastors and lay leaders to address children's trauma. "We cannot build peace for our future by focusing only on adults. If the children grow up with trauma still inside

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[2] These formal educational activities were reported by various participants in the Indonesia Christian Universities Peace Network conference, "The Role of Christian Higher Education in Religious Peacebuilding: Interreligious Understandings and Peacebuilding Workshop" sponsored by United Christian Board of Higher Education in Asia, 6/6/14-6/10/14; also in interviews with the Rev. Leis Mailoa-Marantika 6/25/14 in Ambon City, and with the Rev. Jacky Maniputty 6/26/14 in Ambon City.

them, they will seek revenge. I keep telling them about forgiveness and reconciliation--that revenge is God's hands, so don't kill, we have to forgive. Revenge is God's. This is not easy. It's hard to forgive. But I say to them, even though you lost everything, you didn't lose your life and your hope. It is not easy but we have to, and so we must help the children, to make the impulse for revenge go away and instead have a desire for peace."

<u>Gender Matters</u>

Beyond schooling contexts for formal education toward peace, women peacebuilders in Indonesia also work at the level of public policy, where education is a primary component of bringing about legal and policy changes. In the aftermath of the mass-scale violence against women in the May 1998 riots in Jakarta that ignited conflict around the country, the new government of Indonesia established an independent agency called *Komnas Perempuan,* the Commission on Violence Against Women. This agency was and is tasked with addressing and eliminating violence against women through increasing peoples' understanding of violence against women, advocacy for legal and policy reform, documentation of gender-based violence particularly in the nation's conflict areas, and prevention education. The Commission intentionally draws its membership from women leaders of different religious bodies in the nation.

The Rev. Leis Mailoa-Marantika is the vice-moderator of the Protestant Church of the Moluccas (GPM) and a regional member of *Komnas Perempuan*. She focuses attention on the differential effects of conflict on women, and particularly the escalation of gender based violence in Indonesia's conflicts. She shared with me a story similar to Pastor Jerda's, concerning military troops' sexual liaisons with "ordinary village women who, for reasons of security have personal relations with soldiers and are then told, 'This is not about conflict, it's personal decisions of the women to have relations with soldiers, therefore we do not need to address that.'" Pastor Leis considers this a form of re-victimization of the women, because "the military are representatives of the state who have duty to protect people, not to use people to satisfy their needs. When we see this situation of conflict from a feminist or gender perspective, this is an issue about power relations. But right now, when the state builds a concept of peace, they don't integrate the healing of this kind of experience of power abuse as a part of peacebuilding."

Pastor Lies is critical of public figures and religious leaders who "only talk about burning houses or killing people" as the damage wrought by conflict, but say nothing about violence against women as an act of war:

> Through our work in the Commission on Women (*Komnas Perempuan*), we try to mainstream women's experience of violence and conflict, educating people that violence against women is a form of violence *in the conflict*. In the recovery, in building peace, we have to address three factors. First, economics, which affects women as well as men, and may affect them differently because the men go off to fight leaving the women to provide for the household on their own. Second, acknowledging the truth that violence against women and discrimination against women is affected by conflict. We document this: when the men return from fighting, there is an upsurge in domestic violence. And third, justice for victims and recovery for them. What usually happens is that the women victims of sexual violence in the conflict are just ignored, treated as if they did something wrong, and shamed. When we talk about peace from women's perspective this needs to be acknowledged as part of peace, that we cannot say we have peace while still remaining silent about the situation of women.

Through her work with Komnas Perempuan, Pastor Leis facilitates advocacy on the national level by "linking the work in Ambon with speaking out in Jakarta: we collect the testimony of the victims, and then prepare material to talk with the government, to arrange a national educational campaign, and to facilitate humanitarian aid." Her work represents yet another crucial way that women engage in peacebuilding work. When I asked her about the religious dimensions of her public policy work, she laughed: "I work for the church, and I do this public sector work because of my position in the church and not in spite of it. It is all for faith, that God's justice includes justice for women, especially the women victimized in the conflicts. God's peace includes peace for these women too."

Intersections: Women and Education for Peacebuilding

Conversations with Indonesian Christian women from the Moluccas about their experiences of conflict and work as peacebuilders suggest several dimension of the interaction between gender, peacebuilding, and religious education in their contexts:

(1) Women are primary actors in the day to day interactions between religious groups in markets, taman baca, and other public spaces where peace or conflict are lived out in various micro-practices of engagement. As such, women potentially play a highly significant but ordinarily invisible role in brokering everyday connections across the boundaries of conflict-divided identities. They also apprentice children in practices of respectful engagement, tolerance of difference, and even friendship in these contexts.

(2) Women are primary informal educators of children in the home and in informal, everyday life activities, as well as (at least in the early years) in formal educational settings such as religious assemblies and schooling. Such formal education is a primary platform for women's peacebuilding work in Indonesia alongside the informal. While formal religious education programs embracing religious pluralism and fostering understanding of "religious others" are not widespread, their growing potential and impact is significant. Informal educational practices act as tiny capillaries, from which many small, ordinary activities that invite and sustain the possibilities for peace can nourish the whole body, Indonesia.

(3) Some women express a sense that they as women have a "different stake" in transforming violent conflict, with some even suggesting that as women they possess different capacities for doing so. A primary expression of women's stake in Indonesian conflict transformation concerns the struggle to get gender based violence recognized as an aspect of conflict, rather than understanding it as separate and somehow normal, alongside yet outside of conflict. Concomitantly, recognizing the need to address gender-based violence in recovery and peacebuilding efforts is also key, and part of the different stake women have in building sustainable peace. Women's different relationship to conflict transformation work in the Indonesian and Moluccan context may also relate to their roles (whether viewed as socially constructed or "natural") as the tend-ers and mend-ers of community.

In this paper I have explored some of the ways women participate in the work of peacebuilding in post-conflict society. Gender norms, while problematically contributing to women's invisibility in peace processes and placing boundaries around their spheres of influence, also create opportunities for women to work in important ways in the so-called small spaces where peace takes root: in children's learning about how to regard and engage those religiously different than they are; in Sunday school classrooms; in neighborhood book sharing rooms where women and children can gather in peace. Indonesian women peacebuilders are also at work in

the larger public arenas, drawing attention to the plight of women in conflict and demanding that woman's experiences and healing be part of the work of peace. Across these settings, women address religious conflict with religious education toward peace.

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Religion and Education in the (Un)making of Violence

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Modern Korea and Her Structural Violence in the Transformative Perspective of Religious Education[1]

This study aims to explore modern Korea and her structural violence with the historical approach and then to suggest the transformative perspective of religious education as the unmaking function of violence. The Koreans started their modernity, resisting the violent occupation of the Japanese ruling (1910-1945). We explore her structural violence from the Japanese occupation in three historical memories: the terrible assassination of Empress Myeongseong (1851-1895) who was the last queen of Korea, the March Independence Movement of 1919, and the comfort women who were Japan's wartime sex slavery during the pacific war. In this study, I focus Gilligan's psychological approach to violence. She regards the images of violence or aggression as "a problem in communication and an absence of knowledge about human relationships" (Gilligan 1993, 45). Conversely, I assume that the enhancement or progress in the relationship may be related to the unmaking or ceasing of violence. For example, I suggest the real case of cultural exchanges between the Koreans and the Japanese through the Korean culture wave (the *hallyu*). In conclusion, as the educational strategy to unmake or cease the successive chain of violence and aggression, I suggest the transformative environment in religious education where the class members are able to enhance their mutuality and equality in the image of God.

The Last Queen of Korea: Empress Myeongseong (1851-1895)

Recently, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry noticed the "deeply felt historic differences" between Seoul and Tokyo and said that two countries would find "mutually acceptable approaches" to historic issues "from the past" in order to enhance "bilateral and trilateral security cooperation" (Yu 2014). However, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's controversial visit to the Yasukuni Shrine in December 2013, Japanese provocative remarks

against "comfort women," that is, sex slaves for its soldiers during World War II, and Japan's claim to Dokdo are the main issues to make worse the current Seoul-Tokyo relationships. Especially, the assassination of Empress Myeongseong, the Last Queen of Korea, by Japanese killers is placed in the center of the icy Seoul-Tokyo relationships, because the Japanese government has never made a formal apology about such terrible assassination officially. The terrible assassination of Empress Myeongseong by Japanese killers was conducted on October 8, 1895 and this terrible event was opened to the world by the article of *The New-York Herald* to report "Murder of Corea's Queen" on October 13, 1895. The following is the full text of that article:

Title: Murder of Corea's Queen

Subtitle: The King a Prisoner, and His Father Proclaimed Dictator – A Cabinet of Pro-Japanese Elements.

Paris, Oct, 13. – The Paris edition of The New-York Herald has a dispatch from Seoul, the capital of Corea, confirming the reports that the Queen was murdered while the Japanese troops were at the palace gates. There is nothing to show, the dispatch adds, that the Japanese Minister was aware of the plot. The King is now a prisoner, and his father, the Tai-Won-Tun, the leader of the reactionary element, has been proclaimed Dictator. The new Cabinet will be made up of pro-Japanese elements. The Queen's officials have fled. A Japanese named Soshi has been arrested for the murder of the Queen.

This article reported that the Japanese Minister had not intervened in the assassination of Empress Myeonseong. However, Homer B. Hulbert (1863-1949)'s historical report and analysis is totally different. In his 1906 book, *The Passing of Korea*, Hulbert exposed that the Japanese government systematically and definitely intervened in the assassination of Empress Myeongseong, because the Japanese government regarded Empress Myeongseong as the most obstacle about the Japanese annexation of the Korea. As the sincere friend of the Emperor Gojong and the Empress Myeongseong, Hulbert went as an emissary of the Emperor Gojong, protesting Japan's actions, to the United States in 1905 and 1906, and to the Hague in 1906 and 1907. The first President of Yonsei University, Lak-Geoon George Paik, remembered Hulbert as the following: "Hulbert was a teacher, editor, author, and above all, a friend of Korea and her people. His labor of love for Korea, besides arduous missions for the Emperor of Korea, was largely wrought by his fruitful pen and articulate speech. His writings are mostly, if not entirely, on Korea and her civilization." (Hulbert 1906/1969, 4). Hulbert is buried in the Seoul Foreign Cemetery in Hap Chung Dong, where his epitaph, spoken by himself, is: "I would rather be buried in Korea than in Westminster Abbey" (Hulbert 1906/1969, 4). The following is Hulbert's description of the terrible assassination of Empress Myeongseong by Japanese killers:

"A crowd of Japanese civilians, commonly believed to be *soshi*, and a considerable number of Koreans, all heavily armed, rushed into the royal quarters. A part of the crowd went into the presence of the King, brandishing their weapons, but without directly attacking his person nor

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that of the Crown Prince, who stood beside him. Another part of the crowd ranged through the apartments of the Queen, seizing palace women and demanding information as to the whereabouts of the Queen. They met Yi Kyung-jik, the Minister of the Household, before the Queen's apartments and at once cut him down, but he managed to crawl into the presence of the King, where he was despatched by the Japanese. The Queen was found in one of the rooms which constituted her suite, and was ruthlessly butchered. It is impossible to state with absolute certainty whether the blow was struck by a Korean or by a Japanese, but the overwhelming probability is that it was done by one of the armed Japanese. The body was wrapped in some sort of blanket, saturated with petroleum, and burned at the edge of a pine grove immediately to the east of the pond which lies in front of the royal quarters" (Hulbert 1906/1969, 138-139).

In depth of a history, the images of Empress Myeongseong have often been distorted such as the article of *The New York Times* on November 10, 1895: "From The Westminster Gazette. The late Queen of Corea does not seem to have had a very happy life, and if all reports be true she did not quite deserve one. She ruled the King with a rod of iron, and sold every office in the realm to the highest bidder. She oppressed the people so that she was in constant fear of assassination. It was her custom to sit up all night, and she never went to bed until 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning. She had several bedrooms, so that no one knew where she slept, except her own intimates. Under her bedchamber there was a trap door, with steps leading down to a room below, where she kept always on guard fleet-footed couriers, with a vehicle in readiness so that she could fly at a moment's notice. But all these precautions seem to have been unavailing." However, the wife of Yonsei University founding father Dr. H. G. Underwood and the physician of Empress Myeongseong, Mrs. H. G. Underwood's testimony is totally different. According to Mrs. Underwood's testimonies, Empress Myeongseong had the graceful and benevolent images and had interested in the Gospel message. Empress Myeongseong had even repeated the Gospel message to Emperor Gojong and their son. Especially, Mrs. Underwood looked back on that Empress Myeongseong became the faithful patroness to support the modern education for Korean people by American missionaries such as the following:

"In the spring of 1895, the prime minister came from the Queen, saying that she desired Dr. Underwood draw up plans and estimates for a school for the sons of the nobility. A site had been selected between the west and east palaces. Her Majesty proposed to build houses for American teachers, whom Dr. Underwood was to select and recommend. The Queen was prepared to give thirty thousand dollars for buildings and from twenty to thirty thousand dollars a year for running expenses. Dr. Underwood's delight was great over this unexpected offer, practically throwing the young nobility into the arms of the Christian church. He drew up the first plans and estimates and sent them to the palace for approval. These were returned with suggestions. Amended plans were prepared and were shortly to be sent for Her Majesty's final perusal, when she was suddenly killed and a long period of political upheaval followed" (Underwood 1918/1983, 146-147).

I notice the historic "site between the west and east palaces" which Empress Myeongseong with Dr. Underwood selected for the modern education of Korean people. It is a touching and acute part of our history that site is overlapped with today's place of Yonsei University. The

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historical analysis of Empress Myeongseong is very dynamic. I need to focus on Mrs. Lillias Horton Underwood's portrayal of Empress Myeongseong in *Fifteen Years Among the Top-knots*. Because the original version of that book was published in 1904, it included Mrs. Underwood's sensitive observations about the late 19th and the early 20th centuries' Korean people's life. Mrs. Lillias Horton Underwood went to Korea in 1888 as a medical missionary. Especially, she had served Empress Myeonseong as her personal medical advisor until the terrible and unfortunate assassination of Empress Myeonseong. Therefore, Mrs. Underwood's book, *Fifteen Years Among the Top-knots*, provides us with an intimate and sympathetic portrait of Empress Myeongseong.

Mrs. Lillias Horton Underwood (1904/1977) expresses her appreciation of Empress Myeonseong as "a woman of kind-hearted and generous impulses, high intellectual capacity, and no ordinary diplomatic ability. Of stronger mind and higher moral character than her royal husband, she was his wise counsellor and the chief bulwark of his precarious power" (vii). In Mrs. Underwood's portrayal of Empress Myeongseong, we are able to find that she has had sense and sensibility in very high level, the excellent political leadership and has been the substantial supporter of Emperor Gojong. Considering that Empress Myeonseong's own intimates are very few, I am able to have confidence in Mrs.Underwood's portrayal. For Mrs. Underwood (1918/1983), Empress Myeongseong was so "brilliant, forceful, and daring" that Emperor Gojong could have maintained his lordship on the throne as the rightful king (75).

There is another masterpiece to report Empress Myeongseong's impression properly. That is Mrs. Isabella Bishop's *Korea and Her Neighbors*. According to Pow-key Sohn, who was Professor of History at Yonsei University, "Isabella Bishop's *Korea and Her Neighbours* was first pulished in two volumes on January 10, 1898; the next day 2,000 copies were sold, and the second edition was out within ten days" (Bishop 1898/1970, iii). That shows the high popularity of Mrs. Boshop's book around western society in that time. Mrs. Bishop (1898/1970) visited Korea four times "between March 1894 and March 1897" (iii). Sir Walter C. Hillier, who was British Consul-General for Korea at that time, highly praised "the closeness of Mrs. Bishop's observation, the accuracy of her facts, and the correctness of her inferences" (Bishop 1898/1970, 1). Hillier said that Mrs Bishop recorded Korean features such as "customs, institutions, beliefs, fauna and flora of Korea" with accuracy and impartiality" (Bishop 1898/1970, iv, 1). He looked back that Emperor Gojong and Empress Myeongseong also honored Mrs. Bishop with the "confidence and friendship" (Bishop 1898/1970, 1).

In the early part of 1895, Mrs. Bishop had four audiences with Emperor Gojong and Empress Myeongseong. In retrospect, Mrs. Bishop (1898/1970) says Empress Myeongseong's impressions like the following: "On each occasion I was impressed with the grace and charming manner of the Queen, her thoughtful kindness, her singular intelligence and force, and her remarkable conversational power even through the medium of an interpreter" (254-

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255). Mrs. Bishop's image toward Empress Myeongseong is very similar with that of Mrs. Underwood. Especially, Mrs. Bishop's reports included Emperor Gojong's thoughtful consideration for Empress Myeongseong such as the following:

> "On one day the whole attention of the King and Queen was concentrated on the relations between the English Crown and the Cabinet, specially with regard to the Civil List (the costs of the Crown), on which the King's questions were so numerous and persistent as very nearly to pose me. He was specially anxious to know if the "Finance Minister" (the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I suppose) exercised any control over the personal expenditure of Her Majesty, and if the Queen's personal accounts were paid by herself or through the Treasury. The affairs under the control of each Secretary of State were the subject of another series of questions" (Bishop 1898/1970, 257-258).

Emperor Gogjong's inquiries may reflect the economic circumstance of the Crown and the sensitive relations between Empress Myeongseong and the Cabinet. We are able to easily catch Emperor Gojong's thoughtful attentiveness to care and protect Empress Myeongseong. That is very different with the conventional report that "She ruled the King with a rod of iron, and sold every office in the realm to the highest bidder" (*The New York Times*, November 10, 1895). Mrs. Bishop's report includes her acute and farewell conversation with Empress Myeongseong. In this conversation, we are able to recognize that Empress Myeongseong was so envious of Queen Victoria's "greatness, wealth, and power" (Bishop 1898/1970, 259). Subsequently, she added to Mrs. Bishop, "Does she (Queen Victoria) ever in her glory think of poor Korea?" (Bishop 1898/1970, 259). In her question and final comment, we can assume the gloomy future of fading Corea. Mrs. Bishop's last portrayal toward Empress Myeongseong is so simple and plain to make us have many tears.

> "On this occasion the Queen was dressed in a bodice of brocaded amber satin, a mazarine blue brocaded trained skirt, a crimson girdle with five clasps and tassels of coral, and a coral clasp at the throat. Her head was uncovered, and her abundant black hair gathered into a knot at the back. She wore no ornament except a pearl and coral jewel on the top of head. The King and Queen rose when I took leave, and the Queen shook hands. They both spoke most kindly, and expressed the wish that I should return and see more of Korea. When I did return nine months later, the Queen had been barbarously murdered, and the King was practically a prisoner in his own palace" (Bishop 1898/1970, 259-260).

Mrs. Bishop (1898/1970) summarized Korean impressions through Emperor Gojong and Empress Myeongseong with five words: "simplicity, dignity, kindliness, courtesy, and propriety" (260). British famous historian E. H. Carr (1961), in his book *What is History?*, said, "Development in history meant development towards the concept of freedom" (181). This sentence places emphasis on the role of historical reason or historical consciousness to motivate common people's practices. Like Chicago theologian David Tracy's (1987) famous connotations, Dr. Hulbert's and Mrs. Underwood's memories are not dead but allow us forge "our memories and consequently our actions" (37). In the 21st century, I think that our activities to rediscover and reinterpret modern Korean history about our last queen and her

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terrible end are never waste of time, but the proper task which her offspring ought to practice in order to create the ideal society.

The March First Independence Movement of 1919

It is very difficult to observe and study modern Korea, excluding her violent experiences. For example, we are not able to deny that many Korean people had suffered "the major and the minor injustices and annoyances" under the suppressed ruling period (1910-1945) of Japanese Imperialism (Underwood 1926, 209). Perhaps, the Japanese government may think to officially apology for Japan's colonial rule of Korea and to put off bothering past problems through its economical compensation on the basis of the Treaty on Basic Relations between Korea and Japan of 1965. However, many Korean people's basic mind is not same with the Japanese government's official stand. Thus, we naturally assume that there are very big historic differences between Korea and Japan. Simultaneously, we may recognize that these big differences between Korea and Japan in historical interpretation give some barriers and very sensitive and uncomfortable environments to Korean and Japanese peoples, Korean residents in Japan, and Japanese residents in Korea.

The Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea defines the March First Independence Movement of 1919 as the historical event to originate the Republic of Korea such as the following:

> We the people of Korea, proud of a resplendent history and traditions dating from time immemorial, upholding the cause of the Provisional Republic of Korea Government born of the March First Independence Movement of 1919 and the democratic ideals of the April Nineteenth Uprising of 1960 against injustice, having assumed the mission of democratic reform and peaceful unification of our homeland and having determined to consolidate national unity with justice, humanitarianism and brotherly love, and…

Hence, the historical meaning of the March First Independence Movement of 1919 is closely related to the governmental identity of the Republic of Korea. Most of all, I simply construct the historical outline in order to understand the violent reality of the March First Independence Movement of 1919. *Encyclopaedia of Britannica* introduces that movement as "March First Movement" or "Samil Independence Movement." According to the description of *Britannica*, that movement is a "series of demonstrations for Korean national independence from Japan that began on March 1, 1919, in the Korean capital city of Seoul and soon spread throughout the country…. Approximately 2,000,000 Koreans had participated in the more than 1,500 demonstrations. About 7,000 people were killed by the Japanese police and soldiers, and 16,000 were wounded; 715 private houses, 47 churches, and 2 school buildings were destroyed by fire. Approximately 46,000 people were arrested, of whom some 10,000 were tried and convicted." I basically think that Britannica's description provides us with very violent outline about the March First Independence

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Movement of 1919.

Dr. Min Kyoung Bae (2005) described the "general figure during the first month of the movement" such as the following: "the number of the participants was 1,000,368, the number killed by the Japanese Police 3,336, wounded 9,277, imprisoned 35,712. The total population of the country in 1919 was 16,913,000 and the number of Christians were approximately 219,000. Had the Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox been included, the total Christian population would have been estimated at 318,800" (299). When we compare Dr. Min's data with Encyclopedia of Britannica's description, we can estimate the lengths of severity and savagery under the Japanese militaristic occupation.

	Time	Participants	Killed	Wounded	Imprisoned
Dr. Min	1st month	1,000,368	3,336	9,277	35,712
Britannica	around 1 year	2,000,000	7,000	16,000	46,000

I point out that so many Koreans had successively continued to that movement for freedom in spite of Japanese police and soldiers' terrible and disastrous suppressions. Here I pay attention to Dr. Horace Horton Underwood's book, *Modern Education in Korea*. Dr. Horace Horton Underwood is a son of Dr. Horace Grant Underwood who was a founding father of Yonsei University and the second principle of Chosun Christian College (the old name of Yonsei University). The publishing year of that book is 1926. In that time, the Japanese ruling's controls about the private school institutions such as Chosun Christian College are very serious. In his book, he described Korean people such as the following: "I especially regret the lack of more detailed information on the work which the Koreans themselves are now doing, but hope that sufficient has been said to indicate how large a share this promises to be how rapidly they are awakening to the their responsibilities" (Underwood 1926, xiii). Underwood's portrayal about the Koreans is very positive and active. He basically trusts on the close relationship between the Koreans' rapid awakening and their responsibilities.

Underwood's description about the March First Independence Movement of 1919 is also special. He describes the main causes of that movement for Korean peoples' freedom as "ideas of nationalism, and self-determinism, and a real desire for political independence" from the political and social unrests after the end (1918) of World War I (Underwood 1926, 209). Especially, he focuses on the injustice and suffering effects of the Japanese military during 10 years after Korean annexation by the Japanese ruling. Dr. Underwood (1926) interpreted a Declaration of Independence as "Grievances of the Korean People" (209). In addition, he emphasizes the influence of the Christians about the main character of that movement as "a series of unarmed demonstrations" (Underwood 1926, 209).

Like this, the March First Independence Movement of 1919 realized the Koreans' strong will for independence to escape from the Japanese brutal and violent occupation. In that time, the independent will of the Korean people was manifested as the form of a Declaration of Independence. Mr. F. A. McKenzie's (1920/1975) precious and devotional book, *Korea's Fight for Freedom*, includes the English version of a Declaration of Independence with the

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title of "The Proclamation of Korea Independence" (247). Korean representative historian Park Un-sik (1861-1928), in his book *Han-Kook Dongnip Undong ji Hyol-sa* [The Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement] (shanghai, 1920), praised that Mr. McKenzie's *Korea's Fight for Freedom* was "an appeal to the whole world" to report "the Korean struggle for independence" (McKenzie 1920/1975, 15).

We need to pay attention to a legitimate identification of the Declaration of Independence to break and unmake the Japanese violence's vicious cycles. That document manifests the legitimate identification of the Korean people's independence like this:

> "To bind by force twenty millions of resentful Koreans will mean not only loss of peace forever for this part of the Far East, but also will increase the ever-growing suspicion of four hundred millions of Chinese-upon whom depends the danger or safety of the Far East-besides strengthening the hatred of Japan. From this all the rest of the East will suffer. To-day Korean independence will mean not only daily life and happiness for us, but also it would mean Japan's departure from an evil way and exaltation to the place of true protector of the East, so that China, too, even in her dreams, would put all fear of Japan aside. This thought comes from no minor resentment, but from a large hope for the future welfare and blessing of mankind" (McKenzie 1920/1975, 249).

That document suggests the unmaking of the Japanese violent ruling of Korea and the contribution of the future welfare and blessing of humankind as the ultimate legitimacy of the March First Independence Movement of 1919. Dr. Underwood (1926) pointed out that the main cause of that movement was due to "in large measure the result of gross abuses" under the Japanese militaristic occupation and the Korean people's desire to call "the attention of Japan to these conditions" was reflected in its movement (210). Here we can find that some expressions about injustice and unequal situations and its series of demonstrations are related to the mechanism and structure to unmake the vicious cycle of violence. It is very typical that this movement reflects the idea of unarmed and nonviolent demonstration. Dr. Underwood (1926) finds such characteristics of that movement in many Christian leaders' "leading part" (209).

We are able to connect the Japanese assassination of Empress Myeongseong and their barbarous suppression of the Korean people in the March First Independence Movement of 1919 with their perceiving of danger and their aggressive responses as violence in that time. Perhaps, such traits will be universal in human society. In this aspect, the construction of connection and the reshaping of the hierarchical order will be the good model to create the society unmaking the violence.

The Comfort Women: Japan's Wartime Sex Slaves during the Pacific War

On April 25, 2014, US President Barack Obama visited to South Korea. This is his four time

visits to South Korea. In their summit with South Korea President Park Geun-hye, Obama urged Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Japanese people to recognize their aggressive past history about the issue of comfort women who had been forced into sexual slavery for Japanese soldiers during World War II. Women "between 50,000 and 200,000" were in the sexual slavery system for Japanese soldiers in that time and "the vast majority" of them were Korean women (Cumings 2010, 41). "This (Japan's wartime sexual slavery system) was a terrible, egregious violation of human rights. Those women were violated in ways that even in the midst of war were shocking, and they deserve to be heard, they deserved to be heard, they deserve to be respected," Obama said. "And there should be an accurate and clear account of what happened," he added.

Even though Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe offered his "awkward" and ambiguous apologies about the issues of comfort women, he announced that there was "no evidence" for Japanese government to recruit "comfort women" (*ianfu* in Japanese), that is, "sexual slaves" for Japanese soldiers during the Pacific War on March, 2007 (Cumings 2010, 41). However, Japanese historian Yoshiaki Yoshimi, in his 1995 standard book *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military During World War II*, argued that Japanese military systematically regulated the sexual slavery station. The following clauses included the regulations for the use of the soldiers' club. These regulations were used by the 13th Independent Infantry Brigade Chuzan Garrison stationed in Zhongshan, Guangdong Province, China. The following clauses 13 to 17 included the rules about the military comfort station to have the name of "Soldier's Club No. 2" :

Clause No. 13 – Eating and drinking in Soldiers' Club No. 2 is forbidden.

Clause No. 14 – Fees are to be paid in cash in advance.

Clause No. 15 – As a rule, outings by prostitutes are forbidden.

Clause No. 16 – The following are not allowed to use Soldiers' Club No. 2:

1. people who try to use it at times other than their appointed hours;

2. people who are not properly dressed;

3. people who are extremely drunk;

4. people who are likely to bother others;

5. people not mentioned in Clause No. 17, and those accompanying them.

Clause No. 17 – The use of Soldiers' Club No. 2 is restricted to military personnel and civilian employees of the army. If accompanied by an officer, however, local people [civilians] are permitted to use Soldiers' Club No. 1. (Yoshiaki 1995, 137)

Yoshiaki (1995) finds the governing rules of comfort station "from the 2nd Independent

Heavy Siege Artillery Battalion stationed in Changchow in 1938" to pay each different prostitute's fees to Chinese, Korean, and Japan comfort women: "Chinese comfort women be paid 1 Japanese yen, Korean comfort women be paid 1 Japanese yen and 50 sen, and Japanese comfort women be paid 2 Japanese yen (noncommissioned officers and officers paid twice these amounts)" (138).

Like this, Japanese military controlled the comfort women station and after the infamous Nanking massacre, its administration was applied more systemically by Japanese military. During the infamous Nanking massacre, tens of thousands of Chinese women were raped by Japanese soldiers. The Japanese authorities believed that the military comfort system helped to "prevent soldiers from committing random acts of sexual violence against women of the occupied territories" (Soh 2008, 135). And the Japanese military authorities had their own reputation "with the health of their troops" to provide Japanese soldiers with sex workers to be very healthy and clean in "hygienic conditions" (Soh 2008, 135). In that time, based on the gynecologist and army doctor Aso Tetsuo's report in 1939, Professor Sarah Soh (2008) described that "unmarried Korean women" as "sex workers" were regarded as "gifts for the imperial troops" (135). She argues that the "Japanese military authorities soon began to look to colonial Korea as a preferred source of comfort women" (Soh 2008, 135).

Professor Sarah Soh (2008) described precisely the terrible situations of Korean comfort women at the comfort station houses of prostitution such as the following: "On weekdays the women sat in the hallway for customers to view before picking their chosen ones. This practice of 'sitting in public display' (*harimise*) had been common in licensed brothels of Japanese pleasure quarters since the seventeenth century. Mul Pil-gi recalled that on weekdays they served about ten soldiers, usually during evenings because the men were out fighting during the day. Yi Yong-su, by contrast, stated that she served on average four or five soldiers a day when she labored in Taiwan in 1945. According to many Korean survivors, weekends as the comfort stations were hectic (very busy). They often did not have time to eat, let alone sit in the hallway. On Saturdays and Sundays, Mun Pil-gi had forty to fifty soldiers who would come from eight in the morning until seven in the evening, after which only officers could visit. Mun recalled that soldiers lined up outside the door, waiting their turn and sometimes quarreling when someone jumped the queue (waiting line), while other survivors such as Pak Pok-sun insisted that such descriptions of queuing and quarreling were untrue. In any case, generally, each soldier was allowed thirty minutes but most left after about five minutes of sexual contact, according to Mun and others. Some brought their own condoms, but a few would refuse to use them. Mun would then insist, threatening to report them to their superiors or pleading with them to comply so they would not catch a disease" (Soh 2008, 123). In terms of survivors' testimonial narratives, using condoms by Japanese soldiers was a mandatory rule in the comfort women station. And we are able to approach to the terrible situation of the comfort women station within the Japanese military.

Sarah Soh (2008) analyzes that the Korean "survivors' testimonial narratives" reflect how

Korean working women's "gender, class, and labor" are "commodified and exploited" in the Japanese "colonial capital system" (80). In addition, she describes the systematized structure of Korea's comfort women exploitation and tragedy such as the following: "(1) gender inequality in masculinist sexual culture and patriarchal abuse of power against wives and daughters at home; (2) class exploitation in society under capitalist economy; (3) "race" discrimination under colonial rule of Imperial Japan; (4) Korea's unequal diplomatic relations with Japan (during and after colonial rule) and with the United States after the war in the nation-state power dynamics to redress (correct) historical wrongdoings" (Soh 2008, 105-106). Here we can recognize that the historical implication within the comfort women as Japan's wartime sex slaves during the Pacific War moves beyond only the foreign sensitive relation between Korea and Japan and moves into the universal horizon of social justice between the male and the female, the poor and the rich, white people and colored people, and so on. Furthermore, it will be the social practice to reduce or unmake the violence to threat the survival of human being and all creatures in the world.

Australian wartime sex slave Jan Ruff O'Herne

Jan Ruff O'Herne was born in Java, now known as Indonesia in 1923 of a fourth generation Dutch colonial family. In February 15, 2007, before the United States House of Representative as part of a congressional hearing on "Protecting the Human Rights of Comfort Women," She confessed, "I grew up on a sugar plantation and had the most wonderful childhood. I was educated in Catholic schools and graduated from Franciscan Teacher's College in Semarang, Java. When I was 19 years old in 1942, Japanese troops invaded Java. Together with thousands of

Jan's picture

women and children, I was interned in a Japanese prison camp for three and a half years." On 26 February 1944, O'Herne and six young women were taken by Japanese officers to an old Dutch colonial house at Semarang which is a city on the north coast of the island of Java, Indonesia. The distance from the Japanese prison camp to a Dutch colonial house at Semarang is some 47 kilometers. The Japanese turned that house into a Japanese military brothel having the name of "The House of the Seven Seas" in Java (Australian War Memorial).

Soh (2008) describes precisely the details of the House of the Seven Seas as the Japanese military brothel for the privileged Japanese officers on the basis of the interview with Ruff-O'Herne such as the following: "It was set up in a large Dutch colonial-style house with nicely furnished rooms for each woman, a storeroom for food, servants' rooms, a large garden with several trees, and a pen for fowl. The front veranda of the house was used as a reception area, where the officers could lounge and purchase tickets for the girls and women of their choice, whose pictures were displayed on a bulletin board. The army doctor who

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conducted weekly medical examinations of the women was one of the regular 'customers.' An Indonesian housemaid and a houseboy served meals and did various household chores for the Dutch comfort women, who included married 'volunteers'" (Soh 2008, 122-123). However, even though the house of prostitution of the Dutch sex slaves was luxuriously designed, Australian wartime sex slaves' violence in a Japanese military brothel was very similar with that of the majority of the Korean sex slaves.

Before the United States House of Representatives, O'Herne's testimonial confession about sexual violence at the Japanese military brothel in Samarang was shocking itself:

> "When he eventually left the room, my whole body was shaking. I gathered up what was left of my clothing, and fled into the bathroom. There I found some of the other girls. We were all crying, and in total shock. In the bathroom I tried to wash away all the dirt and shame off my body. Just wash it away. But the night was not over yet, there were more Japanese waiting, and this went on all night, it was only the beginning, week after week, month after month… Never did any Japanese rape me without a fight. I fought each one of them. Therefore, I was repeatedly beaten. In the so-called "Comfort Station" I was systematically beaten and raped day and night. Even the Japanese doctor raped me each time he visited the brothel to examine us for venereal disease. And to humiliate us even more the doors and windows were left open, so the Japanese could watch us being examined… The Japanese soldiers had ruined my young life. They had stripped me of everything. They had taken away my youth, my self-esteem, my dignity, my freedom, my possessions, and my family. But there was one thing that they could never take away from me. It was my religious faith and love for God. This was mine and nobody could take that away from me. It was my deep Faith that helped me survive all that the Japanese did to me" (Ruff-O'Herne 2007).

Her sexual abuse at Japanese military brothel in Samarang had passed during four months. According to the data of Australian War Memorial, the Dutch girls including O'Herne were moved to a camp at Bogor, in West Java, where they were reunited with their families. This data describes, "This camp was exclusively for women who had been put into military brothels, and the Japanese warned the inmates that if anyone told what had happened to them, they and their family members would be killed. Several months later the O'Hernes were transferred to a camp at Batavia, which was liberated on 15 August 1945" (Australian War Memorial). In 1946, O'Herne married British soldier Tom Ruff and had two daughters. Her family emigrated from Britain to Australia in 1960. Studying Japan's wartime sex slaves' testimonial narratives, Soh (2008) focuses on O'Herne and other Dutch wartime survivors' profoundly different attitudes, even though they experienced the very similar sexual violence with the majority of the Korean sex slaves in "sociological or psychological factors" (178). She points out that "gender socialization and the family's class status" and "the extent of personal harm individuals and family members suffered" may play an important role for the Dutch survivors' healing process from "irreparable damage, either in physical or psychological terms" (179). Especially, O'Herne delivered the following message in the interview with the newspaper of *The National Age* on February 25, 2014: "When such a

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terrible thing happens, you expect an apology. It was important for my healing process. It takes a lifetime to get over a thing like that" (Flitton 2014). Her message shows well how "hideous" many statements of Mr. Abe and Japanese in his government who do not acknowledge their past wartime crimes are.

Psychological Approach to Violence: Gilligan's Idea

Gilligan's study of violence provides very meaningful understanding about the violent disaster of the Japanese militaristic occupation. Gilligan (1993) studies the violence in the relationship between connection and separation. Especially, sex differences about the theme of separation and connection are very significant in her study. According to Gilligan's study (1993), the male students in the class used to portray more images of violence in personal affiliation. But the female students in the class used to describe more images of violence in the situations of impersonal achievement. When the people perceive the feeling of danger, they used to respond their violence with a mode of aggression. Gilligan (1993) says, "As people are brought closer together in the pictures, the images of violence in the men's stories increase, while as people are set further apart, the violence in the women's stories increases" (42). She interpreted this psychological pattern in sex differences that "men and women may experience attachment and separation in different ways" (Gilligan 1993, 42). These differences are very significant in men and women's responses to describe the images of violence after seeing the picture of acrobats without the safe net. In this picture, the men used to describe image of violence such as the acrobats' falling and killing but the women do not portray the images of violence through making the safety net for the acrobats in her story but which does not exist in the real picture. Gilligan's interpretation about that psychological pattern is very significant. She describes the male students' images of violence such as the following: "the violence in male fantasy seems rather to arise from a problem in communication and an absence of knowledge about human relationships" (Gilligan 1993, 45). In her study, the aggression such as violence is related to some problems of communication and human relationship. Women's portrayal of the safety net in her image which does not exist in that picture means their success in the connection and its relationship.

The Case of Cultural Exchange to Unmake the Violent Relationship

Winter Sonata is a South Korean television drama series that aired on KBS in 2002. It is the Korean drama starring Bae Yong-joon and Choi Ji-woo. It is noticeable that the drama provides us with the meaning of "Korean-Japan cultural exchange" (Mori 2008, 131). Joon-sang's search for his biological father in the depth of an identity crisis in adolescence and the love story of Joon-sang and Yoo-jin constitute the main plot of this drama. However, a sudden car accident erases Joon-sang's lovely memories with Yoo-jin. During ten years,

Joon-sang had lived in the United States with a new identity as Lee Min-hyeong and came back to Korea as a talented architect. Yoo-jin is co-working with Joon-sang having the new identity as Min-hyeong in the same company and they are recovering the past lovely memories.

The popularity of *Winter Sonata* in Japan surely appears in Junichiro Koizumi's quotation such as the following: Bae Yong-joon is more popular in Japan than myself. He was the Japanese prime minister at that time. Jung-sun Park (2013) analyzes that the Korean Wave in Japan at the beginning depends on the popularity of *Winter Sonata*. It is very remarkable that "the mega hit of *Winter Sonata* and the subsequent *Yon-sama* phenomenon" changed "a stereotypical image of Korean people" in Japan (Mori 2008, 131). Yoshitaka Mori (2008), Professor of Sociology and Cultural Studies at Tokyo National University, interprets the middle-aged female group in Japan who leads the popularity of Winter Sonata as the active and complex agents who "re-interpret media products and eventually create their own culture" (132). They formed an *otaku*-style of *Winter Sonata,* that is, a huge fan in Japan.

The enthusiasm of *Winter Sonata* in Japan creates more newly social and cultural patterns. The middle-aged female group organizes "fan meetings," "participates in *Winter Sonata* tour in Korea," and starts to study Korean culture and language (Mori 2008, 131). The dramatic popularity of *Winter Sonata* makes Japanese middle-aged women understand Korean cultural background about that drama. That leads to the transformative change in a Japanese conventional image about Korea which has the meaning of a "close but far" country (Mori 2008, 137). According to Mori's (2008) description, before *Winter Sonata*, the representative images about Korea in Japan have two characteristics. The first is a liberal perspective. Japanese people having such perspective argue that they need to apologize sincerely for Japan's past to around countries such as Korea, China, and Philippines. The second perspective emphasizes the patriotic and nationalistic discourse in Japanese societies. They tend to justify "Japan's colonial past" (Mori 2008, 138).

However, *Winter Sonata* provides them with a new image and vocabulary about Korea. The following is the interview of Ms. A (60+):

> As I grew up in Omura city, where a camp for illegal migrants was located, I had a certain image of Koreans. They often had quarrelling with each other. They were always loud. Honestly, I looked down on them. But *Yon-sama* changed everything. I have learned about Korea through *Winter Sonata* and now understand that a large part of Japanese culture came from Korea. This reminded me that I was born in Manchuria [during Japanese colonial time] where my father worked. (Mori 2008, 139)

According to Mori's (2008) analysis, the *Winter Sonata* phenomenon in Japan reinvents and reorganizes Japanese female's understandings and experiences about Korean with the different way. In the age of globalization, that is the realization of "the transnational potential of middle-aged women's politics" to break Korea-Japan conventional relationship such as

liberalist or nationalist (Mori 2008, 141).

Transformative Perspective of Religious Education to Unmake the Violence

Many students anticipate their classroom in religious education is the transforming environment. James E. Loder's (1998) case about Kierkegaard's conversion shows well the transforming dynamics. The transforming moment has three processes: (i) collecting some people's past information and knowledge, (ii) the encountering moment between the Divine Spirit and the human spirit, and (iii) representing the "transfigured vision" (Loder 1998, 234). According to Loder's description, some people's past information and knowledge is the main source to reconstruct his or her life. Through permeating by the Divine Spirit, the human spirit experiences the transforming moment in the next stage. Finally, he or she realizes the transfigured vision in their own life span. In the case of Kierkegaard, he experiences "the identity struggle of the young man" in oppressed family environment and "his authoritarian father" (Loder 1998, 237). In this period, the ego's struggle is regarded as the preparation for resocialization due to the dynamic conversion of his personality. The transformation of ego development occurs when the Divine Spirit is working with the young man's human spirit. Loder (1998) expresses this transforming moment as the "exocentric drive" toward "the Other" (237). After this remarkable transformation, the human spirit realizes or releases his spiritual potential. According to Loder (1998), in the case of Luther, "the proliferation of Luther's writings and the beginning of the German Reformation" are the obvious evidences of the release of the human spirit (245). Loder shows well the dynamic pattern of ego development from the interplay between the Divine Spirit and the human spirit. I focus on how to apply Loder's transforming pattern of ego development to the educational environment in religious education.

In order to create the transformative environment, Susanne Johnson (1990) provides the proper solution of religious education. Her Christian educational ecology is expressed with the terms of worship, instruction, and praxis. She emphasizes all students' participation or inclusiveness (worship), the reconstruction or reformulation of their own life stories in light of the Story (instruction), and the hospitality toward the poor, the needy, and the hunger (praxis) in Christian educational contexts. It is possible that these principles such as participation, reformulation, and hospitality can be applied in the context of religious education. The participation is the principle in which students recognize themselves each part of their class. Johnson (1990) explains the process of this participation as "the recovery of the truly human" (136). This recovery process means that some student already has experienced a transforming moment. In other words, whether or not teachers focus on the participating process of their students in the class depends on whether or not the educational environment within their classes is transformative. Secondly, Johnson often uses the expressions to create their own stories in light of the Story. This means the relationship between some tradition and its interpretation. She says, "Traditions can live only through creative reappropriation by

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persons who are willing to reflect critically on their lives" (Johnson 1989, 144). The teaching and learning in Christian (higher) education is initiated by the proper role of "critical thinking, reflection, and inquiry" (Johnson 1989, 142). Therefore, the classroom in religious education is not the prison where traditions rule over students' freedom, but the dynamic process in which they transform their own lives within students' spirits. Thirdly, the principle of praxis can be understood in terms of the concept of the self. Johnson (1989), in her book *Christian Spiritual Formation in the Church and Classroom*, contrasts the self with the ego. In order to initiate the dynamic transformation of Christian (higher) education, she emphasizes the role of the self rather than that of the ego. Pointing out male-oriented bias within the role of the ego, Johnson (1989) focuses on the relational role of the self in "the course of human development" (109). The principle of praxis is closely related to the relational self. She says, "Praxis emphasizes the prophetic office of the church. It refers to our total complex of action (including reflection on action), along with, and on behalf of, the dispossessed, the needy, the powerless. Praxis means we actively seek to place ourselves in the company of strangers" (Johnson 1990, 138). This emphasizes the mutuality and equality of all human in the image of God. The issues of isolation and loneliness are very important in the classroom. Therefore, the principle of praxis may provide us with the proper reasons about why and what we must share with others people.

In order to provide the transforming environment, the pattern of authority in the classroom is very important. We can find the good case to arise the transforming moment in the Story of the Bible. In Act 2:1-4, Luke prescribes the transforming moment in the story of Pentecost day in Jerusalem. However, before focusing on that event, we need to refer to leadership in the community in Acts 1:15-26. The church elects Matthias instead of Judas who betrayed Jesus. For the election of Matthias, the church uses very strict condition. That is whether or not to have "any reliable facts about 'the historical Jesus'" (Willimon 1988, 24). Matthias is accepted with such qualification and participates in leadership in the community as one of authoritarians. However, in the most dramatic transforming event of Acts 2:1-4, the leadership of this new community passing such strict qualification process is not working at the moment. That means that some transforming event takes effect in the equal status, since the shared authority model of education can provide an ideal educational situation to initiate students' passion and their active participation in educational environment (Kim 2009). In addition, the transforming moment makes the coexistence of "multiple" and "contradictory viewpoints" possible (Palmer and Zajonc 2010, 104). And the crowd of Luke's account of Pentecost can hear that the disciples speak in multitude of language (Acts 2:6). That reflects that the story of Pentecost day in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-13) has the transforming motive through the analogical interpretation. Like this, we can assume that the equal class environment may be the main condition for the transforming moment to unmake the violence.

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Reclaiming *Sobaliba*: The Vital Role of Culturally Relevant Moral Education to Counter Increasing Patterns of Violence against Women

Abstract*: Sobaliba* historically provided an indigenous moral code to guide people in Nagaland to responsible and harmonious living. A society that practiced *Sobaliba* valued, respected, and cared for every human being. With the introduction of Christianity, *Sobaliba* was de-emphasized as unique Christian approaches to the formation of faith were introduced. The loss of *Sobaliba* has led to violence against women. The church has a critical role in emphasizing the respect and care of all people and will be wise to reintroduce the moral code of *Sobaliba* for the cessation of violence against women.

Joy (*name changed*) was 15 years old. She was loved by her family and friends. She loved life and the beauty of God's creation. From a human standard she was mentally challenged, but in the eyes of God she was precious and beautiful. She was visiting her sister's family in Kohima, Nagaland, on the weekend of August 30, 2013, when two men from that village took her to a secluded place and raped her.

Grace (*name changed*) was a 35-year-old vibrant woman. Like any other woman of her age, she had great hopes and dreams for her future. She was loved by her family. She was a God-fearing woman with a great heart. She was visiting her sister's family in Dimapur, Nagaland, when she was gruesomely raped and murdered at night on July 4, 2013, in her sister's house. The rapist smashed her head with a brick, slit her throat, and inserted the knob of a broomstick into her vagina.

The justice system in Nagaland has failed Joy, Grace, and their respective families, as justice is not yet served. These two cases of sexual violence are examples of the blatant disregard and negation of women as human beings and the absence of compassion. This paper does not romanticize the past and suggest that Nagaland was free from violence. However, incidents like the ones mentioned above were unknown. Violence against women has increased 300 percent in Nagaland during the past ten years, a reality that cannot be ignored. This reality demands the attention and action of the church.

Nagaland is a small state in North East India. The Ao tribe is one of 16 major tribes in Nagaland. These tribes collectively are called Nagas. Nagas are the indigenous people of Nagaland. Each tribe has its own language, culture, and traditions. Nagas were known for their rich cultural heritage and the expectation of responsible citizenship. Except for occasional inter-tribe and inter-village feuds, the land was peaceful, with love and respect for each other. Nagas were also keenly aware of the interconnected nature of creation. They believed that each part of God's creation was interconnected and interdependent on each other for survival and growth. Hence, they lived in harmony with all living beings and cared for all guided by a strong moral code called *Sobaliba*. *Sobaliba* is an Ao term. Each tribe has its own version of the moral code

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known by their distinct tribal term but similar in essence to *Sobaliba*. For the purpose of this paper, I will focus only on *Sobaliba*.

The people of the Ao tribe (Aos) believe that the essence of human beings is *Sobaliba.* *Sobaliba* made human beings distinct from non-human beings.[1] Nagas lived by the rhetoric "community first then me." Community wellbeing came first and foremost, a philosophy that sustained the Naga community. Some implications of *Sobaliba* are as follows. Be generous and hospitable to the needy, the poor, the aged, and the stranger. Honor and respect everyone. Be unselfish with food and materials that nature provides. Speak the truth, avoid false witness, do not steal, cheat, or rob. Do not seek position, power, or self-glory. Protect and defend the community from harm. Raise children of *Sobaliba*. Work hard, learn traditional crafts, and have pride in the dignity of labor. Observe the norms and laws of the community, and care for the earth and everything in it. Do not kill nor torture any living beings.[2] *Sobaliba* offered a basic code for existence and led Aos through the ages in their relationship with others. This moral code guided the people on the "right path." This principle is characterized by integrity, respect, compassion, simplicity, hard work, and selflessness. These characteristics underscored responsible living and the appreciation and valuing of the interconnected nature of human beings to each other and to the non-human creation. Morality in the Naga context was broadly described as learned communal values that were life-enhancing thus contributing to the common good.

A person of *Sobaliba* would never engage in raping a mentally challenged girl because the moral code of *Sobaliba* requires that one show compassion to everyone, especially those who need special care, and defend the helpless with one's life. A person of *Sobaliba* would never dare to brutally rape and murder someone's daughter because the moral code expects one to be trustworthy under any given circumstance. He is expected to respect life, care for it, and be a selfless model for youngsters. The moral code of *Sobaliba* is similar to Carol Gilligan's "ethic of justice and care."[3] Unlike the goal of Lawrence Kohlberg's moral development—to attain autonomy—Gilligan advocates for morality that is based on responsibility and valuing of human interconnectedness.[4] The moral code of *Sobaliba* did not have stages which one strived to attain. Rather, the goal of *Sobaliba* was to nurture younger generations to contribute to the life-enhancement of everyone in the community. Its goal was to enable a person to live responsibly and value the interconnected nature of all God's creation, thus contributing to the common good.

Sobaliba took place within the fabric of a community. Respect and honor from one's peers and community was the most expensive currency of the community. Therefore, one did everything one could to maintain the respect and honor one had received from their peers and community. Hence, *Sobaliba* cannot be understood in isolation from community. The community was there to model *Sobaliba* and to be a guardian of it. If anyone strayed from this moral code and committed acts that were considered abominable, the village community made sure justice was served. Justice was swift and took place in the community context where the

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[1] A. Wati Longchar, "Interaction Between Gospel and Culture Among the Nagas," in *Encounter Between Gospel and Culture*, ed. A. Wati Longchar (Jorhat: Tribal Studies Centre, 1999), 55.

[2] Ibid., 54-55.

[3] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women*'s *Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 63.

[4] Mark A. Maddix, "Unite the Pair so Long Disjoined: Justice and Empathy in Moral Development Theory," in *Christian Education Journal*, Series 3, Vol. 8, no. 1 (2011): 50

offender admitted to the crime, thus acknowledging that a crime was not only committed against the victim but also against the family and the community as a whole. In a society that valued honor and respect, taking these away as a consequence of one's disregard of the Naga moral code was grave not only for him and his family but also for his descendants as people avoided associating with them.

Sobaliba was taught in traditional learning centers called *Aroju* for men and *Tsukimen* for women. *Aroju* and *Tsukimen* functioned as communal places of social interaction and learning. They were "the main pillars of the Aos social order."[5] They were not only a place of learning but also the seats of sowing the seeds for responsible citizenship. These places of learning produced honest, generous, hardworking, compassionate, and selfless people. Moral development of young men and women took place through observing, story-telling, music, and hands-on activities. The elders in the family and parents modeled the way of *Sobaliba* through their lives. In rare cases where families failed to pass on these moral bearings, the *Aruju* and *Tsukimen* made sure younger generation learned these virtues through interaction with peers and through observation of and modeling by the elders in the community. The younger generation likewise interpreted life through observing and interacting with those around them. At the core of *Sobaliba* was a community that was intergenerational in nature.

With the coming of Christianity, the *Aroju* and *Tsukimen* were replaced by formal schools and Sunday schools where children learned math and science, and biblical stories replaced the teachings of *Sobaliba*. Christianity came to Nagaland in the early 1870s. Inspired by the evangelical missionary movement, Baptist missionaries who landed in Nagaland worked hard to bring all of the "heathens" to Christ. In order to do so they had to provide a lifestyle of complete contrast to that of the indigenous lifestyle. No attempts were made to understand and incorporate the values, beliefs, and culture of the indigenous people into their "new" Christian life. J. P. Mills, an ethnographer, writes that "no member of the Mission has ever studied Ao customs deeply, but nearly all have been eager to uproot what they neither understood nor sympathize with, and to substitute for it a superficial civilization."[6] The Naga society was not perfect, but the moral code of *Sobaliba* effectively discouraged violence against anyone. Today women in Nagaland, like women in most parts of the world, live in fear of violence, especially sexual violence.

Sexual violence against women is a modern phenomenon in Nagaland. The last two decades have seen increasing violence against women, especially sexual violence. Aos do not have a word or term for sexual violence or rape. Today when there is rape, one hears the phrase *tashiyim agi raksatsüba maparen* which could be interpreted as "breaking/destroying using force," a term that in no way does justice to the physical, emotional, and psychological trauma of the victim. The term is parallel to an object been broken/destroyed which adds the layer of objectification of women. What then is sexual violence? "Sexual violence (SV) is any sexual act that is perpetrated against someone's will. SV encompasses a range of offenses, including a completed nonconsensual sex act (i.e., rape), an attempted nonconsensual sex act, abusive sexual contact (i.e., unwanted touching), and non-contact sexual abuse (e.g., threatened sexual violence,

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[5] Christoph von Furerhaimendorf, *Return to The Naked Nagas: An Anthropologist's View of Nagaland 1936-1970* (Delhi: Vikas Pubs House Pvt Ltd, 1976), 47.

[6] J. P. Mills, *The Ao Naga,* Third edition (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 2003), 420-21.

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exhibitionism, verbal sexual harassment).''[7] Sexual violence according to Marie Fortune is "first and foremost, an act of violence, hatred, and aggression."[8] Sexual violence for this paper therefore is any attempted or completed sexual act without a woman's approval, unwanted touching, unwanted sexual comments, threatened sexual violence, and internet sexual harassment. When such acts of violence take place within the Christian community, sexual violence must be considered a sin because it "violates the bodily integrity of another, thus denying a person the choice to determine her/his own boundaries and activities . . . . Sexual violence creates a victim, that is, someone who experiences her/his environment is unsafe and is never allowed to feel safe within her/his own body."[9]

One is not born a rapist. No Naga man was born a rapist. Sexual violence must therefore be seen as a social problem, hence a learned behavior. The first step in addressing sexual violence is to acknowledge the presence of rape culture in Naga society and identify it as a social problem. Unlike the times of our ancestors, the worldview of the younger generation is now influenced by television, movies, magazines, computer games, and the internet. These sources convey conflicting moral messages. People learn violence by interacting with other violent individuals or consuming materials that venerate violence. The low-cost of internet connections and easy access to any electronic materials, especially violent materials and the disregard of Naga moral code, have intensified the predicament.

The work of Ken Plummer is insightful in understanding why men rape. Rape, to Plummer, is a premeditated act. He argues that rape is "locked in social meaning . . . . Rape is not the unleashing of male desire; it is rather the articulation of male meaning."[10] Accordingly, rape is a primary mode of social control.[11] Recent social media conversations on the issue and comments of some educated young Nagas confirm this statement. Some Naga men blame women for staying out late and wearing skimpy attire as causes of being raped, ignoring the facts that a mentally challenged girl or girls under the age of 10 are raped. Power, control, and negation of a woman as human are some possible reasons why men rape.

The public conversation of rape in Nagaland began when soldiers in the Indian Army began to use rape as a tool (under the Armed Forced Special Powers Act) to control the disturbed area.[12] Under this special power, soldiers raped Naga girls and women to intimate Naga men and control them. Girls grew up terrified of being raped by a soldier in the Indian Army. Rape was an evil and inhuman act that "the other," a non-Naga, did to one of their own as a final blow to control the people and to demoralize the Nagas. That Naga men rape, therefore, is a horrible sign of how some Naga men articulate and enforce male meaning and social control. The moral codes

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[7] For more information see: "Sexual Violence: Definitions," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed July 17, 2014, http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/definitions.html.

[8] Marie M. Fortune, "Sexual Violence: A Sin Against Women," in *Women and Christianity,* ed. Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan and Karen Jo Torjesen (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 204.

[9] Ibid., 205.

[10] Ken Plummer, "The Social Uses of Sexuality: Symbolic Interaction, Power and Rape," in *Perspectives on Rape and Sexual Assault*, ed. June Hopkins, (London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1984), 42.

[11] Ibid., 44.

[12] Nagaland fought for independence from India long before the British left India in 1947. Nagaland therefore has its own revolutionary army who continues the struggle for independence. This is the reason Nagaland is classified as a disturbed area. "The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958," accessed July 16, 2014, http://indianarmy.nic.in/Site/RTI/rti/MML/MML_VOLUME_3/CHAPTER__03/457.htm.

of *Sobaliba* clearly discouraged seeking of power, control, and self-glory. Rather, it taught Nagas to honor and respect everyone and protect and defend everyone from harm.

With *Aroju* and *Tsukimen* totally dismantled and obliterated, it is the churches' role to ensure that the younger generation grows in the knowledge of, appreciation for, and practice of what our ancestors once considered the essence of human beings. The principles of *Sobaliba* must be taught alongside Christian faith stories. Learning what it means to grow in the likeness of Christ should go hand in hand with learning how to contribute to the life-enhancement of everyone in the community. For this to take place, the Naga church must begin the difficult task of educating her people to appreciate and be proud of one's culture. Unless one is proud of one's culture (that was once labeled inferior and pagan) one cannot appreciate and see the good in its moral principles. Nagaland as a state cannot address the issue of sexual violence without the active participation of churches. With Christians comprising 95% percent of its population and more than half of them calling themselves faithful Christians, the church is where the movement to stop violence against women must begin.

In the span of less than three generation since we embraced Christianity, the Naga community is on the verge of losing our identity as Nagas and as Christians. *Sobaliba* kept the Nagas grounded. With *Aruju* and *Tsukimen* no more in existence, younger generations have lost the reinforcement available in the past. Today younger generations need someone to model for them the moral virtues of *Sobaliba* through repetition and reinforcement. This is where the church as an institution and as a community of faith must come in and model for and provide support to younger generations. When continuity that once existed is broken, the church as an institution must take the place of traditional learning institutions to revitalize the Naga moral code.

Christianity taught Nagas to be faithful Christians by loving the Supreme God. What was missing was how this love of God should be lived out within their context. Young people need their faith community to show them what it means to love God. Just as our ancestors taught the younger generation through their lives, we need faith communities today to do so. To love God is to care for the community of love that God initiated. It is to love all that reflects God's image, respect the worth of all human beings, including oneself, and seek the flourishing of all those created in the image of God. The younger generations also need someone to show them concrete examples of how to implement this love commandment in their personal lives, at home, at work, and in their relation to others in their community. This then will inspire them to live peaceably with self and others, respect self and others, value the interconnected nature of humanity, and strive toward right relationship with all those created in the image of God.

A Naga Christian person of *Sobaliba* will be kind to everyone, honest at work and at play, and care for the wellbeing of everyone. A Naga Christian person of *Sobaliba* will value and respect the sanctity of life by making sure that every person's life is respected and protected. A Naga Christian person of *Sobaliba* will work to see God in everyone—men and women—and that violence to any one of God's children is violence against all God's children, that violence against one woman is violence against the entire community. A Naga Christian person of *Sobaliba* will live responsibly with all of God's creation.

A Naga culturally relevant moral education calls for an intergenerational commitment where children are taught through the lived examples of adults. It calls for deeper conversations

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and stronger relationships between and across generations to remember, value, and learn the Naga Christian moral code. It requires a community that is committed to fostering the moral development of the next generation. As children make meaning through interacting and negotiating meanings in their environment they need concrete and consistent messages both at home and outside their home. This demands that families and churches work together to educate the younger generation both in the ways of Jesus Christ and the Naga moral code that values and respect life, interconnectedness, and responsible living. When this becomes a reality, no influence of modern technology and media can break the spirit of community and the ethics of that community.

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The (Un)Holy Transvestite Body: Or, What would Hadewijch of Antwerp Say about the Muslim Waria Boarding School in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

This paper is an inquiry into doing theology as part of the search for justice and equality by people on the margins of power. I shall compare the thoughts and practices of those associated with the *waria* boarding school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, with the mystical teaching of Hadewijch of Antwerp. Using the theory of "integrated liminality," I shall try to demonstrate that Mariani, the founder of the boarding school, and Hadewijch, the beguine group leader in mid-thirteenth century Europe, struggled for justice and equality by resisting the marginality-producing power of their societies. This resonated and continues to resonate with the struggles to end violence on marginalized people in society.

INTRODUCTION

Moving toward maturity, in the opinion of Robert Kegan, the human being is in the meaning-making process (Kegan 1982). With each level of development, one enters into a new liberation which entails vulnerabilities and risks. One, must negotiate culture, for it shapes one's self. In a Foucauldian word, this negotiation is part of individual "subjectivity," in which one may perceive, resist, or change oneself to conform to the truth-determining power (Foucault 1990; cf. Butler 1990).   A minority group is often placed in such an ambivalent context. Faustino Cruz proposes that a minority group should have "integrated liminality," the movement from "I am in my culture" to "I have a culture," in which the minority "challenge, deny, and resist the marginality-producing power of centrality and reflexively renew the converging, self-affirming definitions of liminality" (in Billman & Birch 2011:219). In this way, marginalized people are no longer bound by the culture of embeddedness (race, ethnicity, social class, gender, language), but "interrelate with multiple identities," and involve themselves in public arenas for "justice and the common good (right action-in-relationship)."

This paper is an inquiry into doing practical theology which applies the theory of integrated liminality in the search for justice and the effort to undo violence on the people who are on the margins of power. For this purpose, I shall describe the thoughts and practices of the *waria* boarding school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and the mystical teaching of Hadewijch of

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Antwerp as two ways of building an integrated liminality in each of their contexts. Both Hadewijch's mysticism and the thoughts and practices of the *waria* boarding school support, even confirm, the theory of the possibility of development from "embeddedness in liminality" to "relation with liminality."

THE EMBEDDEDNESS OF THE *WARIA* IN LIMINALITY

Who is a *waria*, and how did the phenomenon *waria* emerge in Indonesia? *Waria* is an acronym created from the two words *wanita-pria,* woman-man. Tom Boellstorff defines *waria* simply as "a male femininity" and rejects the notion of a "third gender" (Boellstorf 2004). *Waria are* "male-transvestites," subordinate males who are haunted by their femininity. Scholars do not have much data about the origins of *waria*. Prior to the arrival of Islam and Christianity in Indonesia, however, the *waria* phenomenon was to be found there among adherents of the indigenous religions. By 1960s, *waria* were identified as sex workers or raffish art performers. Yet, no *waria* were brave enough to dress like women back then; they wore men's clothes, but were effeminate in the way they behaved. By 1980s, however, they came out in public in women's dress and were associated with the sex business.

In the religiously pluralistic society of Indonesia today, *waria* are to be found among all religious adherents. Even though they may not be seen as commensurable with gay and lesbian people, however, they are often socially ostracized and mistreated (Safitri 2013). The increase in opposition to these groups has been associated with the rise of the modernist Muslim group in the late 1950s; and it continued to be strong during the New Order era under the presidency of General Suharto. After the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, activities of the three " queer groups" became more visible, although with the strengthening of Islamic laws (*shariah*) in many regions, attacks against their public events have increased (Boellstorff 2004; Blackwood 2007).[1]

 Indonesian Muslims understand that any marriage bonds outside heterosexual marriage are are forbidden in Islam. Gay and lesbian Muslims know that Islamic teaching makes no room for same-sex marriage.[2] Marriage is not a matter of two individuals joining together in a legal bond, but rather is a contract between families. Marriage is therefore seen as the God-given mandate which sustains "family honor" and "community order" (Blackwood 2007:295).

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[1] According to the findings of the ArusPelangi Foundation, in 2013, more than four of five LGBT persons experienced violence (89.3%). About four of five experienced psychological violence (79%), almost one in two physical violence (46.3%), more than one in four economic discrimination (26.3%), almost half sexual assaults (45.1%), and almost two of three cultural violence (63.3%), such as expulsion, marriage arrangement. The oppressors can be from family (76.4%) and friends (26.9%). Almost one of two *waria* experienced violence, and about one of three gays experience assaults from strangers, thugs, and friends. (http://www.megawatiinstitute.org/megawati-institut/kegiatan/kegiatan/155-diskusi-kekerasan-seksual-pada-kelompok-lgbt.html, accessed on August 22, 2014).

[2] It is not my intention to say that other religions, including Christians, are more tolerable to same-sex marriage. The fact is the opposite. Pew Research published a stunning report that in Indonesia, 93 percent of population believe that homosexuality is unacceptable. See "The Global Divide on Homosexuality," (http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/06/04/the-global-divide-on-homosexuality/, accessed on September 1, 2014) ; also "Indonesia Still Far from a Rainbow Nation," *The Jakarta Globe* (July10, 2013) (http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/news/indonesia-still-far-from-a-rainbow-nation/, accessed September 1, 2014).

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Although there are no laws as such against homosexuality, Indonesian politicians often use religion and moral precepts against homosexuality to gain support from the people.

The prohibition of homosexual relationships is based especially on the Qur'an and *Hadith*, a collection of the saying of the Prophet Muhammad. Sura 4:16 in the Qur'an reads: "And as for the two of you who are guilty thereof, punish them both. If they repent and mend their ways, let them be. God is forgiving and merciful." (Schild 1990:616). Meanwhile, the Hadith rebuke such relationships: "Whenever a male mounts another male, the throne of God trembles." (Ibid. 617). The Hadith also distinguish between those whose genitalia are not fully developed so that gender cannot be determined on that basis alone, and those whose gender can be determined to be male because of the urinary organs but who choose to live as female.

In 1997, the state-sponsored Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) issued a binding religious ruling (*fatwa*) that: (a) *waria* is male and there is no third gender; and (b) behavior as a *waria* is to be deemed unclean and forbidden (*haram*). The two largest organizations of Muslims in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), also consider *waria* as deviant from the norms of society. Both groups agree, however, that one can be accepted as fully Muslim after having genital surgery and making a formal declaration about one's gender (Safitri 2011).[3]

BODY AS A MEANS OF NEGOTIATING MARGINALITY-PRODUCING POWER

It is of considerable interest to note the existence of a boarding school for *waria* in the important city of Yogyakarta which is located in the south-central region of the island of Java. According to the 2012 data, 394,012 people live in Yogyakarta.[4] The sultanate government and the Javanese mysticism characterize the city, Centuries-old Javanese culture and mysticism are still strong in the lives of most of the people of Yogyakarta, despite the growth of modernist Islam (Muhammadiyah) in recent times. As one of the academic centers of Indonesia, the city attracts many intellectuals from Indonesia and beyond to exchange critical ideas, including those concerned with sexuality and gender. This has been an important factor in bringing about a condition wherein the people of the city tolerate the existence of *waria*. Indeed, *waria* may express their creativity in the public places of Yogyakarta, and coverage of their activities in the mass media is often positive (Safitri 2011, Siagian 2012).[5]

The boarding school, called *Pondok Pesantren Khusus Waria Al-Fattah Senin-Kamis*, was established in 2007 as a follow-up to the social activism of the *waria* in helping so many people of the city after the big earthquake in the same year. After that experience, the *waria* wanted to gather for prayer once a month (or every thirty five days). Seeing how many *waria* wanted to join in this, Mariani (d. 2014) and her friend Shinta Ratri decided to try to have the

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[3] Aisha Hidayatullah has recently argued that in the Qur'an gender difference is more fluid. She asserts, however, that the Qur'an still assign different gender roles (Hidayatullah 2014). For a comprehensive exposition of the culture and history of Islam's view of homosexuality, see Murray 1997.

[4] http://yogyakarta.bps.go.id/index.php?r=site/page&view=sosduk.tabel.3-1-3 (accessed on August 25, 2014).

[5] According to Safitri's data, some of the *waria* are graduates of prestigious state higher education institutions, such as Gadjah Mada University and the Indonesia Institute of Arts (Safitri 2011:14).

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prayer gathering twice a week-- Monday (*Senin*) and Thursday (*Kamis*).[6] With the help of Hajj Hamrolie, the gathering was then named *Al-Fattah.* (Safitri 2013).[7] Mariani, the founder of the boarding school, said, "The *pesantren* was established because *waria* are not accepted in *pondok pesantren . . .* [but] *waria* are also human beings who want to practice Islamic teachings . . . I do not perform Islamic rituals to 'heal' my soul—to be a man." (Safitri 2013:98).

The school currently enrolls about thirty people.[8] Besides the weekly prayer gathering, these cross-dressed people collect money (through what is called an *arisan*) for social welfare and, during the fasting month (Ramadhan), they open the house for neighbors and the poor during each day's breaking of the fast. Also, as the body of a deceased *waria* is considered unclean (*haram)*, because of abandonment by their families, members of the community will prepare the body for burial and will visit the graves of the dead (*ziarah kubur*). Finally, to improve the education provided, the school collaborates with the State University of Jepara and the Nadhlatul Ulama to provide courses on gender studies, Islamic studies, and in the reciting of the Qur'an.

With regard to clothing worn by *waria* during prayer, it is interesting to note that some change their female clothes to male by wearing a *sarong*. Others, however, wear a *mukena*, a dress as would be worn by a Muslim woman during prayer.[9] These, by wearing such a dress, are trying, I believe, to negotiate their society-constructed gender. For Shinta Rita, the leader of the school, he/ she wants people to regard her as a *muslima*. In an interview conducted in 2010, he/ she asserted that such was the tradition of his neighborhood in Kotagede. He/she was raised in a very religious family, in which every woman should wear a veil (*hijab*). In wearing a veil, he/she hopes that people will accept him/her as part of the Muslim community. The particular prayer clothing, as Safitri contends, is a way to justify one's " gendered identity" before God (Safitri 2013:103). Male-transvestites, wearing special female clothes for prayer, can be a way to assert liberation from the masculine-constructed culture. In this, they are redefining religiosity and intimate relationship with the divine.

The religious activity of the *waria* in such a school questions the conventional view of masculine-feminine dualism in the teaching of Islam. For Safitri, the existence of this cross-dressing people is a form of resistance to the "hegemonic" discourse of Islam. It negotiates the masculine-constructed society in which religion is believed to be in effect only if the *waria* appears to be dressed and behaving as a virile male (Safitri 2013). It can be said that these male-

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[6] After Mariani passed away in March 2014, the school was relocated from Mariani's home in Notoyudan to Shinta's home in Kotagede, Yogyakarta. "Transgender Islamic School Reopened," *The Jakarta Post* (April 21, 2014) (http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/04/21/transgender-islamic-school-reopened.html, accessed on September 1, 2014).

[7] The term "boarding school" (*pondok pesantren*) is actually misleading, for there is no dormitory for the Muslim novices (*santris*). Each Monday and Thursday, students come to pray and learn about Islam. The name of the school, however, makes clear that it is "especially" or "only" for *waria* (*Khusus Waria*). That in itself is a challenge to the common tradition that a "boarding school" (*pesantren*) is for either male or female students (Safitri 2013).

[8] At its opening, few *waria* joined the school. In November 2013, it grew to twenty five persons, but two of them died. After the relocation in 2014, the students have become thirty five in number.

[9] Those who pray as male went to traditional boarding school and they are more comfortable to pray with *sarong*. Some contend that if they pray as female, they deceive God since they were born with male bodies (Safitri 2013).

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transvestites negotiating their embbededness and are moving toward relation in liminality. They question the marginality-producing power symbolized by their "unclean" bodies, and they interrelate with their multiple identities as males with female souls. These people have moved from seeking acceptance or incorporation to developing radically responsive strategies which center on common social and economic justice and empowerment. This can be seen as a movement of a marginalized people, in a non-violent way by (un)doing gender, toward intimate unity with the transcendent God and with their fellow human beings.

TRANSGRESSING GOD'S BODY: THE MYSTICISM OF HADEWIJCH

How does Christian tradition reflect on the religious male-transvestite? In connection with this question, I want to touch upon the thought of Hadewijch of Antwerp, a Medieval beguine who lived in the mid-thirteenth century. Since she apparently never left a journal or any autobiographical notes, scholars must examine her writings to try to ascertain her location in the social stratification of her times. The high quality of her poetry indicates that she had a good education and was fluent in Latin and French. This suggests that she was from the upper social strata. She may have chosen to leave behind her aristocratic and educated privileges when she was invited to be the leader of women of the same vocation. To this day, however, no scholar of medieval times has claimed to have found all the details of Hadewijch's life (Madigan 1998, McGinn 1998, Dreyer 2005).

In the society of that time and place, women were treated as a surplus commodity. Ecclesiastical law allowed a man to beat his wife if she did not obey him. The church even urged men to restrict women's religious enthusiasm by forbidding them to join a cloistered community or live in solitaries under a rigid rule of piety. Another popular option for women to join a beguinage. The beguines were not cloistered nuns, but a movement of pious Christian women who dedicated their lives to spiritual growth through pray and meditation, confession and penance. Many beguines opened their homes as shelters for widows and for victims of abuse. They gave lessons to both poor and middle-class young people; helped outcasts and provided aid for the sick and elderly; and they trained housewives acquire certain skills and to practice contemplative prayer (Madigan 1998). Here, we have a parallel of a peripheral community Similar to the *waria* group in Indonesia described above, the beguines can be seen as a peripheral community who were active and engaged for the common good.

Thus, as a Bequine, there was the risk that Hadewijch's thought would come in conflict with what was deemed sound in the patriarchal society of her time and place. She believed that every woman could come achieve fullness of spiritual growth—"to be God with God, without dictation from any ecclesiastical hierarchy. This did not lead to her breaking away from the Catholic Church. In fact, she and the other beguine sisters attended daily mass. It did lead to the conviction that growth to spiritual maturity could be achieved through personal intimacy with God, often taking place through visions. And it did lead to a minimizing of scholarly scrutiny which was so dominated by male thinkers.

For Amy Hollywood, the mystical thought of Hadewijch was a language of transvestitism "in which the female soul becomes male in order to pursue the Lady Love." (Hollywood 2006:129). Many of Hadewijch's teachings were expressed in erotic ways, for instance the vision in which she identified God as Lady Love and the human soul as the "knight errant." Her

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mysticism, however, was not one of metaphor only; rather, it was a passionate, embodied mysticism in which she cross-dressed God as a lady (Jantzen 1995). As she wrote:

> Who wills to dare the wilderness of Love
> Shall understand Love:
> Her coming, her going,
> How Love shall receive love with love,
> Perfectly.
> So Love has kept nothing hidden from them,
> But she shows them her wilderness and her highest palace
> —Know well, everyone—
> Because each has kept on to the end
> With suffering
> In Love. (Madigan 1998:183)

Her idea of perfection in growth—"to be God with God"—did not teach that one can attain the all of God by escaping from the real world. Rather, through such mysticism, one becomes compassionate and zealous for justice. "But when by fruition," wrote Hadewijch, "a man is united to Love, he becomes God, mighty and just." (Hart 1981:84; Jantzen 1995:145). In my view, this mystical experience of turning God into a transvestite deity did not lead to a mere esoteric experience, but to a life of full maturity characterized by the pursuit of justice. With this, Hadewijch subverted authority and opened herself to persecution by ecclesiastical power— the marginality-producing power. The beguine groups were strictly restricted and Hadewijch, along with other female visionaries, were persecuted. As Jantzen writes, the mysticism of Hadewijch was one with a "focus of integration" in which the body plays an important role, because "it is the body, not a disembodied spirit, which performs the mighty works of justice."

CONCLUSION

Hence, the theological viewpoints—explicit and implicit—from Hadewijch and from those in the *waria* boarding school can be seen as theologizing done by marginalized people. In both sources, questions are raised as to who is deemed worthy to approach the divine. Both are creative in insisting that all human bodies may be in a worshipful relation to God, not only those judged to meet a society's criteria of masculinity and femininity. Unlike Hadewijch, though, the Muslim *waria* do not experience Allah as the divine Feminine, or make any attempt to experience God as a transvestite being. Nevertheless, the Muslim *waria* carry out the core of Islam as "blessing and peace for all the world" (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*) by building a safe community for the queers, those judged unclean by their society. Both Hadewijch's mysticism and the thoughts and practices of the *waria* school resonate with feminists' voices to reclaim and further develop egalitarian themes within their own traditions (Parsons 2002). In this, both have reassessed the definition of liminality through interrelations with their hybrid identities in order to overcome violence in their own social context. Undergirding this is the conviction that theological formulations are socially constructions which are not set unchangeably in eternity.

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Finding peace on the road to Emmaus:
Religious education in the aftermath of Ferguson, MO

Abstract

Public discourse in the US following the death of unarmed teenager Michael
Brown at the hands of police in Ferguson, MO in the summer of 2014 makes clear the
deep abyss which exists between many people carrying white skin privilege and those
who do not. This divide must be confronted and transformed within Christian
communities who seek to embody God's love and calling to justice. White religious
educators can look to the Lukan text of the Emmaus story for hopeful sustenance in
engaging systemic racism, and in doing so lean into transformative forms of religious
education.

Paper

My response to the REA call for papers began in a quite different place than the
paper in front of you now. A year ago I had in mind a way of thinking about religious
identity development that might draw on emerging theological ideas from the realm of
cultural studies to articulate a vision for shaping healthy religious identity amid systemic
violence. I still want to write that paper, but on August 9th an unarmed teenager was shot
to death by a police officer in Ferguson, MO.[1] Such an occurrence is becoming all too
common in the United States. In the weeks that followed, as I worked on this paper, I was
drawn deeply into a variety of solidarity rallies and public discussions that made my all
too abstract and theoretical a paper seem increasingly irrelevant.

In the midst of that organizing I became acutely conscious of how far apart
various communities are from each other in their experiences with and understanding of
the US criminal justice system (the recent Pew poll noting that 80% of Black Americans
believe the case raises important issues about race whereas only 37% of White
Americans think so is but one documented instance of this gap).[2] I also became more and
more aware of how much many of the religious people I know in predominately white
communities are struggling to deal with our horror at what has happened. Even more so,
the ugly fallout in social media and cable news from people who refuse to acknowledge
the pain and legitimate concerns expressed by people of color about police brutality is a
gaping wound in our social fabric. All too many white people do not know where to turn

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[1] A basic outline of the events can be found here:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shooting_of_Michael_Brown
[2] Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, http://www.people-press.org/2014/08/18/stark-racial-divisions-in-reactions-to-ferguson-police-shooting/.

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in their frustration, and they are ill equipped to engage the issues. Given all of these realities, I want to speak in this paper from a personal location, one which is clear about my own white privilege,[3] but also about the ways in which Christian narratives can be helpful in this situation, rather than only or primarily problematic. [4]

On the road to Emmaus…

In the aftermath of Michael Brown's death in Ferguson, MO, largely because of the ability of social media to spread stories "in, with and under" commercial media, there are white people reflecting upon the reality of our criminal justice system who have never before felt any need or desire to do so. In this reflection I am positing that these people feel somewhat like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, devastated and overwhelmed at the ways in which their views of the world – views based on hegemonic narratives about justice, civil society, and due process – have been overturned.[5] They are disconsolate, unable to imagine a way forward.

At the same time, there are others of us who seek to remember and embody the end of the Emmaus story, the joy and energy of the disciples as they run back to their community and spread the news that Jesus is still alive. I have experienced some of this hope myself, in the large numbers of people who have rallied in solidarity with the people of Ferguson, in the widespread consciousness-raising happening in the aftermath of Michael Brown's death, in the ways in which some in religious communities have connected with the integrity and power of standing in anti-racist solidarity.

But of course, whether you are infused with hope at new awareness, or dejected at how painful the long road ahead will be, the reality is that all of us are walking into a future we can not see for certain, a future that holds enormous challenges around racialization, not to mention other forms of systemic violence. In many ways this is a time of great uncertainty in which we have been called, as the Lutheran prayer says, "to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown."

Why write about this experience while it is still happening, and why do so in the midst of an academic conference? Why risk invoking the pain and anger and divisiveness of the past months without the more formal and distancing conventions of scholarly writing? Because I am convinced that the dry and formal tones of academic discourse can serve to hide a deeper problem that we are facing in our lives together, a problem that communities of faith either engage and transform, or collapse into and sink under.

That problem is the challenge of finding our way to truth and meaning in the midst of competing understandings of reality. The last few months of response to Michael

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[3] For a description of white privilege and my own struggles with it, see Hess (1998).

[4] I will do my best in this essay to speak from my specific social location – that is, as a white, North American, able-bodied, straight, cisgender, Roman Catholic woman from the upper Midwest. When I speak of "Christian communities," for instance, I do so not to deny other religious communities who might hold similar beliefs, but more simply from a desire not to speak beyond that location. I hope my ideas are narrowly descriptive, perhaps evocative, but certainly not in any way intended to be definitive. I hope to subvert certain forms of disembodied academic discourse, not further inscribe them.

[5] The story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus is found in the final chapter of the book of Luke in the Christian Bible (Luke 24:13-35, http://www.usccb.org/bible/luke/24).

Brown's death have reinforced for me something profound about the world we live in: many of us perceive strikingly different realities. Even though we live side by side with each other, even though we inhabit the same physical spaces, the meaning we make in those spaces is often radically different, even profoundly incompatible. Indeed, how white people know the world is being fundamentally contested, and unless white people, in particular, find ways to reach across the numerous divides that keep us apart from our wider communities, those contestations will lead to violence rather than to healing and reconciliation.

I think digital media make that challenge more visible than ever before.

Cathy Davidson, a scholar who has spent a lot of time thinking about digital media and learning, and particularly the findings of contemporary brain science, argues that the widespread shifts taking place through the increasingly pervasive use of digital technologies help us to notice elements of our context that we had previously ignored (Davidson, 2011). She writes: "The science of attention teaches us that we tend to pay attention to what we have been taught to value and that we tend to be astonishingly blind to change until something disrupts our pattern and makes us see what has been invisible before" (243-244).

Digital media are enormous disrupters. They can make us see that to which we have been blind before. Many people in Christian communities worry that they are becoming disembodied by the amount of time they spend with digital media, the time they spend on Facebook for instance, or Youtube. Valuing the way in which Christians confess an incarnational faith, they urge fasting from digital media and working harder to be in physical spaces with each other.

While I agree with some of this critique – certainly fasting is a deeply spiritual practice – I am not convinced that our problems began with digital media.[6] In fact, I think it is possible that digital media might be capable of helping us to be more authentic, more physically present, more attuned to the differences and challenges of our physical embodiment than we previously have been – kind of a "now you see it" moment – if we choose to attend as fully as our consciousness allows.

I think that the very strangeness of some of our practices – sitting in a room with family at Christmas for instance, and having everyone in the room poring over a digital device – the very strangeness of such a picture can disrupt our "taken for granted" practices.[7] They can help us to "see" the communication challenges in front of us. But only if we choose to see, only if we value enough of our being together that we can "see" when we are *not* embodying such a commitment.

Unfortunately few of us are choosing to do so. And digital media can make it very easy not to see, very easy to create self-enclosed spaces. In the past two months I have been in conversation with many people who have been deeply affected in various ways by the national debate over the circumstances of Michael Brown's death. Many of these conversations have involved people struggling to figure out how to engage the conversation in their churches, where past experience has taught them the prevailing

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[6] For a thoughtful argument about the ways in which our shift from a more communal context to a more individualistic one can be traced to a shift from party line telephones and buses to individual phones and cars, and eventually a shift to "networked individualism," see Rainie and Wellman (2012).

[7] A lovely visual evocation of this concern -- and what happens when it is flipped – is found in the November 2013 Apple iPhone commercial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v76f6KPSJ2w

wisdom of "don't ask, don't tell" when it comes to divisive issues, rather then trying to engage differences directly. The experience of disagreeing in their congregations has not been seen as an opportunity for learning, for growth, for practice in seeking understanding, but rather as a threat to being, a threat to identity, an attack on people's personhood.

I know I have just stated this challenge in stark terms, but I do not think I am exaggerating. For many people in predominately white and middle class Christian congregations, disagreements over sexuality, over racism, over economic inequality, are a cause of deep alarm and existential angst. One of the biggest challenges new media offer to us arrives as both an opportunity and a dilemma. That is, the representation of various kinds of identity-defining difference can become very present, very personal, very "in your face." That same representation, however, can highlight conflict and oppressive silencing, rather than openness to understanding. How might we engage such differences in ways that are oriented towards learning? towards religious identity which is loyal but open?

This challenge lives at the heart of the Emmaus story. Perhaps not in terms of new media, but certainly in terms of what it means to have one's understanding of the world turned completely upside down. Think about the two disciples walking down the road. Not going anywhere urgently, just walking along. They are heartbroken by the events they have just witnessed, and can make no sense of them. They thought Jesus was the Messiah come to lead them into a glorious future, and instead he has been executed in a horrific manner, hung up in humiliation, an act which has destroyed their hopes and dreams.

What happens next? They encounter a stranger on the road. A stranger who apparently doesn't share their feelings – but clearly shares their stories and the core teachings of their community. This stranger proceeds to reinterpret these stories, to point out to them how what they were taught has indeed come to pass, how the events of the past days were indeed foretold, and how they might see this story from a different angle. Essentially this stranger is teaching them, he is confronting their understanding of their knowing, this stranger is upending all that they thought they knew, by interpreting their own stories, their own teachings back to them from a different perspective. My experiences with many people who carry white skin privilege in the last few months has been that they have had their entire notion of the world – a notion which includes fairness, equity, a belief in the power of law, reliance on policing and courts, and so on – overturned in a nearly inescapable brush with a reality that most if not all people of color in the US have had no choice but to endure their entire lives.

This kind of encounter, where people who are ordinarily quite blind to systemic injustice suddenly catch a glimpse of it, is something that I want to support and encourage.[8] But it is an encounter that requires both support and challenge. As Robert Kegan has taught us, simply encountering disruptions to our meaning-making is not enough for true transformation. Contradiction of meaning can be so unsettling to people that they retreat back into previous understanding, rather than making a move to a new frame. Transformation to a new frame requires what Kegan terms continuity, a form of holding space which allows for new structures of meaning-making to consolidate. Such

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[8] Two recent resources from the literature on the criminal justice system which I have found helpful in this work are Alexander (2010) and Stuntz (2011).

continuity can often be described as a larger community into which someone is invited, in which their previous form of making meaning is acknowledged and its origin respected, while at the same time the new meaning is cherished and nurtured (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

Here the continuation of the Emmaus story is what I imagine as a course of such continuity, for the Emmaus story doesn't end on the road, with the disciples having engaged a different interpretation, and now being ready to share a new perspective on their story. No, the disciples are still simply listening to the stranger, until they invite him to share a meal with them at the close of the day. It is only in the sharing of that meal, in the breaking of the bread, that they suddenly recognize – on some deeper level, in some form of knowing that wasn't yet clear to them on the road, although they sensed it in "the burning in their hearts" – that this is Jesus, raised from the dead. It is at that moment in the story that Jesus vanishes.

What is this kind of learning which transforms them? What is it that we might say about it? How do we recognize it? How might we cultivate it? I would like to offer a few elements, and ponder to what extent these element might help us in the aftermath of Michael Brown's death.

First of all, notice that the disciples were simply on the road, in the midst of their daily life. They were not at worship, they were not in school, they were not in any place where they were *on alert for new learning*, they were simply walking on the road. Perhaps in some ways they were even defended against new learning, because they were neither seeking nor expecting it there, and perhaps were even fleeing from it.

Second, notice that they were formed enough in practices of that time, that entering into discussion with a stranger on the road was a natural and typical thing to do. Strangers on the road were not to be feared so much as simply encountered.

Third, their hospitality did not end with a challenging discussion, but took on the tangible form of a shared meal. I'll return to this element of the story later, but notice now that they invited this stranger to share a meal with them and it was during that meal, in the familiarity of the practices that they had no doubt shared over and over with Jesus, that they finally *saw* him, that they *re-cognized* him.

How different this is from the contexts we inhabit today! Today our daily lives are filled with ways in which we not only do not offer hospitality to strangers, we actively find ways to barricade ourselves against them. Indeed, and here I will speak specifically from the perspective of a person who carries white privilege in the US context, listening to some of my white friends I wonder if they had ever had a real conversation with someone who does not carry that privilege.

I have been struck, over and over again during the past months, by how far apart our observations are. It is as if we are not living in the same world. On the one hand, perhaps I might be energized and encouraged by this range of responses, because it could signal a deep and complex response to a particularly thorny issue. Perhaps. But it also signals to me how vast the abyss is between the different perceptions of reality that white people and people of color hold in the US context. This is one point at which digital media become such a double-edged sword. Because you can – if you are thoughtful and intentional – find vastly divergent perspectives available by which to think about a specific issue. But you can also, if you are white, build a self-enclosed world in which everyone sees the same things and thinks the same things in response. Such a self-

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enclosed world is the kind of space to which people retreat if they cannot find larger communities to offer them continuity in consolidating new insights.

So where am I going with this? What is it I am trying to say about learning, and learning in the midst of digital cultures, that might be helpful for religious identity formation in Christian contexts? I want to make four points in this essay:

(1) First, Christian commitments to and understanding of the Trinity demand a commitment to and understanding of diverse and social forms of knowing and learning.

(2) Second, the more diverse the knowers, the more robust the knowing – this recognition is an essential element for forming learning communities.

(3) Third, digital tools can be engaged with spiritual practices that make them useful resources in the midst of these learning challenges.

(4) Fourth, leading religious communities requires a form of gardening leadership – it is about tending to our *learning* and if we keep the Emmaus story in front of us we have a way forward through our uncertainties, a pathway to hope and engagement

Let me take each one in turn.

(1) A renewed and renewing understanding of the Trinity, as a resource for a renewed and renewing understanding of what is demanded of us in discipleship, requires openness to diversity. As Daniel Migliore writes so compellingly:

> Trinitarian doctrine describes God in terms of shared life and love rather than in terms of domineering power. God loves in freedom, lives in communion, and wills creatures to live in a new community of mutual love and service. God is self-sharing, other-regarding, community-forming love. This is the "depth grammar" of the doctrine of the Trinity that lies beneath all the "surface grammar" and all of the particular, and always inadequate, names and images that we employ when we speak of the God of the Gospel (2004, 73).

This is powerful language. But I wonder sometimes if we really mean it? At least, I wonder if we have really lived into it?

Willie James Jennings has written eloquently about the ways in which our Christian imagination has been shaped over the centuries – many of them deeply destructive and deforming of our witness to Christ (2010). As much as we care about Christian evangelism, for instance, we must always and everywhere be mindful of the ways in which a passionate commitment to sharing the good news has often, not just rarely, but *often* combined with human sinfulness to become horrific, brutal, violent, and systematically oppressive. One of the elements that Jennings points to, one of the ways in which Christian imagination took a wrong turn – over and over again – was in our forms of knowing and learning as they pertained to the social construction of what came to be known as "race." He writes, for instance, that:

> Europeans enacted racial agency as a theologically articulated way of understanding their bodies in relation to new spaces and new peoples and to their new power over those spaces and peoples (58).

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> Whiteness…. a way of organizing bodies by proximity to and approximation of white bodies … a form of identity coupled with processes of identity formation emerges from the colonialist moment, the effects of which scholars have not begun to conceptualize…. That becoming is not simply assimilation, but more decisively a becoming facilitated by whiteness, an agency born inside the racial imagination (59).

> The loss here is of a life-giving collaboration of identity between place and bodies, people and animals. The loss here is also of the possibility of new identities bound up with entering new spaces. Absent these possibilities people are invited into an ever tightening insularity of collective identity and collective narration (63).

Perhaps supported in part by way of the neurological mechanisms Cathy Davidson describes, orthodox Christian descriptions of God blinded people to the realities in front of them, rather than opening up relationship. Western Christians literally *could not see* what was right in front of them. Bondage to sin – particularly the sins of supersessionism, colonization, racism and dualist separation of mind and body – meant that many Christians could not see the native peoples in front of them as human. They could not believe the women whose visions spoke of deep relationality with God. They could not risk having their knowing transformed through learning from the diverse peoples they were encountering. I wish that I could remain "in the past tense" as I write about this blindness, but my recent experiences only highlight how deeply the attentions of people carrying white skin privilege have been directed away from seeing what is right in front of us when it comes to systemic racism.

Jennings proposes that part of what we need to do differently, in confessing a deeply relational, deeply communicative, Trinitarian God, is to expand our knowing and learning, both in terms of its form and in terms of its substance – we need to be continual learners. When we are called to "go and make disciples" we are indeed called to go and make *learners* – and in that learning we must also risk being open to the Spirit, and the very real possibility that in sharing what we know we will find our knowing transformed. So how are we to do that?

Here is my second point:

(2) One way to be more deliberately attentive to the Spirit is an insight that we are learning from certain digital communities – that is, that the more diverse the knowers, the more robust the knowing.[9] This is also an insight that comes from multiple sources, and as Jennings notes it is deep within at least some strains of Christian tradition. But it is not always an insight that Christians have been willing to live into, particularly in the parts of our Christian community dominated by white privilege, and particularly in certain forms of Christian theology which dominate the academy.

Parker Palmer has something very useful to offer in this regard. He wrote a classic little book many years ago entitled *To Know As We Are Known*, in which he criticized what he labeled the "objectivist myth of knowing" and called educators instead to reclaim the ancient wisdom of the desert mothers and fathers, and thus to enter into a "relational community of truth." A decade later Palmer published a book called *The Courage to Teach*, and in that book he used visual diagrams to make his argument more accessible. Consider these diagrams, these epistemological maps, for a moment (1998, 103 and 105):

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[9] See, for example, Benkler, Thomas and Seely Brown, Rheingold, Shirky, Weinberger, and Zuckerman.
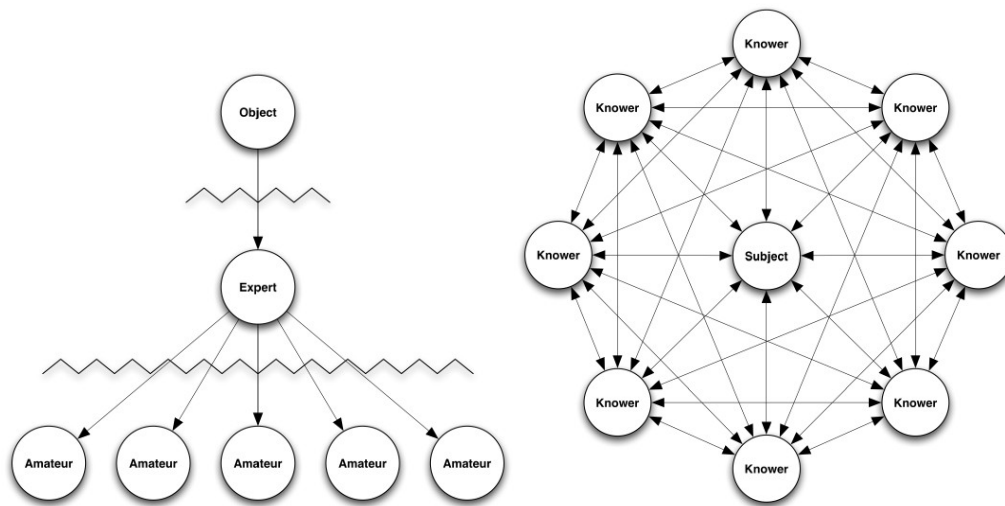
These are maps for considering whether knowing – and by extension, learning – is deeply relational. The map on the left, the "objectivist myth of truth," depicts an epistemological stance which denies such relationality. This map draws straight lines which go in only one direction, focused through an expert who observes an object before transmitting such observations to amateurs. The map on the right, by way of contrast, draws relationships that flow from each knower to every other knower, and from each knower to and from the subject at the heart of the knowing.

Palmer argues that the map on the right, the "community of truth," most adequately depicts the source of all knowing in relationship with God incarnate. He suggests that disruptions in that model can describe sin, and that the primeval example of such sin can be found in the story of Adam and Eve who: "failed to honor the fact that God knew them first, knew them in their limits as well as their potentials. In their refusal to know as they were known, they reached for a kind of knowledge that always leads to death" (1983, 25). Building on this insight, Palmer suggests that "In Christian understanding, the gap exists not so much because truth is hidden and evasive but because we are. We hide from the transforming power of truth, we evade truth's quest for us" (1983, 58-59). And then, "to learn the truth is to enter into relationships requiring us to respond as well as to initiate, to give as well as to take.... Objectivist education is a strategy for avoiding our own conversation. If we can keep reality 'out there' we can avoid, for a while, the truth that lays the claim of community on our individual and collective lives" (1983, 40).

Such knowing demands that we recognize both how imperative it is that we bring diverse perceptions to the table fellowship of our learning, but also that we work very hard to create environments in which those diverse perceptions are held together with respect to their individual integrities. There is a lovely word for such a process, a word coined by architect R. Buckminster Fuller long ago: "tensegrity." Tension + integrity = tensegrity.[10]

Fuller's point was that in that kind of tension you build stable structures by holding opposing or competing forces together with respect for their individual integrities.

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[10] For a more extensive articulation of "tensegrity" see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tensegrity

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Palmer follows on this insight by offering a credo of sorts, a framework for thinking through what he calls the "grace of great things." It goes like this:

> We invite *diversity* into our community not because it is politically correct but because diverse viewpoints are demanded by the manifold mysteries of great things.
> We embrace *ambiguity* not because we are confused or indecisive but because we understand the inadequacy of our concepts to embrace the vastness of great things.
> We welcome *creative conflict* not because we are angry or hostile but because conflict is required to correct our biases and prejudices about the nature of great things.
> We practice *honesty* not only because we owe it to one another but because to lie about what we have seen would be to betray the truth of great things.
> We experience *humility* not because we have fought and lost but because humility is the only lens through which great things can be seen – and once we have seen them, humility is the only posture possible.
> We become *free men and women* through education not because we have privileged information but because tyranny in any form can only be overcome by invoking the grace of great things (1998, 107-108).

These are practices by which we can avoid the two most common ditches on the road to Emmaus. The ditch on one side of the road is utter relativism. This is the ditch that would claim that only what I feel within myself is truth. It is my truth, and you have yours, but nothing is shared. On occasion people have read the Lukan story, with the line about "our hearts burning within us," and seen only this kind of emotional relativism. That is *not* Palmer's point. That is indeed a refusal to enter into the grace of great things.

The ditch on the other side, though, is a ditch that Jennings points to – a ditch that we are always teetering on the edge of in white western contexts, particularly in the theological academy – and that is the ditch in which we understand Christian doctrine only as a stable and static set of truths which must be transferred into the passive minds and hearts of people.

Instead we are must walk down the center of this road to Emmaus. Mark Edwards has a way of describing this kind of stance from within his particular location of Lutheranism, but I think it holds true in wider Christian settings as well:

> The Lutheran Christian believes that she is called to live faithfully and fully in a material, contingent world that was created and is sustained and ruled by God. She knows that she is a fleshly, fallible human being who has been given an almost divine gift of reason to do her part in understanding rightly and ruling justly within that world. She recognizes that there are boundaries, real but often hard to discern, beyond which her reason cannot go without great danger of error. She lives with the Lutheran dialectic of law and gospel, knowing that to negotiate the tensions she requires not only prudential wisdom but also unmerited grace (2002, 9).

The opportunity we face at the moment, this rich vital compelling opportunity to know in deep relationship can be found in digital media spaces. But as Michael Wesch notes, there is a paradox there. We can experience a deeply participatory, humble and open understanding of postmodern knowing in such contexts, we can even experience a deeply generative form of human freedom. But at the same time, paradoxically, these spaces also

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provide room for us to practice, publicly, the performance of hatred.[11] Which leads me to my third point: how is it that digital tools can help us to stay on the generative side of that paradox? What are the spiritual practices that we can bring to our engagement with these tools, that will help us to keep the perichoretic dance of the Trinity at the heart of our knowing and learning?

(3) To start with, let's remember the dynamics that are changing in media cultures – dynamics of how we engage authority, how we experience authenticity, and what it means to have agency (Hess, 2013). Each of these elements of our knowing and learning are being challenged in digital media spaces. The disciples on the road to Emmaus knew how they felt about what had transpired. They knew their core religious teachings. They had lived and worked and loved with Jesus – but they did not recognize him. They did not recognize him until the combination of new learning and a deeply shared practice (breaking bread) opened their eyes and their hearts to who was teaching them. All three of these elements – a new vision on the authority of what they had been taught, an authentic response to that teaching etched in their hearts, and the agency, the *doing* of hospitality, of breaking bread, opened them up to knowing Jesus.

Parker Palmer talks about whole sight, about knowing with the eyes of the heart and the eyes of the mind. He describes that knowing as grounded in love – and not just any love, but the love which pours out from Jesus Christ, the love which is intimately bound up in the relationality of the Trinity – God communicating within God's very self, and God communicating with and through and for and within God's Creation (1983, xxiii). We need to see with whole sight, and that whole sight requires that we engage authority in new ways, that we inhabit authenticity in more full and whole ways, and that we enter into practices that shape us to receive God's agency.

I want to say something hard here: we have to submit to God's agency. Yes, those of us trained in the white male western world of individual autonomy and knowing have to learn what it means to be obedient in the deep sense of that word. We have to be willing to be "acted upon" rather than solely be actors (Palmer, 1983, 128 ff). We need to be consciously reflective about our epistemological practices, and the ways in which our commitments lead us to shape our knowing when we enter environments shaped by digital tools. Palmer's "whole sight" demands that we seek diverse knowers.

The apostle Paul wrote to the community at Corinth:

> When I came to you, brothers, proclaiming the mystery of God, I did not come with sublimity of words or of wisdom. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1Cor2:6).

When Christians confess our faith in Jesus Christ we are confessing that we *know* in a way that is a bedrock upon which all else is built, from which all else flows, through which all can be known. But in that same confession we must recognize that we are called to risk our own knowing, we are called to risk transformation – and that call frees us to engage without fear or doubt.

How do we do this?

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[11] The best articulation he has made of this paradox is embedded in his 2008 lecture at the Library of Congress, "An anthropological introduction to YouTube," at 29:13 minutes in:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPAO-lZ4_hU

Consider the example of systemic racism. It is not enough that I have examples in my own life of relationships with people of color. It is not enough that I have learned how to shape my speech and my interpersonal interactions so that I am not openly displaying ugly bigotry. I need to move beyond my own experience, an experience which is inevitably marred by socialization into a system of white privilege. I need to do the hard biblical work, the complex theological engagement, the holistic systemic analysis, that makes thoughtful discussion with close friends who have differing experiences an opportunity that really opens me up to the Spirit's leading – and that leads me to action and change in resistance to systemic racism.

But what if I don't have any close friends with opposing views? How do I live with sufficient hospitality to invite such views into my awareness? How do I encounter these biblical interpretations, these theological frameworks, these systemic analyses? Digital tools can help me to do this. They can give me a space to engage differing ideas without first experiencing them as a personal attack. They can also give me room to hear, watch and read these ideas with a degree of freedom from anxiety that would not be the case if I were to engage them first in person in a debate mode. I can read thoughtful pieces by people on different places in the theological spectrum, in different faith communities – even in different faith traditions. But my practices matter here. I need already to have set up a framework for getting to these ideas, a pattern of practice that puts those ideas in my vision, that places them in front of me, from people whom I respect and to whom I am accountable. So it is not simply a consumption of ideas, or a "take what I want and jettison the rest" kind of place, but a relationship in my daily life, with strangers on the road, and a hospitality to learning that invites real relationship.

It is an epistemological stance which demands that I see truth as obedience to more than my own knowing:

> knowing of any sort is relational, animated by a desire to come into deeper community with what we know.... Knowing is how we make community with the unavailable other, with realities that would elude us without the connective tissue of knowledge. Knowing is a human way to seek relationship and, in the process, to have encounters and exchanges that will inevitably alter us. At its deepest reaches, knowing is always communal (Palmer, 1983, 54).

It is a stance that recognizes that we find truth in its most robust forms when we have the most diverse array of knowers.

(4) So how do religious educators do this in the midst of digital environments? What could or should it mean to be a white religious educator in in the US in the late autumn of 2014?[12]

Scott Cormode argues that pastoral leaders are builders, shepherds, and gardeners. I think it is this latter posture – the leader as gardener, as meaning-maker, as cultivator of a biblical imagination and nurturer of theological identity – leader as teacher/ learner – that is most pertinent now (2002). I think we can use the Emmaus story as a mnemonic – a memory hook – to help us in the active practice of tending to our meaning gardens, in

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[12] I should note that I have tried to think about and write about these issues for many years, and you can find more scholarly examples of my arguments in the references attached to this essay.

our leadership of learning communities. Think of it in three ways: daily life, stranger/estranged, and practices of hospitality and table fellowship.

First, we have to be present with people in their daily lives. Far more has been written about the "Sunday/Monday" divide than I want to read, but the underlying point that God is working in the world, that we need to find ways to be open to meeting God in the daily, in the ordinary, fairly screams out of the Emmaus story. That recognition has to include the dailyness of digital environments. Being active in digital environments is no longer optional for pastoral leaders. Even in parts of the world where access to digital tools is most difficult, we need to be there. Indeed, it is a justice issue now that we work to help people access these environments.

Social media, for instance, is first and foremost about *relationality* (Drescher and Anderson, 2012). Christians confess that our God is an intimately relational, communicative God. That equation means that God is woven into social media spaces, too. How will we hear God in those spaces if we are not even present? So, first, the Emmaus story reminds us that we need to stay present and attentive in daily life.

Now let us think about strangers – and even more to the point for me, that from which and those from whom, we have been estranged. I mentioned Jennings' work earlier, and I bring it up again here because I think he is by far one of the most eloquent theologians working today at the intersection of Christian identity and estrangement. How is it that so many Christian communities in the US remain so segregated? How is that Christianity became a force through which racism was built? How is it that structural, institutional racism remains such a potent and deadly force in our churches today? How is that white privilege still so thoroughly permeates the theological academy? Jennings offers keen analysis of these questions, and lifts up for us some of the stories from the underside, some of the stories of resistance within our tradition to this colonizing, violent, brutal epistemological commitment. What can we learn from that resistance? More than I can state here, of course, but I would highlight his conviction that

> Christianity is a teaching faith. It carries in its heart the making of disciples through teaching. Yet its pedagogical vision is inside its Christological horizon and embodiment, inside its *participatio Christi* and its *imitatio Christi*. The colonialist moment indicates the loss of that horizon and embodiment through its enclosure in exaggerated judgment, hyperevaluation tied to a racial optic. Pedagogical evaluation in the New World set the context within which the theological imagination functioned. Theology was inverted with pedagogy. Teaching was not envisioned inside discipleship, but discipleship was envisioned inside teaching (2010, 106).

I want to emphasize that last sentence: "Teaching was not envisioned inside discipleship, but discipleship was envisioned inside teaching."

He is resisting this destructive practice, he is arguing that rather than assuming that only disciples might know what is to be taught, what needs to be learned, we all learn through participation. Ancient processes of the catechumenate invited people to journey with a community into ever deeper participation in the mystery of God together. Jennings' argument is deeply resonant with that made by Douglas Thomas and John Seely Brown in their recent book *A New Culture of Learning* (2011). In that book they note that digital environments are teaching us that we participate in order to learn, rather than learn in order to belong. The very act of participation draws us deeper into a desire to learn. That is very different from being positioned in such a way that first you must learn what the

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community is about before you can join it. Instead, you enter into engagement with the community and in the process learn and are drawn ever deeper together.

How beautiful and resonant that assertion is with the central work we do in religious education, where we affirm that Christian education is not about "giving faith," but rather about helping people to explore the relationship they are already called into by God. When I argue from within a Christian space that making disciples is about making learners, please note that I mean that in this way: God makes disciples, God makes learners – and for each of us, in responding to that invitation from God, for each of us that very act of being a disciple involves risking our own knowing. Every time I listen to another person's story I am inviting transformation into my life. Every time I share my own story with someone I am inviting them to help me learn more with it. It is an invitation, a form of hospitality. It is an openness to the stranger on the road; an openness even to those from whom we have been estranged.

I think perhaps the most important question white Christians in the US can ask in this season in which we find ourselves is from whom are we estranged, and why? From whom have we been estranged in the midst of the debates over violence and racism in our churches and in our culture? From whom have we been estranged in the vicious cycles of economic inequality which we regularly experience?

How is it that a people whose convictions ought to drive us toward the stranger, toward the powerless, toward those who are widowed and orphaned and imprisoned and hungry – how is it that large segments of Christian communities find themselves instead refusing to engage each other through polite silences at best, or ugly violence at worst?

Digital tools can give us access to profound and interesting responses to these questions. But in order to access those tools we must first be able to ask the question. We have to have a desire that draws us into engagement with difference. Over and over again throughout the religious education literature you can find references to the need to engage difference. [13] But far too often, in our actual, physical, embodied practices we are still isolating ourselves.

There are many, many limits to this. As we become more and more familiar with the tools, we can build practices that help us to widen the community of knowers and learners. I am the first person to claim that we will have far more failures than successes with these tools. But as Clay Shirky notes, a thousand little failures can lead to a gigantic success (2008). And as the author of the Gospel of Matthew once noted, "with God all things are possible."

Digital tools can extend both access and participation. They can invite engagement with many from whom we have been estranged, if we are only open to the Spirit's leading in doing so. There will be dangers – in our sinfulness we no doubt will create new opportunities for estrangement – but again, we can trust that God will be working with us. To reiterate my point here, the Emmaus story reminds us that when walking along the road in our daily lives, we need to be about doing the hard work of confronting and transforming estrangement.

What about the final piece of the Emmaus story, that part of the story which highlights breaking bread together in hospitality? There are, of course, many deeply

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[13] Simply by way of an introduction to the literature, consider Conde-Frazier (2007), Court (2007), Dalton (2003), Irizarry (2003, 2008), Miedema and Roebben (2004), Parker (2003 and 2006), Selçuk (2008), Smith (2004), Tran (2010), Turpin (2010), Wimberly (1994), and Wright (2008).

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theological elements to this part of the story and the ways in which Christians have drawn this text into our liturgical practices. Others have written and spoken about those elements very eloquently. I want to note here only that the disciples were open to this encounter because they had already been deeply practiced in the hospitality of breaking bread.

The more we get drawn into the collaborative participatory processes of digital environments, the more we are also drawn into deeply physical embodied practices. It is not an either/or. Rather, the very act of participating more fully in one space draws us into desiring more participation in others. This is a reality that those of us in Christian community ignore at our own peril.[14]

I will state this bluntly: a desire to be active in worship, to be engaged by music and movement and story, is not only or even most often about consumerism. Arguing that people's desire to be moved in worship is a negative symptom of consumer commodification is too easy. Of course our sinfulness will draw us into desiring things which are not healthy for us. But deep listening to the Spirit and healthy practices which hone that receptive posture can draw us through and even beyond such desires.

There is an important analogy to be made explicit here. Our practices with food have much to teach us about our practices of communication. We need food to survive, we need communication to survive. We live in cultures that often have unhealthy food practices, and we live in cultures that often have unhealthy communication practices. Yet just as we have learned much about shaping more healthy food practices, we can shape and reshape our practices of communication. Practice matters with food, practice matters with communication. A healthy diet matters with food – and a healthy diet matters with communication. Where is our food grown, and how? Where does our meaning grow, and in what ways?

What does your media diet look like, for instance?[15] How are we as pastoral leaders breaking bread in digital media? Are we sharing our faith in that context? What are our practices of communication? We get an awful lot of practice in the wider culture with shouting at each other. Indeed, I noticed during the last few weeks of pain over Michael Brown's death, that people who were stressed and anxious and in some ways hurt by toxic practices of communication in digital media simply fasted from the process all together. Fasting is not a bad mechanism – indeed, fasting is an ancient and well regarded spiritual discipline. But there are others as well, and I fear that many of us as pastoral leaders have grown unfamiliar with them.

I could go all of the way back to Martin Luther's small catechism for instance, and note the good advice he offered in his explanation of the 8th commandment. What does it mean to "put the best construction" on someone's argument, for example? Or even further back in our community's tradition, I could remember that Paul urged the community at Corinth to remember:

> … we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power
> belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed;
> perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

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[14] See, for example, Campbell (2012) and Thomas and Seely Brown (2011).

[15] When I work with this issue in parishes, I often use an handout which is available online here: http://meh.religioused.org/newsdiethandout.pdf.

always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies (2Cor4:7).

We know that our meaning-making will be broken, we know that we will err, but we also know that God's deep love will sustain us and knit us together in spite of that sin. So how are we open to that love-making?

One of the practices that I have seen bear good fruit in these past few months has to do with learning how to seek understanding, instead of how to proclaim righteousness. We have lots of practice with debates, with arguments, with looking for the holes in someone's argument, with seeking to change people's minds, with proclaiming our own righteousness. But we have much less practice with seeking to believe, with seeking to first understand how and why and what someone else believes, with respecting them enough to be genuinely curious. This is what Parker Palmer means when he speaks of "healing the heart of democracy," a kind of stance which invites genuine and respectful curiosity, which seeks to "soften hearts" rather than to "change minds" (2011).

This is the kind of knowing which white Christians need to practice when our brothers and sisters of color speak to us of their pain at systemic racism in the US, of their nearly constant experiences of suspicion and distrust from police. We need to allow our hearts to be softened, and our minds quieted enough to hear what they have to say.

As I noted earlier, love is at the heart of our knowing, and love must be at the heart of our learning. But what kind of love? I think we need deeply *agapic* practices. *Agape* is the form of love which draws us to care about others with whom we have no biological ties. It is a form of love which is a commitment to the best interest of others while expecting no return oneself. It is a form of love that is not so much a consistent feeling as it is a consistent choice. And that makes it a choice which we can practice.

When the disciples broke bread with Jesus they recognized him in the very breaking of the bread. Was it just the kind of bread they broke? I have a hunch that it had far more to do with how he broke it, with the physical, embodied way in which his voice and his hands and his movement invited them into a practice in which they had already been formed that made the difference. How are we practicing engaging difference? How are we helping our communities to practice being alert to learning in any moment? How are we helping them to listen for the Spirit's whispers no matter the context?

In the last two years I have been involved with the Respectful Conversations project here in MN, which is an attempt to enter into the public conversation around the various divisive issues by helping congregations to host conversations that were about just that, respectful conversation, rather than debate. Our tagline was that we were aiming to "soften hearts, not change minds."

Over and over again in that project I watched people enter a highly structured process and have deep conversations in which they learned to value their own positions, but to do so while respecting the personhood of someone who held a different position. One of the most damaging things about some of the recent media commentary on our criminal justice system has been that rather than helping people to engage ideas and to have thoughtful discussions about our disagreements, they actually evoked and built upon our primitive impulses to experience disagreement as an attack on our personhood, as an invitation to revenge.

I have seen the same thing happen in church circles. Not so much through blatant speech, although I suppose I could point to some examples there, too, but more through

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subtle and even more painful forms of toxic communication. What we have called "MN nice" here in my part of the country is actually often a form of micro-aggression, rather than an open invitation to hospitality. Imagine a pastoral leaders' disdainful rolling of the eyes, or someone's rapid clicking of "like" on a Facebook post without thinking about the implications that 'liking" might have for people in communities beyond their immediate circles. I have done that myself. It is all too easy to click the "like" button, and much harder to think about how to invite disagreement into a Facebook stream. How does one tend a Facebook news stream, for instance, so that you can practice hospitality for differing voices?

Gardening leadership demands that we cultivate a garden, that we nourish and feed and tend and weed and water. But also that we recognize that it is God's work in which we are participating. To speak in Christian terms, we are neither the Creator nor the Redeemer nor the Sustainer. How do we help our communities to practice communication in ways that support transformative hospitality, hospitality that eases estrangement? By exercising our muscles of communicative practice. By being genuinely curious about those from whom we are estranged. By being present with integrity in daily ways. By participating deeply and fully in all that swirls around us. By being open to learning in the midst of difference, rather than retreating into a posture of "don't ask, don't tell." By learning to bake the bread that we share – by learning to create and produce in digital modes of communication.

I love doing digital storytelling with people in specific contexts. It is a method for helping people not only to listen to their own stories, but put them into digital formats which help them to continue to reflect upon them, and also – importantly – share them in ways that invite further community. I run these workshops with people as diverse as teenagers in urban churches, and faculty at scholarly meetings.

Here is one important aspect of digital story telling of this sort: it is a practice. It is a practice that invites you to slow down and attend to the story you are seeking to share. As you narrate and create your digital story, you must first listen for what it is before you can begin to create a storyboard, let alone the digital elements of the story. This is storytelling as a practice that helps you to notice, first, your own story and then – in the sharing – be present to other stories. I have seen digital storytelling put at the heart of confirmation classes, and then expanded into weaving together multiple generations in sharing stories (McQuiston, 2007). I have seen digital storytelling make a congregation's stories come alive for people separated from each other through distance, and I have seen it help people whose fears blocked them from each other find ways to connect.[16]

I quoted Cathy Davidson at the beginning of this essay. She writes of the ways our brains are wired to pay attention to that which we value. Learning to value our own stories is a good first step in learning how to value other people's stories. But we have to find ways to hear our stories in their fullness – in the hope and in the brokenness, in the mythic and the parabolic; and then we can practice that attending, that listening, that hospitality to learning, with others (Anderson and Foley, 1998).

My hope for all of us, but particularly for white religious educators, is that in the process we will find ways to keep our feet on the road to Emmaus. That we will listen to our hearts but seek knowing with our minds (the whole sight of Parker Palmer). That we

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[16] For more examples, view entries tagged "example" at http://www.storyingfaith.org/

will look for those from whom we have been estranged, seek out strangers, make ourselves open to knowing for *understanding*, for seeking in ways that provide hospitality to new insights. And finally: that we will seek to make disciples, which is to say, make learners, which is to say, risk our own knowing in learning. In doing so we might engage in a form of learning leadership on the road to Emmaus which cannot help but make Christ known.

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Theological Edu-PLAY-tion:

***InterPlay* as a Pedagogical Tool for the "Un-making" of
Violence and Aggression**

Abstract:
Play has educative potential in the fight against violence in theological education. This paper places the embodied pedagogical method of bell hooks, the psychological approach to violence and aggression of Peter Iadicola, Richard Mizen and Mark Morris and the *InterPlay* movement of Phil Porter and Cynthia Winton-Henry into conversation. This conversation shows that theology from and through the body as well as allowing the body to be a locus for theology addresses aggression and "un-makes" violence in the theological educational classroom. In this context, play becomes a prophetic practice that can remake classrooms and institutions.

> *I remember being at a two-week theological workshop hearing about philosophers and theologians I was reading about and excited about engaging. I remember one of the professors approaching me, and during our conversation he tapped me on the very top of my head and said, "well, at least you're attractive." This was followed by words of affirmation about how great it was to have my voice and perspective at the workshop. However, as the only African American and only one of three women at the workshop, I found this interaction problematic, degrading and a violent verbal attack on my character, intelligence and integrity. Immediately aggression began to grow inside of me and I knew that it needed to be released. While returning to my room I remember wanting to punch something, or should I say someone, but I had the sound mind to know that I needed to express this anger, but in a safer and healthier way. Once inside my room I began to dance. I cried and I danced until my body no longer held the anger that I had harbored.*

Introduction

This is one of many instances in which I have experienced how higher education can engender aggression and violence. Unfortunately, I have learned through my peers that this is not uncommon. Aggression and violence in the classroom is often caused by the many instances of racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism and ageism that go unchallenged. While many of these –isms are forms of violence in themselves they can also lead to actual physical violence. While higher education can and should engender camaraderie and collegiality, it often has become a place of cut-throat competition with a "publish or perish" mentality that breeds isolation, competition, resentment and aggression. This atmosphere breeds scholars of remarkable erudition of the mind, while

the body is ignored. Scholarly work engages the mind- with books, exams, and papers- without consideration for how the work can be embodied or even applied to one's own life. How can this dualism of the mind and the body not bring about stress, resentment, aggression and unresolved anger? When left unresolved these feelings often lead to the episodes of racism, sexism, and classism mentioned, that then lead to aggression and violence.

Racism, classism, ageism and sexism- embedded in both the curriculum and pedagogy of colleges and universities- breed violence. [1] According to the U.S. Department of Education, there were more than 22,000 violent crimes in and around college campuses in 2013 alone.[2] However, I would assert that an embodied learning is necessary to counteract this violence. Again, once the body is included in the learning process, as oppose to primarily cognitive learning, one is better able to not only understand their own body but to see and appreciate the bodies of others. The body at play provides hope for theological education.

This paper explores how theological education can take a prophetic stance in this matter by finding clues in the "un-making" of violence through play using the organizational practices and tools of *InterPlay*. *InterPlay,* which I will describe in depth and give practical examples later, is an organization that seeks to bring play back into the lives of adults. The strategy of the organization *InterPlay* is one way of approaching the "un-making" of violence by offering a different type of classroom structure. Not only can play breakdown the overly dualistic mind/body structures of the traditional higher educational classroom but it can also enhance it through the wisdom of one's own body, in a way that is beneficial for the students, faculty, and institution as a whole. I begin by defining and looking at the psychology of violence and aggression. I dialogue with Peter Iadicola using his work to highlight how the current traditional higher educational classroom is structured to promote aggression and violence through solely cognitive learning, competition, and various -isms among students and faculty. I then place the engaged and embodied pedagogical method of bell hooks in conversation with Phil Porter and Cynthia Winton-Henry, the co-founders of *InterPlay,* to show the importance and educative potential of play. I argue that theological education can be a prophetic voice in this area by utilizing the educative potential of play to combat the possibility of aggression and violence. I offer up my suggestions for the remaking of the theological educational classroom as a "contact zone" by starting with *InterPlay* workshops at the institutional level and allowing this approach to permeate among the faculty, students and within the classroom pedagogy. This approach has the prophetic potential to remake theological classrooms and institutions into more open, expressive, hospitable and community-based classrooms that will promote holistic learning.

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[1] Peter Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles. *In Violence: Do We Know It*

[2] According to the U.S. Department of Education there are various acts of violence that have been committed and recorded. In the United States in 2013 alone, among 4-year public and private institutions, 2-year public and private institutions, private for-profit institutions as well as less-than 2-year institutions there were 10,769 non-campus crimes and 11,064 on-campus crimes committed. "The Campus Safety and Security Data Analysis Cutting Tool." http://ope.ed.gove/security/Getdownloadfile.aspx.2013. U.S. Department of Education. Accessed May 6, 2014. http://ed.gov.

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Laying the Foundation: Dynamics of Aggression and Violence

While there are a plethora of definitions for violence and aggression, this paper will use the definition, spheres and principles of violence as laid out by Peter Iadicola and those laid out by Richard Mizen and Mark Morris about aggression. Iadicola defines violence as "any action, inaction or structural arrangement that results in physical or nonphysical harm to one or more persons."[3] Violence affects an individual physically, emotional, psychologically as well as their community and communal relationships.[4] The experience of violence is both universal and yet some are more vulnerable to its impact than others. Along with this definition Iadicola offers up six points of clarification that must be taken into consideration when using this definition, however I will give special attention to one. Iadicola asserts, "when violence occurs in neighborhoods it serves to weaken the bonds between residents as they seek the false sense of protection from isolating themselves between locked doors. These relationships are damaged by the violence and in turn have an impact on the physical and psychological well-being."[5] When violence occurs relationships are damaged and this has an impact on individuals physical and psychological wellbeing at various levels. When that professor was so disrespectful towards me, I did not want to return to that university or workshop. It is important to note here that individuals are often affected at a physical level and therefore need a physical way to both deal with and heal from violence.

Spheres of Violence & The 10 Principles

Iadicola notes that violence occurs in three spheres of our lives: the interpersonal, institutional, and the structural. It is the second two that hierarchical power structures and organizational positioning are manifest. Institutional violence is violence perpetrated by institutions and their agents; structural violence "occurs in the context of establishing, maintaining, extending or reducing the hierarchical relations within the society."[6] Mizen and Morris define aggression as "instinctual…an affective component or potential with a particular function."[7] If individuals are acting out of instinct based on feelings of racism, sexism, ageism or classism that come from these hierarchical power structures, they are more likely to resort to violence.

Iadicola offers ten principles that can further our understanding, but for this paper I will only focus on two. The first focuses on the social structures that are already embedded in the way we live our lives – structures which can prompt anger or frustration and in which violence could already be embedded.[8] Iadicola remarks, **"violence may be an emotional expression of frustration in response to social conditions stemming from the (social) structures."**[9] If we can aid in eliminating the frustration and anger at the institutional and structural levels it will decrease the need to have an emotional and or

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[3] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 7.

[4] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 10.

[5] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 10.

[6] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 11-15.

[7] Richard Mizen and Mark Morris. *On Aggression & Violence: An Analytic Perspective*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.) 52.

[8] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 16.

[9] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 18.

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physical response to the frustration or anger that is felt. When the body is recognized there is a greater chance that the bodies of others are seen and valued. The second principle highlights violence as a form of learned power. Iadicola contends that "we learn that violence can be expressive in that it is defined as an 'appropriate' response to anger or frustration."[10] If we learn that violence is an appropriate way to express the aggression and frustration that we experience from various structural powers of authority then we must start ways and practices to un-learn it. Engaging the body offers a type of disruption and expression that can aid in un-learning violence as an appropriate form of expression of anger and frustration.

Educative Potential of Play: The hooks approach

In her book *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks speaks of an engaged pedagogy that bridges the dualism of the mind and body. I even go a step further and say that her engaged pedagogy is also embodied as it requires recognition of both the bodies of the teacher and the students. hooks reflects on professors who "used the classroom to enact rituals of control that were about domination and the unjust exercise of power" and "were often deeply antagonistic toward, even scornful of, any approach to learning emerging from a philosophical standpoint emphasizing the union of mind, body, and spirit, rather than the separation of these elements."[11] I find this to still be true in much of theological education. hooks asserts that to educate for freedom and transformation one must not only incorporate the mind, body and spirit, but one must also take risks in order to "make their teaching practices a site of resistance."[12] There needs to be a break from the traditional role of the university that recognizes the "cultural diversity, rethinking ways of knowing, deconstructing old epistemologies"[13] in order for transformative learning to happen.

One way in which educators can rethink ways of knowing, deconstruct these old epistemologies and transform the classroom through what and how we teach is through engaging the body in the learning process. hooks often affirms that engaged and embodied pedagogy must respect, care for the well-being of, take "interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, and in recognizing one another's presence."[14] The classroom must not solely be about the teacher but about the voices, expressions, stories and experiences of the student as well. hooks also reveals a revolutionary concept of bringing excitement to higher education. "Excitement could not be generated without…students being seen in their particularity as individuals and interacted with according to their needs."[15] I affirm that excitement and play can only add to the classroom experience. It can disrupt this mind/body split that often leads to the various biases and –isms that promote violence and aggression in the classroom. One way to

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[10] Iadicola, "Violence: Definition, Spheres, and Principles," 18.

[11] bell hooks. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. (New York: Routledge, 1994.) 18.

[12] hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom,* 21.

[13] hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom,*29.

[14] hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom,*8.

[15] hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom,*7-8.

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incorporate more of this engaged and embodied pedagogy into the theological classroom is through the playful practices of *InterPlay*.

So what is *InterPlay* anyway?

"To play is to do things that we enjoy…that lift our spirits…makes communities generous and open…fosters freedom and peace."[16] *InterPlay* is an organization that wants to unlock the wisdom of the body, mind, heart, and spirit through various tools and practices with a community of supporters. This organization wants to bring a unity back to the lives of many in order to eliminate stress and promote happiness, joy and the celebration of life.

Co-founders, Phil Porter and Cynthia Winton-Henry contend that life has become so fractured and splintered that there is a deep need to put things back together, which is what *InterPlay* does. I would concur that higher education has become fractured and there needs to be a reunion of the mind and the body. *InterPlay* focuses on using the spirit, mind, body and the heart together through connection and community. In bringing all of these elements together, play aids in diminishing the splintering that has happened over time by focusing on fun and affirming oneself and the other as one seeks to find the good in everything. The best part is that there is no skill or 'creative gene' necessary to do *InterPlay*; they teach you. It provides individuals with tools for everyday stressful situations so that they are better able to assess and handle stress. This aids individuals in looking for the good in oneself and one's neighbor, aiding in the creation of communal relationships and support that become helpful in difficult situations. Play can disrupt the kinds of hierarchical and authoritative power structures that create aggression and violence that plague higher education.

InterPlay in Action

How would *InterPlay* realistically work in the theological classroom? How can professors create this environment while still creating a space for learning and not just play? As a professor you can start and end each class with students and yourself by practicing "easy focus." Easy focus is a practice used to "relax and open up our physical awareness to take in a full range of information."[17] In this exercise you rub your face, massage between your eyes and take a deep breath. Once you are relaxed open your eyes slowly and softly with easy focus. As you gaze around the room take in the whole scene and enjoy all that you are and all that you are seeing.[18] This quick yet effective exercise would be particularly helpful in a very diverse class where students get time to relax, breath and gaze on the dignity and worth of each person before saying anything or offering any remarks.

Another exercise that can be done in the classroom --,perhaps, when there is a particularly heated debate or at the end of a very controversial class, or in my case when I felt debased and belittled by the professor at the workshop -- move the body. Put on music or have silence, but allow people to move their body according to how they are feeling. Some might move with fluidity and direction, some might decide to hold

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[16] Cynthia Winton-Henry and Phil Porter. *What the Body Wants*. (Canada: Northstone Publishing, 2004.) 11.

[17] Winton-Henry and Porter, *What the Body Wants*, 18.

[18] Winton-Henry and Porter, *What the Body Wants*, 48.

positions and then release them, some might just want to be still, while others might want to express their energy in quick bursts and harder movements. They are physically expressing the feelings they may have gathered during the class debate and releasing them into a safe space not to fester and turn into aggression or violence. After these exercises, it is important to have a time of reflection either written or a dialogue about what feelings came to the surface and why. Play offers the space to explore feelings that might not be able to be expressed in words or that aid in bringing words to the surface, allow time and space for this as it not only releases tension and aggression but it calls for a truth and honesty that the body cannot hide from.

The Charge for Theological Education

Theological education has the unique opportunity to be prophetic in highlighting the educative potential of play as it encompasses the whole person. As theologians, ministers, and laypersons we care not only about education, but about educating the whole person in the love and grace of the divine. We take seriously the weight of sin, grace and forgiveness, therefore when these violent attacks are not only committed, but committed in our classrooms, these issues compound making it difficult to see the love and grace of our creator. When we allow our classrooms to be sites for these kinds of acts we are perpetuating this system of violence. We must no longer allow these acts to go unchallenged, but to offer something in its place. As theological educators we are all called to a mission of creating safe spaces to learn, grow and explore that which our students feel called to. If these spaces are no longer safe and in fact cause more harmful affects then we are not affectively carrying out the mission we have been entrusted with. Embodied learning offers an opportunity of reconciliation of the mind and body. Play touches on one's theological anthropology as it encourages and uplifts the power of the individual voice as well as the importance of communal engagement and support. Theological education has not only a wonderful opportunity, but a responsibility to be trailblazers in this area of teaching for and to the whole person through embodied learning.

Knowing the current problem of violence and aggression in higher education in general and theological education in particular, I offer up the organization *InterPlay* as one of many opportunities of learning how to begin to incorporate play into the classroom. As this will be different from what most faculty are use to *InterPlay* offers untensives (retreats), weekly to biweekly play groups, and workshops that can aid everyone at the level they are at. It would simply involve moving at a level in which you feel comfortable by incorporating little things along the way. The point is to start the process not be overwhelmed by it. My recommendation is for each institution to start with departmental retreats at the beginning of each semester. This includes administration as well. I would then have workshops, untensives (retreats), and classes made available for all faculty, administration, and students throughout the year. While this is an intense start, I believe in order for change to happen things must be disrupted. In this context, play becomes a prophetic practice that can remake classrooms and institutions. It is in doing theology from and through the body and allowing the body to be a locus for theology that one can begin to deal with aggression and start the "un-making" of violence in the theological educational classroom.

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Sabbath as Post-Christian Education:
The (De)valuing of Rural Working-Class Persons as Liberation from Socio-economic
Disposability

Abstract

The rural working-class in the United States faces many unique struggles in the face of global consumer capitalism. This paper explores the possibilities of Giorgio Agamben's concept of Sabbath as state of inoperativity for the creation of a Christian education which moves toward a devaluing or removal rural working-class from the current economy of consumption and disposal. In conjunction with Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed, Agamben's Sabbath allows for the possibility of glimpsing an alternative existence than the present oppressive state and attempting to actively pursue that alternative. Sabbath is defined in a broad post-Christian manner which allows for the creation of new potentials within and connected to the rural communities, traditions, and practices.

A dandelion is a weed. Historically it has many uses and benefits, and biologists continue to find new interesting properties.[1] Still for most it is still a weed; it detracts from the attractiveness of lawns, it leaches nutrients from the soil which could nourish the grass, and it spreads easily from place to place. There is an entire chemical industry built around eliminating dandelions and other unwanted plants from otherwise picturesque lawns. Much like the dandelion, rural working-class communities in the United States are often labeled as a nuisance to the rest of the country. Rural education researcher, Craig Howley writes, "For centuries, rural people and rural communities have served as the standard of backwardness for the entire industrializing world. To smug inhabitants of the cosmopolitan mainstream, this history makes it seem wasteful to engage intellectual matters among ordinary rural people (aka rednecks)."[2] That is, rural working-class people are weeds. Greater society often appears to be starving out these weeds. The USDA reports continued decline in average income among rural families, continued growth in income disparity between urban and rural communities, and slow employment growth

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[1] For more information on the positive and negative attributes of dandelions see: Stewart-Wade, S. M.; Neuman, S.; Collins, L. L.; and Boland, G. J. "The biology of Canadian weeds. 117. Taraxacum officinale G. H. Weber ex Wiggers" *Canadian Journal of Plant Science.* 82, no.4 (Winter 2002): 825-853, (accessed September 3, 2014). http://pubs.aic.ca/doi/pdf/10.4141/P01-010.

[2] Howley, Craig, B."The Meaning of Rural Difference for Bright Rednecks." *Journal For The Education Of The Gifted* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2009): 537-564. *Education Abstracts (H.W. Wilson)*, EBSCO*host* (accessed May 10, 2013) 539-540.

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due to lack of manufacturing, healthcare, and tourism employment opportunities.[3]

Tex Sample notes that corporations constantly seek out the most efficient and profitable materials, labor, and means of distribution, thus rural Americans face the brunt of the loss, due to the concentration of profit and employment in major metropolitan areas due to easier accessibility to affordable transportation of goods as well as a much larger market for distribution.[4] Furthering this thread, Henry Giroux claims many persons and populations are considered disposable and hidden from public view through media backed predatory consumer capitalism. This allows for a hyper-individualism, making it socially acceptable to blame the "disposable" population.[5] Any group society consistently treats as a weed eventually internalizes these messages. Craig Howley writes: "To keep breathing the rural air is, in part, to breathe in the acknowledgement of this state of affairs, and the allegations of one's own inferiority."[6]

In order to forge an alternative to the evaluation of these communities as inferior weeds and burdens to society, I propose, not a revaluing, but instead a devaluing of these communities. By devaluing, I do not mean a reduction of value, but instead removing the mechanism and function of valuation from these communities. It is the role of Christian religious education to facilitate this process of devaluing of persons and communities. Giorgio Agamben's concept of Sabbath placed in conversation with Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed allows for the creation of a pedagogy of devaluing rural communities, beginning the liberation from the grips a society which labels them as weeds in order to move toward new possibilities of existence in the twenty-first century.

Origins of Disposable Communities

As I note earlier, greater society has been marginalizing rural working-class communities for centuries. This evaluation of the rural working-class grows out of global capitalism's desire to globalize and homogenize society into one standard model of consumer. Craig Howley calls this the "one-best-way to live," which he describes as suburban, middle-class, professionalism.[7] Rural public schools and media outlets, while operating as a "talent-extraction industry," fueled

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[3] U.S Department of Agriculture, *Rural America at a Glance: 2012 Edition*. By Lorin Kusmin. (accessed: 29 May 2013). Available at: http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/eb-economic-brief/eb21.aspx#.UaYoYWOnbD3.

[4] Sample, Tex. *Blue-Collar Ministry: Facing Economic and Social Realities of Working People.* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1984). 36-38.

[5] Giroux, Henry. *On Critical Pedagogy.* (New York: Continuum, 2011) 90-92.

[6] Howley, Craig. "The Meaning of Rural Difference." 540.

[7] Ibid., 543-545.

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by capitalist intentions, promote individualistic personal success and consistently label family, community, and tradition as disposable.[8]

Henry Giroux writes that this individualistic and consumeristic education creates: "Privatized utopias of consumerist society [which] offer the public a market-based language that produces narrow modes of subjectivity, defining what people should know and how they should act."[9] He further explains that this education not only disrupts social and communal bonds, but creates a worldview of individual responsibility; a worldview which generates a social acceptance blaming the disposable parties for their own plight while refusing to take into account the complex socio-economic injustices which this individualistic consumerist creates.[10]

The ramifications of this lifestyle of consumerism and disposability are enormous. Katherine Turpin notes that consumption merged with capitalism creates a religious-like way of making meaning.[11] This consumerism leads, John Francis Kavanaugh explains, to an understanding of persons as product, "The person *is* only insofar as he or she is marketable or productive."[12] Turpin further continues along the religious lines of consumerism:

> Each day we encounter thousands of discrete commercial messages...This onslaught of marketing engages us in an ongoing process of formation, not just in particular brand loyalties or the production taste, but also in deeper questions of meaning and purpose that used to be relegated to families, communities and religious experiences.[13]

This consumerism is not simply selling products; it is selling identity, lifestyle, and narrative. Diane Levin and Jean Kilbourne note the impact of media on children, explaining that the television, consumer products, and even educational standards currently directed toward children are designed to market a lifestyle.[14] This leads to what Diane Levin calls Problem-Solving Deficit Disorder (PSDD), which, "Describes the condition in which children are no longer active agents of their own involvement with the world...In the long run, it can lead to remote-controlled people who exhibit conformist behavior, accept orders without question, and miss out on the joy

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[8] Ibid, 539.

[9] Giroux, Henry. *On Critical Pedagogy.* 90.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Turpin, Katherine. "Consuming," in Miller-McClemore, Bonnie J.*The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology* Kindle Edition. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012). Kindle Location (KL) 2896.

[12] Kavanaugh, John Francis. *Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1981), 22.

[13] Turpin, Katherine, "Consuming." Kindle Location 2897.

[14] Levin, Diane. E. and Kilbourne, Jean. *So Sexy So Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do To Protect Their Kids.* (New York: Ballantine Books: 2009). 66.

[of play]."[15] Levin and Kilbourne provide an educational and formational understanding of the experience consumerism. They even go as far as to say that this PSDD can and does lead to what they call Compassion Deficit Disorder.[16] Compassion Deficit Disorder emerges as individuals continue to treat themselves and others as objects or commodities for consumption or service. If a person does not fit the commercially prescribed lifestyle, they are often discarded like a broken toy or a CD of music you no longer like. And just as Kavanaugh says, persons not only treat others as commodities, they treat themselves as commodities for sale and use.

For the rural working-class community, this self-evaluation can often lead to despair and desperation as they can never fully live up to the one-best-way no matter their struggle. When these communities are unwilling or unable to call on the often traditional rural values of community, cooperation, resourcefulness, and improvisation due to the effects of problem-solving deficit disorder, the despair deepens. Furthermore, those who resist this middle-class consumer culture, also often into despair and lament in the face of what appears to be an impossible struggle. Therefore, an alternative pedagogy of devaluing of persons in order to create new potential for rural working-class communities is necessary.

An Alternative to Disposability

Paulo Freire calls this form of evaluation of persons: dehumanization. He writes that this oppressive process is a distortion of the true vocation to become more fully human.[17] This form of education, he names as the banking method of education, assumes absolute ignorance of students, subjects, or consumers, and the teacher (be that classroom, movie, billboard, employer, etc), deposits knowledge about the world into their brain, creating a lifestyle to live, rules to follow, and desires to fulfill.[18] Authentic human vocation requires a freedom from these oppressive and divisive formational powers. However, Freire explains, "The central problem is this: How can the oppressed, as divided, unauthentic beings, participate in developing the pedagogy of their liberation?"[19] He points toward a pedagogy of the oppressed which begins with the opening up of a perception of reality in which the oppressed no longer see themselves in a closed off world with a set path of consumption, production, despair, and disposal. They instead begin to understand that they can transform their current situation and take action toward

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[15] Levin, Diane. E."Problem-Solving Deficit Disorder: Programmed Play in Korea and the United States," in *Where do the Children Play? A Field Guide to the Film* 137-141, Elizabeth Goodenough (College Park, MD: Alliance for Childhood 2010) 139.

[16] Ibid. 70.

[17] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* (New York: Continuum, 1970/1993) 44.

[18] Ibid. 74-75.

[19] Ibid. 48.

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this transformation.

Freire's concept of transformation is not simply integration or revaluing of persons to better fit into a society which treats all people as "beings for others," but a restructuring of the entire system creating "beings for themselves."[20] Not Sabbath as a day off, a day to honor God, or a day to go to church, but more so as a state of inoperativity. In the essay, "Hunger of an Ox: Considerations on the Sabbath, the Feast, and Inoperativity."Giorgio Agamben explores this topic as he writes:

> The feast day par excellence of the Jews--for whom it is the paradigm of faith (*yesod ha-emunah*) and in some way for archetype for every day of celebration---finds its theological paradigm in the fact that it is not the work of creation, but rather the cessation of all work that is declared sacred...The condition of the Jews during the Sabbath is thus called *menuchah*...that is to say, inoperativity.[21]

Inoperativity, the cessation of all production, in the observance of Sabbath holds eschatological and messianic potential for Agamben. It is not simply an abstention disconnected from the rest of the week, but instead corresponds to the eschatological fulfillment of the commandments and provides a glimpse of the Messianic Kingdom.[22]

The Sabbath, and any other feast, is thus not marked by what is not done but by the idea that what is done (which may be similar to what is done on any regular day), becomes Agamben writes, "Undone, rendered inoperative, liberated and suspended from its 'economy,' from the reasons and aims that define it during the weekdays."[23] Sabbath provides the potential for a glimpse of human potential outside of the confines of the oppressive economy of production, labor, and consumption. Perhaps Agamben's most interesting example is that of dance, which transforms the productive action of the human body into the something new and unexpected outside the realm of production and consumption, outside of value.[24]

(De)valuing the Disposable

This devaluing of the rural working class through Sabbath inoperativity allows for a new existence in the world, a salvation. For Jean-Luc Nancy, salvation involves an opening up to the other and a revaluing or devaluing of self (and all others) within the world. It is not escape from

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[20] Ibid. 74.

[21] Agamben, Giorgio. *Nudities.* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). 104.

[22] Ibid. 110.

[23] Ibid. 111.

[24] Ibid. 112.

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this world or promise of another world to come, instead, Nancy writes: "It restores us to the world, and it sets (us) into the world anew, as new."[25] It is disconnected from the values and measures of the present world of consumerism, individualism, and capitalism, and therefore allows for engaging the world (and persons in the world) anew, without value and measurement.

This devaluing salvation is perhaps better spelled (de)valuing as a value is being acknowledged, but it is an irreplaceable heterogeneous value. Nancy points to the realization of death (of self or other) as the realization of the homogenous value of individuals, due to the fact that only a person can die their own death, no one can die it for them. Within his writing, Nancy will even call this realization or salvation, "resurrection."[26] Thus, as individuals begin to experience (de)valuation they begin to no longer be subject to the valuation of global capitalism, which for the rural working-class is disposability. This new concept of value can lead toward the new possibilities Agamben suggests in relation to Sabbath inoperativity and the ability to name and change the world that is key to Freire's pedagogical method of becoming "beings for self."[27]

While the terms mentioned above such as Sabbath and salvation clearly have Judeo-Christian overtones, I title this paper, "Sabbath as Post-Christian Education," intentionally. My understanding of post-Christian is not an abandonment of Christianity or rejection of Christianity. Instead I refer to the movement of Christianity into a new way existing, a Christianity which grows out of the current or modern Christianity but begins to operate in different ways. It appears Bonhoeffer begins exploring this idea in a letter on April 30, 1944: "If religion is only a garment of Christianity--and even this garment has looked very different at different times--then what is a religionless Christianity?"[28] As he continues, he acknowledges the impact of a religionless Christianity on Christian practices: "What do a church, a community, a sermon, a liturgy, a Christian life mean in a religionless world? How do we speak of God--without religion, i.e. without the temporally conditioned presuppositions of metaphysics, inwardness, and so on?"[29]

Jean-Luc Nancy further nuances a post-Christian understanding of existence. As he works toward a deconstruction of Christianity, he writes that "[The] redeemer is he who founds no religion, who does not proclaim a god, who demands no belief in any doctrine, or in any type of belief. He is the one whose faith is a behavior, not the adherence to a message."[30] For Nancy,

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[25] Nancy, Jean Luc, *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity I.* Kindle Edition (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2008) KL 1678.

[26] Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Adoration:The Deconstruction of Christianity II.* Kindle Edition (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013) KL 1077.

[27] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* 88.

[28] Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Letters and Papers from Prison.* Ed. Eberhard Bethge, Tr. Reginald Fuller, Revised Tr. Frank Clarke, et al. (New York: The Macmillian Co, 1953, 1967), 140.

[29] Ibid. 141.

[30] Nancy, Jean Luc. *Dis-Enclosure.* KL 1657.

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salvation arises not in founding a religion or a belief system or connection to a transcendent force, this salvation frees humans of the value systems of the world through highlighting his understanding of salvation mentioned above.

In developing an understanding of post-Christian education, I find both the historical and contemporary practices of Christianity helpful. Sabbath as post-Christian education, does not teach persons to honor the Sabbath for the sake of pleasing or worshipping God, but instead for the sake of rendering themselves inoperative within the current economy in order to allow for new ways existing and naming the world. Throughout history and literature, states of inoperativity have allowed for new and unexpected relation to form. Feast and inoperativity play particularly interesting roles in the works of William Shakespeare. In his tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, the masquerade ball renders inoperative through feast (at least for a time) the identities and socially ascribed values of Romeo and Juliet allowing for them to engage each outside the value system of hate and malice their two families share for each other.[31]

While a masquerade party works well within the world of Shakespeare's Verona, rural working class communities might utilize celebrations from within their own community. Agamben suggests Halloween, naming it as a feast in which children impersonate the dead (or other fantastical characters) and small gifts of candy and sometimes baked goods, fruit, and nuts rendered inoperative of their exchange value through the feast, are given as gifts to the children.[32] From my personal experience, Halloween in rural small towns allows for a (de)valuing of time. Instead of quickly running from door to door collecting as much of the free gifts which take on an obvious consumer value for the children, my parents and others in my community took the holiday as opportunity to visit one another and check in on family and friends, they rarely saw throughout the year. Our parents would then sit and talk often for ten or fifteen minutes, we would get our treats and be back in the car. This was a common occurrence in our community.

While not expecting rural communities to emulate my personal experience, I do see the potential in rendering inoperative the economy around similar festivals, events, and traditions, and then taking action based on experiences within these events. However, within contemporary society, Agamben warns readers that persons and communities have often lost the ability to truly be festive and while we observe the feast, we are not actually celebrating or rendering inoperative the event.[33] Persons observe the feast days within an economy of nostalgia, conformity, and production, missing the point of the Sabbath aspects of feast days.

Instead of directly engaging holidays tainted with the values of nostalgic tradition and commercialism which preys upon this nostalgia, I find potential within the lyrics of country

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[31] Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet*, Act 1. Scene 5. The New Folger Library Edition, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine. (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992), 51-61.

[32] Agamben, *Nudities,* 111.

[33] Ibid. 106.

music. Contemporary country artist, Kip Moore sings, "Beer Money."[34] The song begins with lament over the working-class employee's experience in a rural small town, and the singer's desire to for a night to be free of the values of this small town. The lyrics read:

> Tonight, Tonight,
> Baby, we're drinkin';
> Let's wake the town that never stops sleeping,
> You got the kiss that tastes like honey
> And I got a little beer money. [35]

They continue:

> In a field, where we can scream,
> Get away with almost anything,
> Yeah, every now and then you gotta raise a little hell,
> Hope we get lucky and stay out of jail.[36]

Moore creates the potential for a Sabbath activity of escaping the value system of employers, as well as the greater community and society. Within in this moment inoperativity they glimpse the potential of a (de)valued life, where they are not disposable pawns in a dangerous system.

Toward a Post-Christian Education

Post-Christian education must find ways of engaging these bonfires, parties, and cookouts as opportunities for Sabbath. A Sabbath that is not simply a time of repose or escape but instead is directly connected to the rest of life. Agamben writes, "What is essential here is a dimension of praxis, in which simple, quotidian human activities are neither negated nor abolished, but rendered inoperative in order to be exhibited, as such, in a festive manner."[37] He further explains that this inoperative is experience in order to open human activities up to new (de)valued ways existing even with the existing economy of productivity. Combined with Freire's problem-posing education, which affirms human beings in the process of becoming, the potential for a post-Christian education of (de)valuing emerges.

The observance of Sabbath festivities as a community allows for an eschatological revelation of what is to come. This view of the messianic potential of the Sabbath allows for the

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[34] Moore, Kip; Davis, Blair; & Verges, Troy. "Beer Money." Performed by Kip Moore on *Up all Night.* (MCA: Nashville, 2012) CD and Digital Download.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Agamben, *Nudities.* 112.

unveiling of potential within the present economy of consumption and disposability. Action in response to Sabbath allows for a reworking of how individuals and communities interact with the world. Freire points out that this renaming and reworking never ends; persons and reality are always in the in the process of becoming. Therefore, the juxtaposition of Sabbath inoperativity (eschatological completion) with the process of creation, inaugurates a perpetual cycle of action and reflection moving toward human freedom. As rural working-class people practice Sabbath, they realize they are not the weeds on society's lawn. They instead begin to (de)value themselves, change the world around them, and work toward their own liberation. Just as dandelions, free from its role as pest can become a means of spreading new life as it seeds, blown in the wind, float on toward new possibilities, rural working-class communities create and shape their world, liberated from disposability.

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11

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Redemption Without Mutilation:
Girls, Cutting, and the Proclamation of Salvation

Thought by medical professionals to be an attempt to assert control in an out-of-control life or to express complicated and confusing emotions, self-mutilation is a growing phenomenon among adolescent girls. Theological reflection on this trend reveals connections with the historical practice of penitential self-harm and a cultural context that places overwhelming demands on young women. Nevertheless, churches and schools have theological resources for hearing the messages that girls are literally writing on their own bodies and for helping them find healthier ways to grow into adulthood.

Adolescent girls are growing to adulthood in a culture that is confusing and fragmented. They are hearing messages about who they are supposed to be from a wide variety of sources and these messages are often conflicting. Some girls respond to this cacophony and their resulting sense of lack of control by resorting to self-mutilating behaviors.[1] In harming themselves, these young women are trying to find a way to manage their emotions; this raises questions for theologians about salvation – not only what salvation means for the young women who self-injure, but also what messages of salvation they need to hear from the church.

Adolescent Girls and Self-Mutilation

Adolescence for girls is a time of great potential and great vulnerability. As girls become adults, their brains, bodies, and ways of thinking are changing dramatically even while our culture is bombarding these girls with messages telling them how they are supposed to be in the world – as consumers, as women, as adults.[2] At the same time, many girls find themselves isolated from those who could best help them navigate this confusing time. Modern teenagers tend to spend the majority of their time either in the company of other teens (in school, in church youth groups, in social situations) or alone (either at home after school or alone in their room).[3]

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[1] Until relatively recently, it was assumed that self-harming behaviors are more prevalent in white and middle- or upper-class populations. Subsequent research has shown that these are problematic behaviors in a wide range of communities including poor communities and communities of color. However, because white middle- and upper-class girls and women come to the attention of medical professions at a higher rate, it is their experiences that are reflected in the medical and psychological literature. While it is beyond the scope of this paper, further theological reflection (in addition to the needed community based studies) on the class and race issues involved in the prevalence, diagnosis, and treatment of these disorders is needed. In this paper, given the emphases of the research literature, the descriptions of adolescent girls' behaviors will tend to be descriptions of white and middle-class girls.

[2] David Elkind, *All Grown Up and No Place to Go: Teenagers in Crisis*, Rev. Ed. (Cambridge, MA, Perseus Books, 1998), 25. Elkind argues that, while physical changes are the most obvious, it is the changes in the ways they think that are the most challenging for teens (and the adults who work with them). See also, Robert Kegan, *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 24-29.

[3] Chap Clark, *Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 50. Clark notes that this isolation is due in part to the additional demands put on the adults in teens' lives (such as single parenting and dual-career families). Straus also notes that girls spend a significant part of their days alone: 20% of

Caught among competing demands from family, friends, church, and society, girls often feel pulled in many directions – to be both sexual and innocent, active and passive, good and bad, caring and self-interested. Girls display a variety of emotional reactions to these competing demands: anger, aggression, self-doubt, defiance, and withdrawn silence. And they tend to turn these emotions inward and present a public face to the world that belies their emotional turmoil.[4]

Some girls respond to these stressors by hurting themselves. Self-mutilation refers to the deliberate harming or alteration of the body without suicidal intent.[5] Some studies suggest that 1.5% of all Americans have or are currently hurting themselves. Of these, 60-70% are female; 90% of self-injurers begin hurting themselves as teenagers.[6] Self-harming behaviors often begin around the age of fourteen.[7] In one study, the authors argue that there were four factors that contributed to self-mutilation among adolescent girls. The first two factors deal with the regulation of emotions: some girls injure themselves to avoid negative emotions; others seek to provoke an emotion.[8] Girls who are motivated by these two factors are reflecting significant internal distress, especially depression. The second two factors have to do with stress surrounding interpersonal relationships: some girls self-injure as a negative reinforcement (to avoid punishment from others) while others self-injure to get attention from others.[9] Interpersonal concerns are particularly important for girls and they are often dealing with stress related to their relationships.[10]

In addition to this correlation between self-mutilating behavior and depression and/or anxiety, there is also a significant overlap of self-mutilating behavior and eating disorders.[11] Approximately 25% of young women with an eating disorder also engage in some kind of self-injurious behavior and nearly 50% of self-mutilators have a history of disordered eating.[12] In both self-mutilation and eating disorders, the goal is rarely death; rather these are behaviors that

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their waking hours, more than twice as much time as they spend socializing with friends. See Martha B. Straus, *Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Intervention and Hope* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007), 7.

[4] Straus, 11. Straus also reminds us that, while the majority of girls in our contemporary society experience these pressures, only a minority of girls engages in self-destructive behaviors or has on-going psychological issues. The vast majority of girls do successfully navigate the transition to adulthood.

[5] Shana Ross and Nancy Heath, "A Study of the Frequency of Self-Mutilation in a Community Sample of Adolescents," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 31, no.1 (February 2002): 67. There are few hard numbers describing the prevalence of self-mutilation among adolescent girls; there are a variety of reasons for this uncertainty: 1) self-mutilation is a hidden behavior only recognized when it comes to the attention of medical professionals; 2) few broad community-based studies have been done to establish the prevalence of this behavior; 3) self-mutilation is often one of several diagnoses, often accompanying depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and/or suicidal behavior, making it harder to separate self-mutilation from other medical issues; 4) families often treat it as a passing phase that will pass on its own or as a bid for attention that would be reinforced by over-reaction. See also, T. Suzanne Eller, "Cutting Edge," *Today's Christian Woman*, 28, no. 1 (January/February 2006): 39.

[6] Eller, 39.

[7] Ross and Heath, 69. A similar survey of high school students reported that 39% had engaged in self-mutilating behaviors in the last year. See Straus, 59.

[8] Lori M. Hilt, Christine B. Cha, and Susan Nolen-Hoeksema, "Nonsuicidal Self-Injury in Young Adolescent Girls: Moderators of the Distress-Function Relationship," Journal *of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 76, no. 1: 63.

[9] Hilt, Cha, and Nolen-Hoeksema, 63.

[10] Hilt, Cha, and Nolen-Hoeksema, 69.

[11] Eating disorders include a variety of behaviors such as extreme food restriction (anorexia nervosa), purging of food eaten (bulimia nervosa), cycles of restriction and binging, and excessive exercising. While these are separate, if related, disorders, for the purposes of this paper, they will be treated as a single cluster.

[12] Randy A. Sansone and John L. Levitt, "The Prevalence of Self-Harm Behavior among Those with Eating Disorders" in *Self-Harm Behavior and Eating Disorders: Dynamics, Assessment, and Treatment* ed. John L. Levitt, Randy A. Sansone, and Leigh Cohn (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), 3-4.

help girls control aspects of their lives that they perceive as being out of control.[13] Eating disorders and self-mutilation also share important phenomenological overlaps: both are more typical of females, onset is usually in adolescence, and both can often be interpreted as a dissatisfaction with one's body coupled with a sense of ineffectiveness in other areas of life. Both seem to be attempts to take control of the body, especially after the uncontrollable changes brought about by puberty.[14]

Given that these behaviors are more common among women and girls, feminist theorists root the behavior in a patriarchal society in which women, regardless of class, race, age, appearance, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation, are systematically marginalized and silenced. Beth Hartman McGilley suggests that patriarchal culture perpetuates an oppressive disregard for women's bodies and that patriarchy is the context in which women and girls behave as though they are under constant observation and judgment by others – judged and found wanting because of who they are and how they look.[15] For McGilley, self-harming behaviors and eating disorders in girls are a misdirected but not illogical attempt to assert control and to communicate in a patriarchal culture that silences the voices of girls and dictates how women should act and look.

Self-Mutilation in Christian History

Christian history is replete with examples of holy people who have harmed themselves for religious reasons. Consider the following: "Blessed Clare of Rimini had herself bound to a pillar and whipped on Good Friday. Hedwig of Silesia scourged herself, and Blessed Charles of Blois wrapped knotted cords around his chest… Christina of Spoleto perforated her own foot with a nail."[16] And many more fasted themselves to the point of starvation, wore hair shirts, or whipped themselves. Simon the Stylite lived on a pillar for 37 years; Catherine of Siena fasted so severely that she likely died of starvation.[17]

Ariel Glucklich describes several ways that religious believers interpret self-inflicted harm. Individuals might harm themselves as punishment for sins; they might use it to cure an illness or to end suffering. They might understand their behavior as preparation to fight the enemy (such as Satan) or as spiritual training (for resisting sin). Some see self-harm as having magical or purifying effects. Others see self-harm as communal – pain experienced vicariously (experiencing the suffering of Christ) or sacrificially (so that others might be spared).[18] Ultimately, Glucklich argues that there are two fundamental types of pain: disintegrative pain

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[13] Mervatt Nasser, "Dying to Live: Eating Disorders and Self-Harm Behavior in a Cultural Context" in *Self-Harm Behavior and Eating Disorders: Dynamics, Assessment, and Treatment* ed. John L. Levitt, Randy A. Sansone, and Leigh Cohn (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), 24. Nasser quotes a young woman who describes her cutting this way: "While I was cutting, I felt more in control, whereas before I'd cut, I sort of felt like, Oh God, there is nothing I can control."

[14] Angela Favaro, Silvia Ferrara, and Paolo Santonastaso, "Impulsive and Compulsive Self-Injurious Behavior and Eating Disorders: An Epidemiological Study" in *Self-Harm Behavior and Eating Disorders: Dynamics, Assessment, and Treatment* ed. John L. Levitt, Randy A. Sansone, and Leigh Cohn (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), 32.

[15] Beth Hartman McGilley, "Feminist Perspectives on Self-Harm Behavior and Eating Disorders" in *Self-Harm Behavior and Eating Disorders: Dynamics, Assessment, and Treatment* ed. John L. Levitt, Randy A. Sansone, and Leigh Cohn (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), 83.

[16] Ariel Glucklich, *Sacred Pain: Hurting the Body for the Sake of the Soul* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 79.

[17] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 169.

[18] Glucklich, 13.

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and integrative pain. Disintegrative pain is the experience of pain as destructive; it is the experience of pain as punitive or as an enemy. Integrative pain is the experience of pain as something healing, productive, or transforming.[19]

Parallels between Glucklich's understandings of sacred pain and the factors motivating self-mutilation can be identified.[20] First, some girls self-mutilate in order to stop negative feelings or to provoke intense, if negative, feelings. Glucklich might describe this as integrative pain, perhaps as curative (curing the bad feelings) or preventative (to prevent negative emotions). Second, some girls self-mutilate to deal with stress; it can be a negative reinforcement or an attention-grabbing behavior. Glucklich might describe pain used as a negative reinforcement as disintegrative pain in a punitive model – to punish oneself before another can. An attention-getting motivation might also be interpreted as disintegrative in a communal model – aligning one's self-harm with the perceived needs and responses of the community.

Glucklich further argues that modern young women who self-mutilate describe their pain in similar ways to the medieval saints. He describes the case of a young woman named Jill who experienced very little pain when she cut herself; Jill also described "a feeling of somehow taking charge of her life with the help of the razor."[21] Glucklich also presents the experiences of St. Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi, a sixteenth century Florentine Carmelite sister, who practiced an extreme form of self-harm, including beating herself with sticks and thorns, wearing a girdle studded with nails, and dripping hot wax on herself in an attempt to transform herself into an instrument of God. Glucklich makes the point that, whereas St. Maria Maddelena's self-mutilating behavior was understood in religious terms, the same behavior in Jill is seen as an illness.[22] This shift from a religious to a medical understanding of self-harm means that medical professionals do not always consider the ways that self-mutilating behavior are interpreted by religious believers. This also means that doctors may not make connections between a young woman's faith background and her understanding of her own self-harming behavior.

Eating Disorders, Self-Mutilation, and Questions of Salvation

Just as extreme fasting and self-inflicted pain were often linked in the religious practices of our saints, they continue to function theologically in similar ways today. Given the significant overlap of eating disorders and self-mutilation, it makes sense to look to those theologians who explore the theological questions raised by eating disorders. Michelle Mary Lelwica engages the question of soteriology through the lens of eating disorders[23] and her insights can speak to the soteriological questions raised by self-mutilation.

Lelwica argues that contemporary culture is sending girls and women messages that tell them that, in order to be saved, they have to be thin. This message of thinness, proclaimed through the media, but also found in the fitness culture, the medical community, and the diet industry, tells girls that they are not good enough if they are not thin. She goes on to suggest that the reason that this thinness salvation myth finds traction among so many girls and women is that it echoes the misogynistic and anti-body tradition of Western culture. Girls and women

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[19] Glucklich, 34.

[20] While not all young women interpret their own self-injurious behavior in religious terms, there are significant similarities between the ways that the Christian tradition has interpreted self-harm and the ways that some girls speak about their self-harming behavior.

[21] Glucklich, 80.

[22] Glucklich, 84. See also, Bynum, 194-5.

[23] Michelle Mary Lelwica, *Starving for Salvation: The Spiritual Dimensions of Eating Problems among American Girls and Women* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

experience this as a message that, because they are female, they are bodily and therefore imperfect. In addition, the Christian tradition has often told women that bodily cravings are sinful. This is taken up by the contemporary culture when girls and women are told to "control your appetite, be thin, and you will be beautiful/loved/successful/saved."[24]

Lelwica traces some of the ways that medieval female fasting practices are reproduced in the contemporary situation of women and girls with eating disorders. Caroline Walker Bynum argues that medieval women saw fasting as redemptive and sacrificial, whereas today's young women are starving themselves for narrower and less lofty reasons.[25] Lelwica argues, however, that situating fasting within a theology of women's suffering as salvific is problematic because it is oppressive of women. Further, contemporary girls and women who engage in extreme fasting are not simply engaging in narcissistic behavior. "If we listen carefully, we will hear that contemporary girls' and women's accounts of their struggles with food and body are multifaceted, diverse, and permeated with symbolic and ritual – one might argue, religious – significance."[26] Particularly noteworthy are the ways in which rituals of weight-loss take on religious overtones.[27]

While Lelwica's discussion centers around the symbolic power of media portrayals of thin women and the salvific promise of thinness, her approach speaks to questions of salvation raised by self-mutilating behavior. First, many girls describe self-mutilating behavior as an attempt to assert control – often over the one thing, their bodies, they can control.[28] In a patriarchal culture, where women are powerless, the search for control through one's own body is logical. However, the inadequacy of self-mutilating behaviors to achieve control points to the fact that these behaviors do not address the actual cause of powerlessness in girls' lives.[29] Similarly, many young women who self-mutilate describe their cutting behavior as a search for a voice or a way to express emotions that they cannot otherwise express.[30] The self-harming behavior is not caused by the sense of a lack of voice and agency – lacking these does not necessitate finding one's voice through self-harm; rather, in a patriarchal culture where they are denied these, some girls find that self-harming is the only way to assert their voice and agency.[31]

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[24] Lelwica, 8. This dualism gets played out, as well, in rhetoric about good and evil women: "'Good women' (nuns, martyrs, virgins, and saints) transcend their natural inferiority as females by eschewing bodily pleasures. When 'evil women,' by contrast, give into those pleasures, they are merely doing what is 'natural' for them, given their supposedly inferior nature as women" (85).

[25] See Lelwica, 27-29. See Bynum, 299-300.

[26] Lelwica, 29.

[27] Whether it is counting calories, logging hours on the treadmill, or purging the body of unwanted food, girls and women with eating disorders structure their lives around these weight-loss rituals and, in doing so, these rituals become sources of meaning and control in their lives.

[28] Paradoxically, in both eating disorders and self-harming behaviors, it is easy for these young women to move from a behavior that seeks control and over which they do have control (such as dieting or cutting) to a point where they loose control over the behavior and can no longer manage their lives without it.

[29] See Lelwica, 108-112. In this section, she discusses how language about control is understood and gets played out in young women with eating disorders.

[30] Straus describes this as "'writing' messages to us on their bodies" (59).

[31] See Lelwica, 111-112, in particular for her discussion of agency and voice as related to the powerlessness experienced by women and girls with eating disorders. "To understand the spiritual dimensions of anorexia and bulimia, we must ask not simply 'Why do anorexic-bulimic girls and women want to control their bodies?' but also 'How has the language of control become the most viable idiom for exercising agency and resisting domination?' This question suggests that neither the desire for control nor the sense of helplessness to which it responds is the *cause* of eating problems. These feelings are best seen as the *effect* of living in a culture that is guided by a logic of domination: a way of thinking-feeling-being that reduces power to control" (112).

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As a theological question, the search for control and voice point to the historical silencing of women and girls in the church and the various messages that girls and women are sent about how they fit into the economy of salvation. When women are told that the only way to achieve salvation is through transcending the fleshy concerns of the body – to become spiritual – then control over one's own body in the attempt to achieve this salvation makes sense. Further, in finding voice and agency in self-harming behaviors, these girls are also offering a profound critique of a church that tells them that their bodies are undesirable and that salvation comes through control over all aspects of one's life.

A second theological concern that is raised by self-mutilation among young women is their sense of escapism and an otherworldly search for salvation. Girls who self-mutilate often experience a sense of release of emotions and a sense of freedom and inner-peace.[32] These descriptions suggest that girls who self-injure are searching for a sense of salvation that is bound up with this otherworldly or disconnected experience. However, self-mutilation goes beyond this escapism; rather, in a world where transcending this reality is a spiritual goal, then self-harming behaviors that provoke this feeling make sense to these young women. Further, the use of self-mutilating behaviors to manage emotions and to seek salvation means that, for these girls, they are alone and isolated from their families and communities.[33] Because self-mutilation is usually hidden, girls are engaging in private rituals and a solitary struggle for salvation. Their search for salvation through an otherworldly experience of freedom or release becomes an attempt to achieve salvation through suffering.[34] Locked into a cycle where self-injury seems to be the only way to achieve salvation, girls find that they have to continue the self-injury in order to maintain that salvation. Two theological questions are raised by this escapism and otherworldliness. First, a salvation that is experienced primarily as detached from this world serves to reinforce the spirit/body dualism that feminist theologians, among others, find problematic. Second, the search for an otherworldly salvation that isolates young women becomes a rejection of the role of the community in the experience of salvation and perpetuates the sense of being alone with which many girls are struggling.

Proclaiming Salvation to Girls Who Self-Harm

In her discussion of eating disorders and salvation, Lelwica argues that, in addition to investigating the individual causes of eating disorders, we need to interrogate the symbol and ritual systems that make disordered eating a useful strategy as well as the anti-body and anti-woman messages of salvation of our religious traditions. In order to do this, Lelwica advocates a re-examination of salvation – What does it mean to be well and healthy?[35] In considering the proclamation of salvation to young women who self-mutilate, we must ask a very similar question – What does it mean to be healthy and whole? In the unmaking of self-harming behaviors in young women, theologians and religious educators must provide girls with the tools to break the connection between self-harm and salvation.

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[32] See Lelwica, 119-121, for descriptions of how food and food-denial become escapism and create an otherworldly shelter for women and girls. Paradoxically, by creating a shelter for themselves through their self-harming behavior, girls can find themselves in a prison. Just as the search for control easily becomes a loss of control over this behavior, so does the search for a safe shelter become, in fact, a self-destructive and crippling prison. Because they lack other skills for managing what feels so out of control, girls continue to fall back on self-harming behaviors since they seem to work for them.

[33] See Lelwica, 124, for a discussion of the isolating tendencies of eating disorders.

[34] See Lelwica, 123, for a discussion of the elevation of suffering in the salvation myth of thinness.

[35] Lelwica, 127.

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A first important part of helping young women to understand salvation without feeling the need to self-injure is to help these young women come to a critical consciousness about the effects of a patriarchal society and church on their understandings of themselves as women and as embodied. Young women can see that the messages of being the "good girl" who does not show negative emotions, who does not act on her emerging sexual feelings, and who is passive and selfless are, in fact, destructive messages that serve to reinforce the oppression of women. In addition, critical awareness of the patriarchal roots of girls' and women's experiences of lack of voice and agency can help them to understand not only why they feel this lack of voice, but also how self-harming behaviors are not adequate ways for them to find their voice and sense of agency. Taking this critical consciousness to the messages of salvation that are preached by a patriarchal church can help young women highlight the oppressive aspects of that message of salvation. When suffering and pain are held up as salvific, when salvation means becoming more "spiritual" and less "body," when salvation is an individual endeavor, and when women and men who tortured themselves to achieve salvation are idolized as saints, girls who self-mutilate may be more likely to see this behavior as useful or even necessary for achieving salvation. However, critical awareness of these destructive tendencies can help girls and women see them as unhelpful distortions of the Gospel message and can help them to reject misogynistic and oppressive approaches to salvation. Developing critical consciousness can empower girls to find new ways of creating meaning in their lives, to develop a new vision for what salvation means, and to learn new ways of coping with the emotional stresses they must still deal with.

A second approach to addressing questions of salvation with young women who injure themselves is to help them understand salvation as a process rather than as a state of perfection. We live in a society and a church that ties salvation to conversion and then identifies conversion as a once-and-for-all event – we are either saved or not saved. However, when salvation is understood more as a process of continual movement towards the goal of wellness, wholeness, and love, this dualistic approach to conversion/salvation is contested. Understanding salvation as a process can be challenging for girls who self-injure; it means that girls who self-harm will have to let go of their belief that their self-harming behaviors are *the* answer to managing their inner emotional turmoil. Instead, salvation can come to mean engaging in a multitude of more healthy practices that draw girls into community with others rather than shutting them into their own isolated prisons.

As adults who work with young women in our churches and schools learn to recognize and adequately respond to these young women who self-mutilate, we must also learn new and more life-giving ways of preaching a message of salvation to these young women. Churches and other faith-based institutions have much to deal with as they help adolescents navigate the tricky waters of growing into healthy adulthood. But these adults have the opportunity to preach a message of salvation that rejects the need for girls to, as Mary Pipher puts it, "carve themselves into culturally acceptable pieces."[36] Girls who are in such emotional distress that they resort to harming themselves as a way to control and relieve their stress should be able to turn to the adults in the church for assurance and grounding in a tradition that offers redemption without mutilation.

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[36] Mary Pipher, *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls* (New York: Putnam, 1994), 157.

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Learning the Limits of Salvation:
Young Women, Hookup Culture, and the Failure of Catholic Colleges

Colleges promise young women a brand of salvation—that education guarantees their socio-economic success. Catholic colleges couple this promise with the message of Christian salvation, raising the stakes for these young women. Unfortunately, many women face a loss of confidence amidst the violence of the contemporary hookup culture that pervades college campuses. A feminist articulation of salvation serves as a much needed corrective: Catholic colleges are called to educate students in a faith that empowers them to unmake violence.

Introduction

College education is frequently sold today in terms of salvation—it is a guarantor of economic and social success in a culture that equates personhood with status and consumption. Education is perceived as the one-way ticket to the American Dream—it gives young people the tools to advance if they are willing to work hard enough and long enough, and makes the fleeting promise that it will turn you, no matter your current social location, into a power figure. This promise has been more recently extended to young women and they are taking full advantage— women are now completing more undergraduate and graduate degrees than men. [1] While this development is surely reassuring, it has resulted in an unexpected backlash—some are now claiming that the need for feminism no longer exists; that women now are demonstrably out-achieving men and have surely found equality.

A deeper look into the experiences of many young women during their college years fundamentally refutes this claim. [2] While many college students continue to find their education empowering, all too many report experiences of violence in the form of racism, sexism, homophobia, and classism. Young women in particular speak about the prevalence of the hookup culture and sexual violence during their time in college. [3] Recent studies now link those

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[1] Katty Kay and Claire Shipman, "The Confidence Gap," in *The Atlantic*, April 14, 2014, accessed April 17, 2014, http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/04/the-confidence-gap/359815/

[2] A few caveats: this paper will end up being primarily about the experience of middle to upper-middle class straight women. Race will also not be a primarily category of analysis, though it is of the utmost significance. Women of color are more likely to suffer sexual assault and less likely to taken seriously by authorities (for more information on this please see Samhita Mukhopadhyay "Trial by Media: Black Female Lasciviousness and the Question of Consent," in *Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and a World without Rape*, ed. Jaclyn Friedman and Jessica Valienti (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press, 2008, 151-162.) as well as the work of Traci C. West and Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas.) Moreover, the current research in this area is limited to heterosexual assaults. This does not, of course, mean that same sex sexual violence is not occurring, just that the literature is still desperately needed. Finally, this paper, in recognition of a history of silencing, will focus primarily on the voices and experiences of young women. However, I wholeheartedly support efforts to better understand the impact of the hookup culture on young men, and analyses of how society's construction of masculinity is damaging to the development of young men.

[3] I want to make it abundantly clear that while I am not entirely conflating "hooking-up" with sexual assault, and am aware of many feminist tracts that laud what they see as women's sexual liberation, I am convinced

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two violent college norms to the deterioration of young women's sense of self. The "hookup culture" is defined by brief, unemotional sexual encounters, ranging from relatively minor experiences to intercourse, that deprioritizes communication and that considers a coercive notion of consent to be the only standard for sexual contact. This paper will rely on studies that find this culture is one of entitlement and violence, where the standard of consent is threatened. This culture is pervasive on college campuses and it exerts a tremendous amount of social pressure on young women who are still in the process of self-discovery.

While this experience of violence raises important questions for theologians no matter the other details of the situation, it is important for us to remember the frequent use of salvation language in reference to higher education. How is our cultural understanding of salvation and the violence it visits on many young women impacting how these women understand religious salvation? This question is further complicated when we realize that the hookup culture and sexual assault are also staples of young women's experiences at Catholic and other religious universities. The Christian faith proclaims God's promise of salvation—the liberating and transforming experience of love, community, and faithfulness—and Catholic colleges are built to be ministers of the church's belief in that promise. Unfortunately, for many young women, their time at these institutions is one of shame, self-denial, and victimization. These young women are trained to associate violence with salvation. What are we, as ministers and teachers, called to do to unmake this association and create systems that promote justice and foster healthier understandings of salvation?

The Violence of Hooking-Up

Contemporary sociological tracts acknowledge that the prevalence of the hookup culture on college campuses is participating in the deterioration of many young women's sense of self-worth. In this section, I will focus on three primary facets of the hookup culture that perpetuates this reality: that it is difficult to define, that it is pervasive, and that it devalues communication. Each of these characteristics contributes to an environment that enables sexual assault, polices the behavior of young women, and turns the promised experience of salvation into one of destructive violence.

Many researchers who undertake projects relating to the hookup culture on campus find that it is exceedingly difficult for students to articulate how it functions. Kathleen Bogle admits that it is nearly impossible to get a coherent definition from students.[4] This is not only true because the vast majority of students have never witnessed another dating pattern, but also because a hookup can range anywhere from kissing to intercourse.[5] This is how the hookup

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by the material presented here that shows the line between the hookup culture and the prevalence of rape and sexual violence to be very fuzzy. In some instances it seems that young people are using hooking-up as a placeholder term for sexual assault or rape, because they either are unsure of how to identify such violence, or they fear either silence or reprisal if they report. I am an advocate for young women learning to claim their own sexuality and to break out of the cycle of shame that has too long been used to police women's self-perception and behavior, but in order to make that change we need to help young women claim their agency and make active and informed choices about sexual activity and potential sexual partners. The hookup culture provides anything but, with its heavy reliance on social pressure to keeps individuals uncommunicative and complacent.

[4] Kathleen Bogle, *Hooking Up: Sex, Dating, and Relationships on Campus* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 30.
[5] Ibid.

culture functions: it is able to pull any partnered sexual act under its label, making it a ubiquitous and coercive standard.[6]

The hookup culture is normalized in the lives of college students,[7] in great part, because everyone around them, including parents, teachers, administrators, and sex educators assume that their behavior will conform to the hookup culture, and the best thing to do is minimize damage.[8] This is not to say that all students participate in the hookup culture to the same extent—some draw sexual boundaries and others abstain entirely. However, even these students have to pay the price of isolation for their decision not to comply.[9]

Colleges effectively market themselves as entering students' new home. What young women learn upon arrival is that they will have to make their home in the midst of a hookup culture that does not expect or value emotional commitments.[10] It is worth noting that sexual pleasure is an unthought-of standard in this culture: "Hookup sex is fast, uncaring, unthinking, and perfunctory. Hookup culture promotes bad sex, boring sex, drunken sex you don't remember, sex you could care less about, sex where desire is absent, sex you have 'just because everyone else is, too,' or that 'just happens.'"[11] Individuals engage in acts of sexual intimacy, not because they desire it, but because it is expected of them.[12]

This disregard for pleasure is closely linked to hookup culture's disregard for communication. The most concerning result of this is that verbal communication, even consent, is unexpected and unnecessary. Indeed, verbal communication during a hookup breaks the social contract.[13] Bogle stresses that while "ascertaining whether someone is interested in a sexual encounter is an important aspect of the hook up script," individuals often rely on unreliable nonverbal cues before moving forward.[14] This reality causes Freitas to reevaluate how we talk about sexual assault and date rape with college students: "Within hookup culture, it is too simplistic to have conversations about date rape and 'no means no,' since this culture is one that by definition *excludes dating*…while promoting using copious amounts of alcohol. Taken together, it has students not only *not* saying no, but barely saying anything at all, including yes."[15] The hookup culture perpetually exists at the ugly boundary of sexual assault, in large part because it inhibits communication and reporting:

> Several of the young women I interviewed discussed how, during a hookup, it did not occur to their partners to ask for—or even wait for—consent. Talking is not what the hookup is about—getting it done is. Though these women knew (more or less) that they had not said yes to sexual intimacy, they were also unwilling to call it sexual assault. Instead, they called on ambiguous language to avoid the claim. "I did not actually say no in the situation, it just kind of happened," said one young woman. "I didn't want to do it," she went on, but then later added, "I don't feel like he raped me, but it *was* against my will the first time."[16]

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[6] Donna Freitas, *The End of Sex: How Hookup Culture is Leaving a Generation Unhappy, Sexually Unfulfilled, and Confused About Intimacy* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 2.
[7] Ibid, 5.
[8] Ibid, 3.
[9] Kathleen Bogle, *Hooking Up*, 71.
[10] Donna Freitas, *The End of Sex*, 36.
[11] Ibid, 2.
[12] Ibid, 12.
[13] Donna Freitas, *The End of Sex*, 53.
[14] Kathleen Bogle, *Hooking Up*, 33.
[15] Donna Freitas, *The End of Sex*, 48.
[16] Ibid, 49-50.

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The hookup culture normalizes violence and promotes silence and complacency. Despite rhetoric around how much sexual assault rates have plummeted over the past several decades, the research proves otherwise. The percentage of women at college who will experience attempted rape or rape could be as high as 20-25%,[17] and the number of women who experience other forms of sexual assault is much, much higher.[18] In fact, "most recent studies of non-rape sexual victimization suggest that little has changed since the 1950s with respect to the extent of these types of victimizations committed against college women."[19] Sexual assault remains a norm on college campuses, and the coerciveness of the hookup culture functions in such a way as to inhibit the full freedom and consent of participants.

Decreased communication also expels emotional ties from sexual encounters. This disconnect from emotions is something that incoming students had to learn. Many young women spoke to researchers about wanting "something more" but feeling "powerless" to pursue deeper relationships.[20] Young women often learn to repress their emotional response because risking that connection is frequently emotionally and psychologically devastating.[21] It is equally risky, however, for women to embrace the hookup culture. Women find that they are derided for behaviors ranging from alcohol consumption, to sexual activity, to wardrobe choices.[22] Their behavior is constantly policed: they are coerced into the hookup culture or risk social isolation, but to embrace the culture is to be labeled a "slut" and face social stigma.[23] It is unsurprising that students told researchers that hooking up could make them feel "miserable" and "abused," fully cognizant that one night could ruin their reputation.[24] This outline of how the hookup culture operates on college campuses proves it to be a violent and uncompromising system. Some institutions have begun to notice this troubling trend and have started some preliminary investigations.

Damage Done: College Women's Decreased Self-Esteem

Boston College's "Undergraduate Women Academic Self-Perceptions" study analyses this disturbing piece of information: that the school's female students indicate decreased self-esteem over their college careers. The young women surveyed attribute this most to the social and sexual environment of the school.[25] At Boston College, women, on average, garner higher GPAs and are more involved leaders than their male counterparts, but regularly rate themselves lower than men do on self-assessments measuring "academic ability, intellectual self-confidence,

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[17] Bonnie A. Fisher, Leah E. Daigle, and Francis T. Cullen, *Unsafe in the Ivory Tower: The Sexual Victimization of College Women* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2009), 70.

[18] Ibid, 86.

[19] Ibid, 87.

[20] Kathleen Bogle, *Hooking Up*, 49.

[21] Donna Freitas, *The End of Sex,* 19.

[22] Kathleen Bogle, *Hooking Up*, 111-112.

[23] Donna Freitas, *The End of Sex*, 24.

[24] Ibid, 12.

[25] In the interest of concision, and in light of my focus on the particular accountability of religious institutions, this paper only cites Boston College's study, but other schools have uncovered shockingly similar information, including Duke University (historically associated with the United Methodist Church) (Roth, Susan. Chair. "Women's Initiative." Duke University, Durham, NC, 2004. http://universitywomen.stanford.edu/reports/WomensInitiativeReport.pdf), and Princeton University (historically associated with the Presbyterian Church) ("Report of the Steering Committee on Undergraduate Women's Leadership." Princeton University: Princeton, NJ, 2011. http://www.princeton.edu/reports/2011/leadership/download/).

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and related skills."[26] While first-year women rated themselves higher than the men "in the areas of drive to achieve, writing ability, cooperativeness, creativity, spirituality, and understanding of others" by senior year women's self-assessment exceeded the men only in "spirituality, understanding of others, and writing ability."[27] The women in the focus group that the school established in conjunction with this report answered overwhelmingly that the decline is associated with "BC Culture," or the "social dynamics between male and female students and faculty."[28] Many of the women pointed to a "disregard for women on campus," focusing on "explicit and implicit expressions of disrespect from male students"[29] particularly when it comes to sex.[30]

It is equally disturbing that women who have preserved their sense of self-esteem attribute it to opting out of the campus culture.[31] This is particularly worrisome given Catholicism's understanding of salvation occurring in community—these young women are learning that their best chance of survival is in isolation. Unfortunately, these young women might not be incorrect when they think that their peers or their administrators might not take claims of sexual assault seriously.[32] As a ministry of the church, Catholic colleges are called to reverse this tide by taking seriously the violence done to their female students and critically analyzing social and theological precepts that participated in the promulgation of violence.

Revisiting the Soteriological Framework

If ministers, educators, and administrators at Catholic colleges are prepared to better address the hookup culture that permeates their campuses and attend to the heresy it preaches about Christian salvation, they must reflect on and critique their own soteriological assumptions and create spaces for that same process of reflection, analysis and renewal to take root in the campus community at large.

In light of the hookup culture's tendency to particularly disenfranchise young women and patriarchal tendencies to inadequately protect survivors, the insights of feminist theology are particularly relevant. The works of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Rebecca Chopp operate on two levels: 1.) as a resource for women who are suffering violence in the place that supposedly offered them salvation and where they are struggling to find God, and 2.) as a prophetic witness to the institutional bodies that have yet to sufficiently recognize or respond to this suffering. Both Schüssler Fiorenza's "ekklēsia of wo/men" and Chopp's "emancipatory transformation" rely upon making the experiences and voices of women public; on making the church a place of prophetic justice and mercy; and on articulating that God can be found with women who suffer.

It is clear that too many young women on college campuses—religious and secular alike—find their bodies, psyches, souls, and freedom abused by the hookup culture and the normalization of sexual assault. Society's failure to respond reveals our continued allegiance to

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[26]"Undergraduate Women's Academic Self-Perceptions." Report of a Faculty Committee on Undergraduate Women" (Boston College, Boston, MA, 2013), 1.

[27] Ibid, 5.

[28] Ibid, 16-17.

[29] Ibid, 18.

[30] Ibid, 17.

[31] Ibid, 20.

[32] As is indicated by the 55 colleges under investigation for being non-compliant with Title IX, two of which are Catholic institutions. See Tyler Kingkade, "55 Colleges Face Sexual Assault Investigations," in *Huffington Post*, May 1, 2014, accessed May 1, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/05/01/college-sexual-assault_n_5247267.html.

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the spirit-body dualism that asserts the superiority of the mind and spirit over the body and further associates men and masculinity with the intellect and the spirit and women and femininity with base bodily urges. [33] Moreover, the suffering of women's bodies, of black and brown bodies, of queer bodies, is of no concern theologically—that suffering is either their just punishment, or their pathway to purification. It is in this tradition that the assault on young women's bodies follows, and they are learning that their bodies are made for consumption; that they should be long-suffering in the face of abuse; and that the gospel may not apply to them.

Feminist theologians have refuted this dualism by pointing to scripture: Jesus of Nazareth's attention to bodies in his ministry—providing food and drink, healing those in pain, washing the feet of his intimates, and allowing such corporeal acts of mercy to be reciprocated. Taking embodiment seriously as a place for theological reflection revolutionizes the way we understand and respond to sexual assault on college campuses. Firstly, it challenges us to talk about bodies, relationships, and sexuality with students. Donna Freitas' research began when she offered a course on dating and sexuality on campus and empowered her students to speak.[34] I am not advocating for an entire breakdown of professional boundaries, but rather for a space where students can speak honestly and be taken seriously. We ask students to critically analyze the world but we fearfully back away from their most immediately pressing concern. Broadcasting with our own dis-ease—both individually and institutionally—that bodies and relationships are not fit to speak of only further reinforces the silence, shame, and violence that manifests in the hookup culture. The investigations coming out of schools like Boston College are an important entry into these discussions, but it is a conversation that desperately needs to be opened up for wider participation.

This wider conversation points towards what Schüssler Fiorenza calls "the "ekklēsia of wo/men," or the radical democracy that underwrites the operation of gender dualism.[35] It is fruitful to consider what Catholic colleges would look like if they practiced ekklēsia, and were grounded in the hopes of a truly democratic community. Ekklēsia insists that this hope "cannot be realized if wo/men's voices are not raised, not heard, and not heeded in the struggle for justice and liberation."[36] Living into the ekklēsia of wo/men calls institutional bodies to seek out the voices of the marginalized and to invite them to preach in the public square. It is in the struggle to practice justice, freedom, and mercy that the ekklēsia is embodied and speaks.[37]

This brings us to the question of voice and agency. Young women feel disempowered by the hookup scene, and unfortunately the church and the academy have not always advocated for women's voices and experiences to be considered. Rebecca Chopp is particularly concerned by the way in which women's voices are silenced and subsumed by sexist linguistic and symbolic turns.[38] Christianity's participation in sexist language and symbol-making creates a crisis for many women who have struggled between loyalty to the church where they came to know God and their experience of oppression in that church. Chopp has great hope in the capacity of feminist theology to reconstruct the Christian tradition around "discourses that, through a multiplicity of strategies, allow each woman to speak her self, her desires, her time and space,

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[33]Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Transforming Vision: Explorations in Feminist The*logy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press), 36.

[34] Donna Freitas*, The End of Sex,* vii-ix.

[35] Schüssler Fiorenza, *Transforming Vision*, 42.

[36] Ibid, 160.

[37] Ibid, 238.

[38] Rebecca Chopp, *The Power to Speak: Feminism, Language, and God* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 2.

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her hopes, her God."[39] These discourses proclaim a God of freedom, a God who suffers with those women whose bodies, psyches, and souls are assaulted by the violence and coercion of the hookup culture.[40]

Unmaking this violence on the campuses of Catholic colleges calls for intentional efforts to foster "emancipatory transformation" and the "ekklēsia of wo/men." This can be done in myriad ways: by making feminist critique a standard tool in classroom conversations; by revisiting administrative policies with an eye towards hiring and promotion bias; by placing a premium on mentorship; by encouraging events that, in proper context, help women find their voices and claim their agency, their bodies, and their sexuality, like *The Vagina Monologues* and "Take Back the Night."[41] Moreover, we must begin to articulate religious and spiritual ways to unmake violence, such as thorough training for campus ministers on issues pertaining to sexual assault, prayers of the faithful that reflect this wound in the community, prayer services for those who have survived, and retreats that focus on embodiment and social justice. The Gospel that Catholic universities preach proclaims a God concerned with the unmaking of violence, and fostering a relationship with the Divine can empower our communities to live into justice and mercy.

When Catholic schools that promise both socio-economic and religious salvation reflect on how to preach salvation to the young women who suffer at the hands of the hookup culture and sexual assault on campus, and begin to act as more forceful advocates for these young women they engage in the unmaking of violence. They no longer participate in a culture that ties salvation with physical suffering and that ignores the needs of the vulnerable. Rather, they witness to a God who suffers with the hurting and live in relationship, in mercy, and in justice. They preach the dignity of all persons and foster a love that looks both inward and outward. It is in living and fostering discipleship that ministers and educators can unmake the violence that occurs in their midst, and speak of salvation in a way that rebelliously condemns violence.

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[39] Ibid, 18.

[40] Ibid, 25.

[41] All this presumes the baseline, of course, that safe, adequate, and confidential services are available to anyone seeking help related to violence of any kind, that fitting disciplinary action will occur, and that the school is ready and willing to work with law enforcement whenever the survivor so chooses.

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Manichaeism, Redemptive Violence and Hollywood Films: (Un)Making Violence through Media Literacy and Theological Reflection

Abstract

This essay identifies the Manichean worldview and redemptive violence prevalent in American films and explores some of the reasons these stories are told so often. Filmmaker interviews and commentaries reveal ways in which many American filmmakers feel compelled by film's a) time-limited b) character-driven c) visual and d) affective natures to change their source materials into stories of redemptive violence. In the process of exploring these themes, this essay models a method for leading groups in media literacy exercises and theological reflection that educators can use with all ages.

People do not learn world and life views in classrooms alone, but from a variety of sources including the mediated stories of a culture. For this reason, many religious educators and other cultural critics raise concerns over the way numerous American films resolve their narrative's conflicts through violent means, thereby perpetuating a myth of redemptive violence. Rather than simply identifying and condemning examples of this, this paper engages in a more sophisticated level of film analysis and theological reflection, identifying the Manichean worldview and redemptive violence prevalent in American films and suggests some possible reasons why this is so. By introducing the theological concepts and showing clips or stills from the films discussed in this article, religious educators can help their communities of faith engage in both media literacy reflection and theological reflection on violence.

MANICHAISM AND REDEMPTIVE VIOLENCE

One approach to understanding the nature of evil is a dualistic approach that views Good and Evil as two equal and competing forces that simultaneously control the universe. This approach is commonly associated with the dualistic religious philosophy known as Manichaeism, based on the belief system taught by the Persian prophet Manes in the third century C.E.

As a young adult, Augustine of Hippo held to Manichaeism. After his conversion to Christianity, however, Augustine became one of Manichaeism's most ardent critics (Augustine 2006). While Manichaeism has its own ancient traditions and its own nuances (see Coyle 2009), many philosophers and religious scholars today follow Augustine in referring to Manichaeism as a heresy and focusing on its potential liabilities. Critics of Manichaeism today argue that it opens itself up to some problematic philosophical and ethical implications as well. They argue that those who believe that there is a universal struggle between Good and Evil are tempted to see themselves as fighting on the side of good or the side of God while seeing their enemies as evil ones who are part of the universal force of Evil. As a result, say its critics, those who take a

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Manichean approach are tempted to justify all sorts of methods to defeat those who they see as evil.

Political and social critics raise concerns about those who enter into wars with Manichaean rhetoric or policies. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, for example, Rodrigue Tremblay criticized what he saw as Manichaean rhetoric and methodologies by leaders on both sides of the conflict. Tremblay writes,

> For a manichaean leader, debates and discussions are out. Any policy is justifiable, since the goal is to fight absolute Evil. It is all-out war, jihad, with the blessing of God or Allah. (Tremblay 2003, 7)

Tremblay continued,

> When leaders succumb to a manichaean classification of "Good" and "Evil," it is not only to demonize their enemy, although that can be a prerequisite before killing them or committing atrocities, but especially to assure themselves and their people that the enemy is 100% in the wrong and that they are 100% in the right. (Tremblay 2003, 6-7)

Tremblay expresses the concern, held by many, that a Manichaean worldview can potentially lead people to justify any means, including violent means, to defeat their enemies and save their own communities.

Related to these issues, many scholars of religion today express unease over the pervasive belief that conflicts can be resolved and communities can be "saved" or "redeemed" through individual and communal acts of violence. Christian theologian and Bible scholar Walter Wink refers to this idea as the "Myth of Redemptive Violence." According to Wink, "This Myth of Redemptive Violence is the real myth of the modern world. It, and not Judaism or Christianity or Islam, is the dominant religion in our society today."(Wink 1998, 42) The ideology of redemptive violence stands in stark contrast to the teachings of many religious leaders of the past century, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Dalai Llama, who have drawn upon the sacred texts and teachings of their faith communities to teach their followers to seek nonviolent means for redemption, reconciliation and social change.

MAINICHAEISM AND REDEMPTIVE VIOLENCE IN FICTION AND FILM

Works of fiction are sometimes criticized as being Manichean when they present one side, the heroes, as totally good and the other side, the villains, as totally evil. Film viewers can easily recognize the dynamics of Manichaeism and redemptive violence in action adventure films such as *Die Hard* (1988), *Ransom* (1996), and *Taken* (2008) in which the protagonist saves captives by using a gun to kill antagonists. Tales of redemptive violence are not only told in R-rated action adventure films; Disney films from the 1990s such as *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *The Lion King* (1994), and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996) perpetuate the myth as well. The films structure their narratives in ways that demonize the antagonists and making their deaths an emotionally satisfying resolution to the conflicts. The protagonists, then, must simply become determined enough (and righteously angry enough) to carry out acts of redemptive violence.

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Tales of Manichaeism and redemptive violence are, of course, not limited to films. Stories in which the use of physical violence saves individuals and society go back to the days of ancient myths such as the *Enuma Elish* and permeate our culture through television, film, video games, comic books, and novels. Still, they are pervasively present in today's popular commercial films. Many filmmakers even make significant changes from their source material, whether it be a novel, comic books, or original screenplay, that turn their narratives into ones that reflect a Manichean view of the world and that resolve their conflicts through acts of redemptive violence. While all of the following examples include acts of violence in their original form, in the original source material redemption is not achieved by killing the enemy in an act of redemptive violence, but through subtly different means. When transmediated to film, however, the conflict is ultimately resolved only when the hero or heroes kill the enemy though an act of violence and proving themselves to be more powerful or more effective at killing than the evil ones.

Recent popular films such as *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part II* (2011), *Warm Bodies* (2013), and *Man of Steel* (2013) are all examples of this phenomenon. While the novels and comic books that these films are based upon contain much violence, in each case the authors of the source materials made sure that the climaxes of their books were affected through love, mercy or defensive acts rather than acts of violence intended to kill the enemy. In each case, however, the filmmakers made subtle but significant changes in which the heroes initiated forceful action to kill their enemies, suggesting that the conflict was ultimately resolved only through the hero's act of killing the enemy.

The special edition DVDs of two films, *Daredevil* (2003) and *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003) provide particularly compelling case studies in the way films are drawn towards stories of redemptive violence. The writer/director of *Daredevil* (2003) Mark Stephen Johnson was so unsatisfied with the theatrical release of his film that, in 2004, he released *Daredevil: Director's Cut* (2004) on DVD, which featured a cut of the film that more closely followed his original screenplay. This later version received much more positive reviews from both critics and fans than the theatrical release. What changed? In both versions of the film, Matt Murdock is a troubled man who works within the law as an attorney by day and who dons a red devil outfit and violently beats up villains at night. In Johnson's original screenplay for the film, however, Murdock pursues the case of murdered prostitute. It was this case, with a victim that no one else cared about, that ultimately brought down the Kingpin of crime. Johnson based his screenplay on Frank Miller's famous issues of the *Daredevil* comic book. Johnson appreciated how it was not Daredevil's actions as a violent vigilante, but Murdock's determination to work within the law to stand up for those without power that ultimately won the day. A featurette called "Giving the Devil His Due," available on the director's cut DVD, details how studio executives had Johnson remove virtually all the court scenes from the film and instead cut the film to emphasize Daredevil's acts of violence as what won the day. As a result, Johnson admits that the theatrical release of the film ended up looking like a violent revenge fantasy. As Johnson put it, "In the process of making a film you can forget what got you into making it in the first place."[1] In the case of the film *Daredevil*, Johnson's original vision offered a subtle critique of vigilantism and redemptive violence, but the theatrical release of the film actually celebrated those very things (see Dalton 2011a, 165-170).

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[1] See the Featurette "Giving the Devil His Due," on the *Daredevil: Director's Cut* (2004) DVD.

Perhaps the most extensive case study for this phenomenon can be seen in Peter Jackson's adaption of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King.* Tolkien did not agree with the philosophy of Manichaeism (see Tolkien 1981, 243; Tolkien 1981, 121; and Shippey 2002,135). So, while Tolkien's novel is undeniably extremely violent, Tolkien took care to craft the two climaxes of his novel in such a way that the forces of grace, sacrifice, and providence saved the day rather than acts of violence in which the hero kills the villain (cf. Wood 2003, 101-102 and Dalton 2011b, 174-176). So, for example, in Tolkien's novel the One Ring is destroyed not by Frodo killing his nemesis Gollum, but precisely because Frodo showed grace and mercy to Gollum, sacrificed his own desires, and allowed providence to play its part (Tolkien 2002b, 957). In the same way, in the novel's other climactic scene, Aragorn does not win the day by stabbing and killing Sauron, but by sacrificing himself and his army to give Frodo a chance to destroy the Ring (Tolkien 2002b, 891). As the bonus feature "From Book to Script: Forging the Final Chapter" on the Extended Edition DVD of *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* (2003) reveals, however, Peter Jackson originally wrote and filmed these climaxes in a very different manner. In Jackson's originally filmed ending, Frodo ultimately murders Gollum by shoving him into the Crack of Doom. In the same way, in the climactic scene Jackson originally shot for Aragorn, Sauron takes on bodily form and Aragorn saves the day by stabbing him with a sword and killing him. While Jackson was talked into reshooting and revising most aspects of these climactic scenes, the fact that he was tempted to make such significant changes, especially given his stated intention to stay true to Tolkien's novels, is instructive.

These films, then, seem so focused on presenting a Manichean worldview and climaxes of redemptive violence that they change the stories from their source materials to make them so.

THE INFLUENCE OF FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMERICIAL FILM

What compelled these filmmakers to make these significant changes to such popular source material? Based upon the filmmakers' comments, the changes appear to be due, at least in part, to film's visual nature, character-driven nature, time-limited nature, and affective nature.

1. Film as a Visual Medium

Film is a visual medium and in a visual medium it is simply not that interesting to watch two people or, for that matter, two societies sit down and talk through their conflicts and resolve them through a long period of compromises, grace, forgiveness, and mutual understanding. It is more visually compelling to watch internal conflicts enacted and resolved externally and visually through physical combat.

The "Giving the Devil His Due" featurette on the *Daredevil: Director's Cut* DVD, for example, suggests that the studio executives felt the exploits of a vigilante in a red devil outfit, for example, were more visually compelling than staid images of a blind lawyer standing up and talking in a courtroom, thus compelling Johnson to remove almost the entire courtroom plot from the film.

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In the "From Book to Script" feature included on the Extended Edition DVD of *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, Peter Jackson explains the reason he was drawn to have Sauron don his black armor and battle Aragorn. He says, "We felt that we really had to do something more than just have Sauron staying in his tower as this flaming eye, that we had to have him make an appearance outside the Black Gates at the end of Return of the King." As a filmmaker, Jackson, felt compelled to have Sauron take on human form and have Aragorn defeat him in physical combat.

The world is often divided into good and evil in terms of physical appearances as well. According to Tolkien's novel, Aragorn is quite homely on first sight. In the film, however, as portrayed by Viggo Mortenson, Aragorn is quite handsome. The orcs, meanwhile, are portrayed as ugly and entirely evil.

Film's visual nature, then, appears to play a role in filmmakers' decisions to tell Manichean tales with acts of redemptive violence.

2. Film as a Character-Driven Medium

It is often said that great books are about great ideas, while films are about great characters. Films are often better at helping viewers care about the characters they see than they are at helping viewers understand abstract ideas or principles. In the "From Book to Script" feature Jackson explains, "[We] felt that Aragorn has come this distance with his journey, and that Sauron is his enemy and that we had to somehow have this personal dual between Aragorn and Sauron. And it's not in the book but we felt it had to be in the movie." In the same feature Phillipa Boyens explains that they felt that film audiences also needed to see Frodo play an active role in the destruction of the Ring, saying, "Peter had this notion or this sense that he wanted Frodo not to be inactive. That we can't have invested all this energy and time with this character and then just have him be a bystander in that moment." Individual characters, rather than communities or unseen forces, must be seen resolving the conflicts and redeeming communities themselves.

3. Film as a Time-Limited Medium

The time limits of commercial films often influence the nature of the stories they tell. While novels have the luxury of time to develop subtle themes and sophisticated ideas, most films only have approximately two hours to establish characters that the audience cares about and to tell a story that the audience can follow.

In *The Lord of the Rings* Jackson did not have as much time to nuance the character of the orcs as Tolkien did, and so just established them as ugly, savage beasts to be killed. In the film *Daredevil*, the studio executives seem to have felt that they needed to keep the action moving and had no time to develop the plot of the court case so key to Johnson's original screenplay. For many directors working under the restraints of time, it is vital to quickly establish the hero as noble, the villain as evil, and then to offer a quick and clean resolution to

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the conflict by having the villain die. There is little time to portray the long process of conversation and compromise that is usually necessary to resolve conflicts in the real world.

4. Film as an Affective Medium

While print is a highly effective medium for conveying cognitive content, films are a highly effective medium for transmitting affective or emotional content. The typical action-adventure film will use camera angles, framing of shots, acting performances, and soundtracks to rouse one's sympathy and empathy with a hero and ignite one's anger towards the villain. When the heroes of a film finally get angry enough and determined enough, they set their jaws toward defeating the enemy and ultimately defeat him or her out of their force of will. As Jackson and Boyens's comments suggest, it is very emotionally satisfying for film audiences to see their heroes win the battle and the villains who caused them such grief to be crushed and destroyed.

Nothing in the interviews or commentaries with the directors or studio executives of these films suggest that the stories were intentionally changed into stories of redemptive violence that reflect a Manichaean worldview because of any ideological views of the filmmakers. Instead, the changes appear to be due, at least in part, to these four features of the medium of film itself.

CONCLUSIONS

The medium of film can be and has been used to tell much more hopeful tales of reconciliation and redemption. Films such as *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh* (1977), *Babette's Feast* (1987), *Juno* (2007), and many films directed by Robert Redford, Wes Anderson, and others offer visions of peaceful redemption and patient, negotiated reconciliation, rather than simply demonizing others and resolving conflict through violence. Still, it is important for religious educators, members of our communities, and our faith communities in particular, to be taught to recognize the embedded ideologies of violence manifest in many of the films they watch and to understand some of the dynamics that lead to the plethora of portrayals of redemptive violence seen on screen.

Religious educators can easily adapt this type of media literacy and theological reflection for use with adults, youth, and even with older children. Sessions that use text readings of source materials and then show film clips from the films noted above, together with clips of DVD bonus features that explain the changes, can help conscientize their faith communities and wider communities to the embedded theology of violence present in so many popular culture narratives. In the process, religious educators can help people become aware of the implicit ideology of redemptive violence embedded in many of our culture's most popular stories and begin the work of breaking the cycle of violence and offering more helpful approaches to redemption and reconciliation.

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Stories of Faith in the Unmaking of Violence:
Religious Narratives and Violent Cultural Stories

Abstract: In this paper, I want to explore what a particular biblical story might suggest regarding the capacity of stories of faith to counter cultural stories of redemptive violence. The Acts of the Apostles, a richly descriptive and often deeply inter-textual narrative, describes the common life and mission of the early church. The shipwreck scene in Acts 27 is in ways deeply reminiscent of Greco-Roman novels, drawing on many of the same literary tropes, yet the violent possibilities realized in other narratives are foreclosed. Drawing on this text, and in conversation with literature on the formative capacities of narrative and practices, I will suggest that stories of faith and practices of hope provide necessary resources for Christian communities to resist the myth of redemptive violence.

Introduction: The Power of Narrative in Christian Life
        Aside from the normalization, if not glorification, of violence in popular media, certain kinds of violent stories appear with haunting regularity in our news cycles: murder and kidnappings at the hands of extremists, assault weapons in neighborhoods and the loss of innocent life, domestic violence, sexual violence on college campuses, and so forth. Given the prominence, if not inescapability, of these stories, especially once coupled with violence as entertainment, religious education faces a significant challenge. What resources might our faith traditions provide to help people of faith gain the capacity to imagine different outcomes, to resist perpetuating cyclical stories of violence, and to facilitate the un-making of violence?
        I suggest that religious narratives are a central resource and begin by identifying three arenas of narrative's formative capacities for the self that emerge from a diverse body of literature. Second, I employ the shipwreck of apostle Paul in the 27th chapter of Acts of the Apostles as a lens through which to consider the potential of religious characters formed by religious narratives to act within typically violent cultural stories. In the third section, drawing on the insights of the prior sections, I suggest three ways that educators might consider religious narratives as counter-formation in the face of cultural narratives of apparently inevitable, clearly, glorified, or redemptively portrayed violence.

Tracing the Formative Potential of Narratives
        Based on readings from a variety of fields, I posit three distinct, if only heuristic, categories for describing narrative's ostensible functions in the formation of human identity and meaning.[1] I further suggest that viewing the potential of narrative through these three lenses may help Christian educators consider the distinctive ways in which religious narratives are important for communities of faith committed to the un-making of violence.
        The first category entails narrative's capacities to shape human meaning in ways that run below conscious awareness and at the level of the emotions and the body. This is crucial because

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[1] I am influenced here by Richard Bondi, "The Elements of Character" *Journal of Religious Ethics* 12 (1984): 201-218.

emotions, Mark Johnson claims, "lie at the heart of our ability to appraise the situations we find ourselves in and act appropriately. When we feel them, they can enter into our more conscious deliberations about how we should respond to our situation."[2] Simply stated, no perception on the basis of which to make meaning exists without emotion. Thus Johnson calls for a reclamation of the body's centrality to meaning; the body through its visceral comportment in the world powerfully influences the meaning produced by our more strictly rational faculties.

It is primarily narrative, according to Christian philosopher and educator James A.K. Smith, that functions at the level Johnson describes. Central stories and narratives shape the way we imagine the world before we rationalize about it – helping to comprise our "social imaginary", to use (as does Smith) Charles Taylor's helpful terminology. Such central stories, says Smith, "capture and orient . . . not primarily didactively or instructively, but affectively and unconsciously: such stories are 'understood' by the imagination at a 'gut level' that turns out to be the incarnate core of my existence."[3] Thus, at the root of our affective and imaginative engagement with the world are certain stories that shape our perception of that world, and these stories emerge from and affect us through our bodily participation in cultures and communities.

While Johnson and Smith locate narrative's function at the pre-conscious level of the body and affections, other scholars in the second category focus more on the explicit consideration and appropriation of narrative toward the end of the construction of identity and moral character. White and Epson, pioneers of "narrative therapy," refer to the process by which meaning is inscribed on human experience as "storying," a process in which people gain "a sense of continuity and meaning in their lives [that] is relied upon for the ordering of daily lives and for the interpretation of further experiences."[4] Goodson and Gill, drawing on what they deem an a emerging consensus about the meaningfulness of life being essentially narrative in character, go so far as to define learning as "an interplay of to-and-fro dialogic encounters at the core of which is enhanced understanding of oneself, others, one's place in the world and a course of action more aligned with one's values, beliefs, and worldviews."[5]

Stanley Hauerwas and Alisdair MacIntyre share these concerns about the individual's relationship to meaning-full narratives, but attend more specifically to the communities and traditions that ultimately provide the contours for an individual's moral formation. Hauerwas, for instance, claims only "by learning to make our lives conform to God's way, [can] Christians claim that they are provided with a self that is a story."[6] Though MacIntyre places less emphasis

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[2] Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2007), 60.

[3] James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 127.

[4] Michael White and David Epston, *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990), 12. In narrative therapy, a therapist supports individuals in the construction of new stories, as individuals recognize the operative stories, externalize the problematic elements, and construct a new sense of identity out of available, typically "unstoried", experience.

[5] Ivor F. Goodson and Scherto R. Gill, *Narrative Pedagogy: Life History and Learning*. (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 88. The telling of stories is not transformative in and of itself, but the dialogic "narrative encounter" provides a space for re-narration and renewed forms of action as teacher and learner interact around the life narrative, locate it in terms of broader social forces or particular traditions, and finally integrate the story by reconstructing the narrative. Ibid*.,* 118. Benjamin Spinoza never cites Goodson and Gill but does discuss "narrative pedagogies" along the same lines of individual construction of stories. Benjamin Spinoza, "The Christian Story and Our Stories: Narrative Pedagogy in Congregational Life." *CEJ* 10 (2013), 432-443.

[6] Stanley Hauerwas, *Character, Narrative, and Growth in the Christian Life* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1981), 142.

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on the individual's narrative construction of a sense of self, he does attend to necessity of a narrative for an intelligible account of moral action – thus the oft cited quote, "I can only answer the question, 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?'"[7]

The third category attends more explicitly to the relationship between narratives and embodied practices. As David Hogue notes, "stories are not only to be told and retold, they are also to be lived," and his interest in the intersection of story and ritual in worship coheres nicely with Smith's, who draws on both Bourdieu and Taylor in insisting that bodily practices are actually *constitutive of* certain understandings of the world, not just responses to them.[8] Smith's insistence on careful attention to practices in learning communities, like the Christian university, derives from this concern for what Hogue calls the "bottom up" formation of the narratives through which the world is understood.[9]

Along similar lines, in expounding on his "social theory of learning," Etienne Wenger maintains that "what narratives, categories, roles and positions come to mean as an experience of participation is something that must be worked out in practice."[10] This theory of learning situates it within the multi-directional interaction of community, identity, practice, and meaning. Through participation in communities of practice, individuals are able to "anchor [learning] in practice yet make it broad, creative, and effective in the wider world."[11] Wenger's approach illustrates the necessity that narratives be "worked out in practice" in order for a robust identity construction by both community and the individual who participates in it.

The preceding paragraphs have briefly surveyed three ways in which narrative is said to effect the formation of identity: 1) in the imagination, operating on the body and through the affections; 2) in the formation of a sense of self, including a sense of one's moral agency; and 3) as both producer and product of bodily practices. It is my contention that these three operations of narrative can be fruitfully considered both in relationship to biblical narratives and in relationship to the unmaking of violence. Toward a demonstration of that claim, the next section takes on a particular narrative biblical narrative – the story of Paul's shipwreck in Acts 27 – in order to consider how it might prompt reflection on the capacity of Christian narratives to form agents capable of countering commonly violent endings to cultural stories.

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[7] Alisdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (3d. ed.; Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2007), 219.

[8] David A. Hogue, *Remembering the Future, Imagining the Past: Story, Ritual, and the Human Brain* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2003), 111. These understandings may be unarticulated and un-articulable, thus Bourdieu states, "What is 'learned by body' is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one is." Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980) ,73; see also ibid., 91.

[9] See also David I. Smith and James K. A. Smith, "Introduction: Practices, Faith, and Pedagogy" in *Teaching and Christian Practices: Reshaping Faith and Learning* (David I. Smith and James K.A. Smith, eds.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 1-23.

[10] Wenger's "social theory of learning" is an integration of theories of practice and theories of identity. Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 151.

[11] Wenger, *Communities of Practice,* 217. In an earlier publication with Jean Lave, Wenger argues that "the practice of the community creates the potential 'curriculum' in the broadest sense – that which may be learned by newcomers with legitimate peripheral access . . . . a learning curriculum unfolds in opportunities for engagement." Jean Lave and Etiene Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 93.

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The Formative Capacities of Narrative and Acts of the Apostles

Commentators on Acts generally assume some level of formational function, a fact which suggests that the intersection between the formative capacities of narrative and this particular biblical narrative may be both evocative and fruitful. In telling the story of God's work among the early Christian community, the writer of Acts frequently draws upon other stories known to the text's implied readers. Specific texts along with general tropes and themes from the Hebrew Bible, from Luke's gospel, and even popular Greco-Roman literature appear interwoven in this often deeply allusive text. More pointedly, the stories in Acts occasionally subvert dominant cultural stories or values, leading Kavin Rowe to argue that the early Christians presented a challenge to the dominant ethos of the empire at the level of the "social imaginary."

These dynamics can be developed in many and various profitable directions, but here I am especially interested in two questions. First, how might the story of Paul's shipwreck in Acts 27, a story that appropriates a common literary form and fascination with travel, constitute a re-narration of an anticipated violent ending? Second, can the broader dynamics of this story, understood in terms of the heuristic categories introduced in the prior section, suggest ways that religious educators could conceive of the power of narrative to contest cultural stories of glorified or redemptive violence?

Commentators have established that Acts 27 bears no little resemblance in its dynamics and motifs to sea travel and shipwreck scenes in Greco-Roman novels.[12] The story of Leucippe and Clitophon, a novel from the same general period, demonstrates many of these similarities, like a divinely secured happy ending for the story's heroes.[13] In this Greco-Roman novel, as the ship breaks apart and people begin to perish at the hands of the raging seas, chaos and mob violence ensue during a desperate battle for the few remaining spots on a life boat. At the conclusion of the scene, the few lucky survivors, like the story's protagonist lovers, float to shore. Yet Acts 27 concludes with the simple declaration: "And so it was that all were brought safely to land (Acts 27:44)," suggesting a very different course of events. The reader of Acts 27 finds Paul, the central missionary figure of the second half of the book, bound for trial in Rome as an unjustly imprisoned man. Accompanied by a few other disciples, including apparently the narrator, Paul's faithful presence and actions secure an alternative ending to a dramatic course of events, which may be summarized as follows:

The pilots of Paul's ship, having convinced the Roman guards of their plan, set sail from Crete to Rome despite it being well past the safe time to sail. Paul enters the scene first here, with a prescient – and ignored - warning that their late departure may result in the loss of cargo, ship, and even their lives. Almost immediately, a great storm arises and drives the ship dangerously off course. Says the narrator: "We were being pounded by the storm so violently that on the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard, and on the third day with their own hands they threw the ship's tackle overboard. When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest raged, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned" (27:18-20).

At this dark juncture, Paul speaks again, urging his fellow passengers to have courage because the Lord has told him that all lives would be preserved, though the ship may be lost. On

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[12] Richard I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 52.

[13] Marguerat identifies this story as an exemplar of the genre, but cautions that it cannot be assumed that Luke's imagined reader knows this specific story. However, given the frequent presence of shipwrecks as a literary trope, comparing Acts 27 with this particular story is still illustrative of important dynamics. Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the 'Acts of the Apostles'* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)*, 250. The full text of the novel is available here: https://archive.org/details/achillestatiuswi00achiuoft

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the fourteenth night of peril at sea, with the new realization that the ship was at greater risk of running aground, a group of sailors apparently unconvinced by Paul's confident declaration of their salvation, attempt to escape ship by disembarking in a lifeboat under the pretense of putting out additional anchors. Here Paul speaks again, telling his Roman guards that the assurance of their salvation depends upon the salvation of all people on board, saying "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved" (27:31). At his second proclamation, the soldiers cut away the ropes and the passengers' common lot is secured. That same night, Paul speaks a final time, encouraging his fellow passengers to eat since they will survive. Paul then takes bread, thanks God, breaks it, and partakes of it in the presence of the other passengers. Then, and only then, do the fellow passengers "take courage" as Paul has advised for days, eating and then throwing the remaining grain over board.

In the final scene, as the boat begins to break up, the soldiers decide to kill the prisoners to prevent their escape. The centurion, however, wanting to save Paul, prohibits them from doing so. Instead, the 276 passengers floated to land on various bits of wreckage. "And so it was that all were brought safely to shore (Acts 27:44)."

We may note at least three moments in which the readers' expectation of a violent scene is thwarted, especially in comparison to *Leucippe and Clitophon*. First, at Paul's words the lifeboat is cut away, foreclosing the possibility of a violent rush for self-preservation, like the scene from Leucippe and Clitophon. The basis of Paul's action to prevent this potentially violent attempt is the conviction that the fates of the 276 passengers are bound together. Second, the centurion prevents the summary execution of the prisoners out of respect for Paul, which has apparently increased through the ordeal.[14] Third, and as a broad basis for the first two, Paul remains confident of and testifies to the Lord's deliverance of the group from a violent death at the mercy of a violent sea. In the end, Paul's hopeful public action of breaking bread conveys his confidence more effectively than his words. With these outcomes and actions of the text in mind, what implications can be gathered for communities of faith in violent times?

Un-making Violence through Narrative

In light of the functions of narratives described above, and in conversation with Acts 27, I conclude by suggesting three ways that educators might think about the capacity of religious narratives to counter cultural narratives of glorified or redemptive violence.[15] First, engaging religious narratives can help individuals and communities imagine alternate endings to violent stories in our context. Second, engaging in religious narratives can assist in the formation of faithful, hopeful characters capable of identifying themselves as actors in a kind of story that rejects glorified violence as a plot device. Third, the performance of religious narratives in the context of a practicing community involves bodies in actions that enact and sustain hopeful, non-violent stories.

First, engaging religious narratives may help us imagine alternate endings and unexpected ways of responding to situations of violence. In Acts 27, hope and hopelessness are

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[14] Though a prisoner, Paul has been granted certain privileges like having his friends care for his needs (Acts 27:3) and gains enough respect for his word to be heeded later in the story as it was not in the beginning.

[15] Two important caveats are in order. First, though I am working with Christian narratives and from a Christian standpoint, I anticipate that other religious traditions and communities will find their own narratives and resources with which to work. Second, I acknowledge that not all religious narratives resist violence, and some appear to glorify it. While I do not mean to gloss over the hermeneutical complexity that this raises, the normative function of the story of Christ provides what I see as the central point of resistance to interpretations of Christian texts that glorify or promote violence.

the affections most prominently at play, the actualization of both dependent on the characters' imaginations of the outcome of the storm. Paul's confidence of their delivery rests on a vision from the Lord, yet the engaged reader is aware that this particular story partakes in broader themes from Acts as a whole. For a church that faced the threat of cultural and physical violence from quite different opposing forces, the capacity to boldly carry on the work of the kingdom depended upon the ability to imagine divinely secured outcomes that appear to defy expectations and circumstances. No story more directly encapsulates that sustaining hope than that of Christ, who suffered and did not perpetrate violence, and in whose life acts of human violence were ultimately thwarted by resurrection, the promise of which sustains the community's life. Thus a level of eschatological hope in the accomplishment of God's good purposes provides the imaginative framework for constructing meaning in the present circumstance.

Yet God's good purposes in Acts are accomplished through cooperative human agents, faithful characters who participate in a certain kind of story and whose own character development takes Christ as model. In his final journey and trial, Paul is characterized through narrative links to the story and character of Jesus, and in a broad sense the text of Acts itself conducts an explicit appropriation of scriptural and cultural narratives toward the end of character and community formation. As a hopeful character whose faithful presence influences non-Christian others and alters the course of events in a non-violent direction, and as a moral agent whose understands his own actions in terms of the broader narrative in which he sees himself a part, Paul presents an intriguing model for our consideration as educators interested in the formation of those capable of resisting violence.

Third, this story portrays the intersection of practice and narrative when it records Paul's engagement in the practice of breaking bread. This ordinary, and here somewhat pragmatic practice given the necessity of physical strength to survive the ordeal, is nonetheless pregnant with meaning as a distinctively Christian practice. Luke narrates Paul's actions with the same sequence of events that characterizes the meal at the feeding of the five thousand (9:16), with the disciples at Emmaus (24:30, and, most critically, at the institution of the Eucharist (Luke 22:19): taking, thanking, breaking, and partaking. Given the presence of the Eucharistic sequence, it seems evident that the reader should see the resonances of these other stories of provision, sacrifice, and resurrection in Paul's actions on a stormy sea. Here it is Paul's practice, not his words, that ultimately proves persuasive.

For religious educators, the following questions seem pressing in light of the violence that faces our communities within and without: What stories of faith can shape imagination in such a way that violent outcomes increasingly seem neither inevitable nor necessary for the accomplishment of desired ends, against what the myth of redemptive and glorified violence persuasively contends? How might religious educators construct learning experiences that invite people into the difficult work of un-masking in order to un-make cultural stories, the interlacing religious narratives with personal and communal stories? Finally, what are the practices in which our communities engage that arise from the community's story of faith while also contributing to the formation of faithful disciples in concrete situations? I have attempted here to consider these questions in terms of a particular biblical narrative, and biblical narratives provide one powerful location for this kind of exploration, but a number of other possibilities exist. Practitioners must consider these questions in light of their particular situation, but the questions bear serious and persistent consideration.

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Youth Ministry as Conflict Transformation in the War on Kids

Abstract

The war on kids is a conflict between adults and youth, in which adult institutions and their representatives ghettoize, objectify and abuse youth, and to which youth respond with withdrawal, resistance or even violence, visited upon each other, adults or themselves. Such a conflict, once named and understood, can be engaged constructively and transformed through the way we as adults interact with youth. I will trace the historic, economic, political and cultural factors shaping this conflict, examine a specific practice of ministry that contributes to unlearning this violent dynamic of adult-adolescent relationships, and suggest implications for educational ministries with youth.

Introduction: Discovering Storytime

It was only the second night at the Youth Theological Initiative's three-week Summer Academy, and one of the staff members, I'll call her Anne, along with four teenage girls living on her dormitory floor, were still getting to know each other. Anne had wandered into their suite, sat down, and started to engage them in conversation. After chatting for several minutes, engaging in the typical "get-to-know-you" conversations, one of the girls asked Anne to tell them a bedtime story.

Anne accepted their invitation, but decided that she wanted the girls to be part of the process; to be active, not passive. She therefore invited them to think about different ways they could tell stories that would spread out the creativity—and responsibility. After some discussion, the group came up with the storytime format they would follow for the remainder of the program: each night, a different person would be the storyteller, and the storyteller would narrate a tale in the "Mad-Libs" style, asking the person next to her in the circle to come up with a word to fill in the blank, thus sending the tale in a new direction that the storyteller would then need to build on and follow until she asked the next person in the circle to supply a key word for a blank. In this way, each person had a chance to be the storyteller, but the entire group helped to shape the story. Anne continued to join the group for storytime every night, but she was not in charge of this activity. She was an adult participating alongside youth.

Over the course of the three weeks, Anne noticed several dynamics developing. First, in the minutes before storytime commenced, Anne was able to engage in informal conversation that often yielded important insight into how the girls were relating to each other, and how the community as a whole was functioning. By simply sticking around and being a part of the group, she was able to understand on a more complex level the social dynamics taking place throughout the community. But she had to listen; she had to be present without controlling the conversation.

Second, by the final week, the storytime girls no longer needed storytime. After so many nights engaging in silly, informal conversation that served to create the space for building trust, the girls moved into deeper conversations with each other and with Anne, conversations in which

they were able to become vulnerable, engage in self-critical reflection, and ask their most pressing questions about life, love and God. They turned to Anne as wise-person, recognizing the resource she could be as someone with more life experience. By hanging out, being a participant rather than a leader in this space, Anne's role as respected adult grew rather than diminished.

Having sensed early on the value of this time in helping to develop trust with the girls who participated in storytime, Anne had encouraged the other staff members to do something similar, to simply go up on the halls and hang out with the girls as they transitioned to going to bed. The staff in the girls' dorm resisted this idea, however. From their perspective, the girls had spent the entire day in the presence of adults, and they felt strongly that the girls needed space and freedom. Going up and entering their suites to hang out felt intrusive, and seemed like a form of "surveillance." Yet, once a few of the staff members did go up on the floors to hang out, they realized this was not surveillance. The girls *wanted* them there, and welcomed them into their space. It was true that they had had enough of adults standing on the edges of the room, watching and judging without participating, listening, or contributing to their discussions. It was true that they didn't want surveillance. It was *not* true, however, that they didn't want adults. They wanted adults—fully present, caring adults.

Naming the Conflict: The Youth Theological Initiative and the War on Kids

Since 1993, the Youth Theological Initiative has gathered youth from around the world, to its Summer Academy, an ecumenical program in justice-seeking theological education for juniors and seniors in high school. Our summer "scholars" explore theological and social issues, create an intentional community of mutual relationships, and serve others through work at Atlanta-area social agencies. While such language sounds relatively innocuous, the observations and assumptions that inspired this vision comes out of a critical social analysis that seeks to transform a larger dynamic—and I would argue, conflict—taking place in our society.

Based on their observations of the cultural context of youth and the church, the original designers of YTI concluded that North American society marginalizes and oppresses young people *as young people*—regardless of (or in addition to) race, class, gender, sexual orientation or other identities that are marginalized across age ranges. The authors of the first grant proposal described "contours of oppression" that characterize the experience of contemporary youth, including the "domestication of youth" the "lack of meaningful adult sponsorship for youth," and the "absence of voice and vision among youth."[1] I see these claims, made more than 20 years ago, as prophetic and more urgent than ever. What my predecessors described as "contours of oppression" that marginalize youth I now venture to describe as elements of a set of systems that is engaged in nothing short of a "war on kids."[2]

This "war" is a conflict between adults and young people, in which adult institutions and their representatives ghettoize, objectify and abuse young people, and to which young people

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[1] YTI Handbook, 2012 edition, 4.

[2] I derive this phrase from the recent documentary, *The War on Kids* (2009), which does an excellent job of pulling together in a provocative way many of the points I suggest in the discussion that follows. The film focuses on the U.S. context, including federal and state education policies, current trends in adolescent mental healthcare, and the juvenile justice system. I highly recommend this film for those in the US context who work with youth, and for youth themselves, as a starter for discussion.

respond with withdrawal, resistance or even violence, visited upon each other, adults or themselves. Such a conflict, once named and understood, can be engaged constructively and transformed through the way we as adults interact with youth. As suggested in Anne's story, a specific moment in the context of youth ministry became an opportunity for a creative reorienting of adult-youth interaction, one that suggests possibilities for peacebuilding in the midst of this larger "war."[3]

YTI identifies one contour of oppression as the "domestication of youth." In his essay, "The Social Construction of Adolescence," David White argues that our society has developed the category of "adolescence" and "teenager" only within the last 100 years, and that this social construction has now resulted in the creation of an ever-extending liminal space in which young people—neither children nor adults—have significantly fewer meaningful roles to play in society, compared to their predecessors. Because "adolescence begins with an earlier puberty and extends longer than ever before…this prolongation leaves youth in situations in which they have less than full power for longer than any other age cohort in history." White continues, "Whereas historically youth were at the forefront of those who took responsibility for creating a just social environment in which human life can flourish, today many young people are relegated to marginal social roles that discourage or inhibit such engagement."[4] This dramatic change in the role of young people in society is presented as a necessary process for them to reach the deferred reward of attaining a good job that will enable them to start a family and become a "real adult." White calls this the "bargain of adolescence—dependence and education now, responsibility and independence later."[5] Neither holding jobs, nor starting families, nor engaging in social movements or civic life, but rather biding time under adult supervision, young people have been excluded from participation in meaningful social action.[6] In exchange, they have been given

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[3] I therefore agree with John Paul Lederach that Conflict Transformation "is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creative constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships." See Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003), 14.

[4] David F. White, "The Social Construction of Adolescence," in Brian J. Mahan, Michael Warren, and David F. White, *Awakening Youth Discipleship: Christian Resistance in a Consumer Culture*, (Eugene, OR, Cascade Books, 2008), 14.

[5] White, 4.

[6] White points to G. Stanley Hall's seminal 1904 work *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education* as the beginning of the invention of adolescence as a distinct phase of psychological development marked by "storm and stress" that must be contained and redirected for the good of youth and society. According to Thomas Hine, this theory became a useful tool in winning the case for compulsory attendance in high school. The high school was thus conceived as a "holding tank" for youth, and as such has developed into a highly regimented, adult controlled space that often abstracts youth from meaningful work and moral agency. See Thomas Hine, *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager: A New History of the American Adolescent Experience* (New York: Perennial, 1999), 162. Others recently have extended this argument to highlight the breadth and depth of youth domestication to take note of the role of student loan debt, zero tolerance school policies and other school reforms, the overuse of ADHD medications and the pacifying effect of media and advertising. See Juliet B. Schor, *Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New*

movies, clothing, video games, fashion magazines and music to occupy the few remaining waking hours left to them after hours of homework, sports practice, and other adult-directed "enrichment" activities.[7] This is what we mean at YTI when we talk about the "domestication of youth."

Another contour of oppression affecting young people is "the lack of meaningful adult sponsorship for youth." This problem arises out of an increasing gulf between adults and youth--attributable to several economic, social and cultural forces--that is extending and deepening in every sector of young peoples' lives. As high schools became overwhelmed with the numbers of students entering their buildings, the system became increasingly bureaucratized and impersonal,[8] limiting students' access to teachers and the kind of mentoring relationships possible with smaller numbers and flexible schedules.[9] The evolution of our economic system has transformed family structures, with adults working longer and longer hours, all adults in most households working, and extended families living further and further apart.[10] This separation manifests itself not just in a *lack* of adult involvement in the lives of youth, but also in a *misplaced* involvement that objectifies and alienates them, as our focus on activities and achievement primarily serve the agendas of adults rather than the needs of youth. Whether in school, on the field, on the stage, or at home, young people are experiencing adults as present only in the most shallow of forms. In response, young people have created a subterranean space, what Chap Clark calls "the world beneath," safe from the agendas and betrayals of adults.[13]

In the wake of this increasing chasm between adults and youth, we have developed "ephibephobia"—extreme fear of youth[14] that "exudes both a deep-rooted hostility and chilling

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Consumer Culture (New York: Scribner, 2005); Henry Giroux, *Youth in a Suspect Society: Democracy or Disposability?* (New York: Palgrave, 2009); and Bruce E. Levine, "8 Reasons Young Americans Don't Fight Back: How the US Crushed Youth Resistance," *AlterNet*, July 31, 2011, accessed August 20, 2014: http://www.alternet.org/story/151850/8_reasons_young_americans_don%27t_fight_back%3A_how_the_us_crushed_youth_resistance

[7] The film *Race to Nowhere* (2010) documents the increasing stress young people face trying to stay competitive for college admissions and meeting the myriad and sometimes conflicting expectations adults have for them. For a critical assessment of the value of homework, and whether we may now be assigning too much homework, see Alfie Kohn, *The Homework Myth: Why Our Kids Get Too Much of a Bad Thing* (Philadelphia, PA: DaCapo Press, 2007).

[8] Hine, 254; 269.

[9] John Taylor Gatto's provocative work focuses our attention on the implicit messages that the regimented school day in mass education sends to young people about learning. See, "The Seven Lesson Schoolteacher," in *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling* (Gabiola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 2005), 1-19, particularly 5-6.

[10] For an extended discussion on the simultaneous lengthening of workdays and falling wages, see Juliet Schor, *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure* (New York: Basic Books, 1993) and *The Overspent American: Why We Want What We Don't Need* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999).

[13] Chap Clark, *Hurt 2.0: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011).

[14] Clark, 25.

indifference toward youth," and often depicts youth as "criminal, sexually decadent, drug-crazed, and illiterate."[15] At the same time, advertisers play on stereotypes of parents as out-of-touch, easily manipulated, and valuable primarily as purse-holders in their drive to encourage youth and children to use their influence to convince parents to buy them their products. This "pedagogy of commodification" drives a further wedge between youth and adults, because "within this pedagogical template, parents are useful only as a potential source of good for kids and profits for corporations…In fact, 'adults are never cool—they are boring, often absurd, sometimes stupid—and when they try to be cool they are pathetic.'"[16] As adults learn to fear youth and keep their distance, young people learn to mistrust or even disdain adults and insist they want this distance, creating a feedback loop that both fulfills and deepens our stereotypes of each other—driving adults and youth further apart.

Yet another contour of oppression named at YTI is the "absence of voice and vision among youth," and this follows from the others. The absence of voice and vision among youth can be attributed to both sides—adults who actively silence or passively ignore young people's voices, and youth who have internalized the belief that their position as full contributing members of society is on hold until they pass through the danger zone. How much have we lost—fresh ideas, innovative projects, bold actions, imaginative visions of new futures—as a consequence of buying into the stereotypes?

What the YTI "contours of oppression" point out, and what several cultural critics, economists, sociologists and educational theorists echo, is that we have ghettoized and silenced young people, separating ourselves (or allowing ourselves to be separated) from them to such a degree that we simply do not know them. Lacking true connection, we project onto them all of our fears, and we seek to quell those fears by containing and controlling "youth," rather than taking the time to get to know and appreciate young people on their own terms. This is the conflict—the war on kids—that requires transformation. It is within this larger context of conflict that Anne's small gestures of crossing over the gulf between youth and adults becomes a significant moment in conflict transformation.

Storytime as One Practice of Conflict Transformation

What can we learn, then, from Anne and the storytime girls? As the adult in the situation, Anne crossed over the gulf between adults and youth, and did so with no other agenda than to get to know the youth on their terms. Patricia Hersh calls on adults "to reconnect the adolescent community to ours." But, it is sometimes harder than we think. The long years of systemic abandonment has left young people mistrustful of adults who reach out to them. Citing a youth worker that exclaimed exhaustedly her frustration that when she reaches out to youth, they don't meet her halfway, Chap Clark explains that, "whether they experience it from a coach, a schoolteacher, a parent, a music teacher, or a Sunday school counselor, adolescents intuitively

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[15] Giroux, "The Demonization of Youth," in *Channel Surfing: Race Talk and the Destruction of Today's Youth* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 37, 40. See also Giroux, *Youth in a Suspect Society,* 91. Thomas Hine traces this back to the early 1970s, when films like "Rosemary's Baby," "The Exorcist" and "The Omen" cast children "as the carriers of evil." See Hine, 272.

[16] Giroux, *Youth in a Suspect Society*, 51. He quotes Madeline Bunting, "In Our Angst over Children We're Ignoring the Perils of Adulthood," *The Guardian/UK* (November 13, 2006).

believe that nearly every adult they have encountered has been subtly out to get something from them." Thus, adults need not only to reach out to young people, they have to make themselves vulnerable and cross over fully into the space of young people, risking rejection, with an attitude of peacebuilding appropriate to representatives of a party to a conflict that knows it has disproportional power and has abused it.

Anne's *way* of reaching out is thus important. When Anne walked into that dorm room, she didn't stand in the doorway, one foot in, one foot out, standing over the lounging girls as an adult coming to do a shallow "check in"—which, within the context of the war on kids is more likely to be interpreted as suspicious surveillance rather then caring concern. Instead, Anne went fully into the room, plopped down on the floor, introduced herself, and then waited for the girls to invite her into the conversation they were already having. She didn't come in with a set of instructions to give, with pre-planned lessons to teach, or a structured "ice-breaker." She didn't come in to get the girls "pumped up" about the great experience they were about to consume. She ensured the conversation did not become one in which she became the star, the authority, or the impersonal representative of the institution. She signaled that she did not intend to be one more adult abusing her power.

Not only was Anne's act of crossing over significant, but the actual development and structure of storytime itself becomes significant as a peacebuilding practice. Together, the girls and Anne came up with the "Mad-Libs" format that featured rotating leadership and frequent contributions from everyone in the room—not only more creative, but much more inclusive. And more democratic—both in the way they came up with the idea and in the way they executed it— thereby sending a signal that the contribution of each person in the room was equally valuable. But once this was established, Anne no longer could control the choice of topics or the dynamics of the conversation. She had to trust that as a group, the girls would develop a set of guidelines that would keep the game fun and inclusive. She offered to the girls a way of having fun and getting to know each other that was not carefully planned, not closely controlled, and not dependent on her. She showed them respect and trust, and the result was the discovery of a simple yet extraordinary practice of building community.

Moreover, she did this night after night, despite exhaustion, and despite her other commitments. She could not have done this in one storytime meeting, nor even in a week of them. In fact, it was not until the third and final week that the girls began turning to Anne for her advice. She brokered a peace by proving that she was not one more adult using them for her own agenda, ready to abandon them if they did not meet it.

Conclusion: Youth Ministry as a Site for Transforming the War on Kids

In this discussion, I have focused on storytime as an example of a peacebuilding practice that, in its own way, contributes towards the transformation of a larger societal conflict, the war on kids. For Christians, transformation of our relationships with young people is inspired and informed by our understanding of ourselves as already in a transformed and transforming relationship with a loving God that continually seeks us out, broken and lost though we may be, to bring us into healing and wholeness. It is out of this theological orientation that youth ministry serves as a site for conflict transformation on the war on kids.

Christian language and imagery stands in powerful counter-distinction to the language and imagery of consumerism and violence that dominates our culture and institutions, and shapes the way youth and adults interact. In the face of images of youth as violent, sex-crazed or

valuable only as tools for adult agendas, and of images of adults as stupid, self-serving or valuable only as purse-holders, Christian imagery offers the *imago Dei*, humans "fearfully and wonderfully made" in the image of God, and adopted as beloved children of God through Jesus Christ.[18] In the face of images of a "tribe apart" in which youth form a separate community from the adult world in response to systemic abandonment, Christian imagery offers the Church as the Body of Christ—diverse and pluralistic, yet interdependent and united in love—and the Lord's Supper, in which we become one Body through sharing of bread and wine.[19] In the face of images of punishment in zero tolerance school policies, armed guards and surveillance cameras in schools, and adult prison sentences for minors, Christian imagery offers grace, forgiveness and reconciliation, from biblical images like the Prodigal Son, the Lost Coin and the Lost Sheep, to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and to the cleansing waters of Baptism.[20] In the face of images that dismiss the pursuit of social justice as "youthful rebellion," Christian imagery has a bountiful list of courageous prophets, including Amos, Jeremiah, Jarena Lee, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, Shane Claiborne, and Oscar Romero, to name only a few. In short, in the face of pervasive and growing "ephebiphobia," Christians can stand with youth as Paul did with Timothy and proclaim: "don't let anyone look down on you because you are young."[21]

For adult Christians to be able to make this proclamation, however, we have to show—not simply say—that we really believe it. If we really believe that youth are intrinsically valuable as children of God, not as projections of our cultural hopes and fears, we have to prove it, by listening to youth, getting to know youth on their terms, taking their concerns and their dreams seriously, and affirming that they are beloved just as they are. If we really believe in grace, forgiveness, love of neighbor, and love of enemy, then we have to stop treating youth as criminals and seek restorative forms of discipline rather than punitive forms of punishment. If we really believe that the "greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves,"[22] then we have to stop standing over young people, lecturing and monitoring them, but instead step—humbly and respectfully—into their space, sit down with them, and show them another way of being leaders.

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[18] Gen 1:27; Ps 139:14; Rom 8:14-17.

[19] I Cor 12; Eph 2:20-22; 4:1-16

[20] Mt 5:38-48;18:15-20; 21-35; Luke 15

[21] I Tim 4:12

[22] Luke 22:26

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Sexting, Symbols, and Sanctification:

The Role of Religious Education in the Making and Un-making of Violent Imaginations

Abstract
Though indispensible to meaningful living, the imagination is also the gateway through which violence enters the world. This paper explores this ambivalence as it relates to the potential of religious education to both stem and exacerbate the violence originating in the imagination. Drawing upon research in moral formation, cognitional theory, and transformative learning theory, the author examines a recent high school "sexting" scandal, analyzes what led to this incident, and draws implications for how religious education can deter rather than perpetuate such instances of violence.

Introduction

Last year at this conference I presented a paper arguing for the benefits of engaging young people in conversation around religious symbols as part of their preparation for life in today's pluralistic public spaces. In my conclusion I added a brief warning about the dangers inherent in symbolic thinking, a danger which the conference organizers have acknowledged in proposing this year's topic of cultural and religious imagination in the making and unmaking of violence. In the time since I issued that warning, an event transpired within my own local community that, unfortunately, exemplified the sort of dangers about which I was and remain concerned. Taking this incident as a case study, I address these dangers head-on in this paper.

In so doing, my aim is not to report all the details of this incident so much as to address the deeper questions that this incident raises about the workings of human imagination, the challenges presented by the current cultural milieu, and the role of religious education in the making and un-making of violent imaginations. I begin by describing a "sexting" scandal that occurred at a local high school in February of this past year, using this example as an entrée into a more general discussion of the dangers inherent in the human imagination. In the two following sections I discuss how religious education can, on the one hand, contribute to the making of violent imaginations and, on the other, serve to sanctify them.

The Dangers of the Human Imagination

CBS Boston reports that in February of this past year a group of 15 underclassmen girls at Walpole High School in Massachusetts texted nude photos of themselves to a number of upperclassmen boys.[1] The photos were soon widely circulated throughout the school. While the girls endured no physical harm in this incident, they have suffered real violence in terms of the violation of the dignity of their bodies and extreme public humiliation in the eyes of their peers, families, school officials, and the wider community.[2] As for the male students, some of whom were 18 years old, were it not for the leniency of the police and the juvenile magistrate, they might have been charged with possession and distribution of child pornography.[3] Had this been the case, the boys would have served a prison sentence of up to 10 years and been labeled sex offenders for the rest of their lives. As the matter stands, they will endure the less severe—but, nonetheless, very real—consequences of public shame and academic disciplining. Sadly, journalists inquiring into the case have found that this incident is indicative of a widespread culture of sexting in this high school and others. "Every school does it," reported one Walpole High junior. "We just happen to be the one school who got caught."[4]

"The impoverishment and alienation of the self, as well as the destruction of others, issues from a reasoning of the heart that uses evil imagination."[5] Richard Niebuhr wrote these words in 1941, long before the first "sext" message was sent, but recent events have only served to

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[1] Jim Armstrong, "Walpole High School And Police Investigating Sexting Between Students," CBS Boston, February 26, 2014, http://boston.cbslocal.com/2014/02/26/walpole-high-school-investigating-sexting-between-students/.

[2] The age difference between the underclassmen girls and upperclassmen boys also suggests a power differential that may reflect its own subtle form of violence. Even though no one physically coerced the girls to pose for these pictures, it is certainly not a healthy situation in which so many young women feel compelled to violate their own dignity in order to attract attention or garner other social benefits.

[3] Brittney McNamara, "School Officials Back Court Decision in Walpole High Sexting Case," *The Patriot Ledger*, April 14, 2014, http://www.patriotledger.com/article/20140414/News/140418771.

[4] Armstrong, "Walpole High School And Police Investigating Sexting Between Students."

[5] H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 75.

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reaffirm the wisdom of his words. All human-originated violence begins in the imagination. It is for this reason that idolatry is portrayed as the paradigmatic sin in the Hebrew Scriptures and that Islam and some sects of Judaism and Protestant Christianity prohibit human-made images.

Whatever prohibitions we might impose, we can never escape the influence of images altogether. Images and imagination are an indispensible part of human cognition. Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio defines a "mind" as none other than "the ability to display images internally and to order those images in a process called thought."[6] Over 2,000 years earlier, Aristotle similarly wrote, "the mind never thinks without an image."[7] In the intervening time, the leading authorities in every age—from Thomas Aquinas to Albert Einstein—have acknowledged the essential role of images in cognition.[8]

What exactly is that role? As Paul Ricoeur has famously observed, thought begins from the symbol.[9] The generation of mental images provides clues to new insights and the material for thought.[10] The manipulation and modification of those images then plays a subsequent role in attaining to new knowledge.[11] On a more sophisticated level, the repertoire of images we bring to a situation determines what we experience and learn and how we behave.[12] Those images form the interpretive lenses—the "meaning perspectives," as Jack Mezirow calls them—through which we evaluate the meaning of our experiences and develop a system of beliefs and habits of expectation and behavior.[13] Whether one sees life as a rat race or a gift to be savored or God as a distant clockmaker or a loving, personal Being determines one's experience of life in this the world. Indeed, without this ability to generate and modify mental images that we call "imagination," we would not be able to respond intelligently and meaningfully to our environment.[14]

Necessary though it is, the imagination is an ambivalent power. The evangelist recognizes as much when he quotes Jesus, "The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light; but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be in darkness" (Mt 6:22-23). Bernard Lonergan explains the source of the danger thus: When we have a question—whether implicit or explicit—mental images provide the pivot between the question and an answer. However, as we have all experienced on numerous occasions, the understanding that emerges from that image is not always correct. When we fail to reasonably judge the appropriateness or truth of our ideas, there opens a gap between what we think we

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[6] Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Putnam, 1994), 89.

[7] Aristotle, "De Anima," in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Modern Library, 2001), 431a, 16.

[8] See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q.79, a.4, r.3; and Albert Einstein, cited in Jacques Hadamard, *An Essay on the Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field* (New York: Dover Publications, 1954), 142.

[9] Paul Ricoeur, "The Symbol: Food for Thought," *Philosophy Today* 4 (September 1, 1960), 197. For my purposes here, it will suffice to define a symbol as an image that evokes multiple meanings.

[10] Here I use "image" in the more technical sense of a mental representation such as may come to a person's consciousness in visual, audible, or other forms. When discussing examples from popular culture and marketing, I employ the term in the more common sense of a visually perceived picture, symbol, projection, etc.

[11] See Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, 105; cf. Lonergan, *Insight*, 35.

[12] See Arthur W. Staats and Jeffrey M. Lohr, "Images, Language, Emotions, and Personality: Social Behaviorism's Theory," *Journal of Mental Imagery* 3, no. 1–2 (1979): 90.

[13] Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), 42.

[14] The higher-level imaginative work of constructing and participating in our reality is what Charles Taylor means when he speaks of "social" and "cosmic imaginaries" and what Sandra Schneiders means when she speaks about a person's "world". See Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2007), 323, and Sandra M. Schneiders, *Buying the Field: Catholic Religious Life in Mission to the World* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2013), 37.

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know and what we actually know. "It is through this gap," warns Lonergan, "that there proudly march the speculative gnostic and the practical magician," and, I might add, the buzzword-brandishing talking head and the marketing guru.[15]

Modern marketers take advantage of the fact that many people will act impulsively and without due reflection upon the images they perceive. People buy clothing because they imagine it will make them look more stylish without properly judging if they can afford it. They "supersize" their meals because they imagine they will be more satisfied without reflecting on the consequences for their health. Or, in the case of the students at Walpole High, they send and forward nude photos because they imagine doing so will make others perceive them as sexy or cool without considering that their actions could lead to personal humiliation or imprisonment. Such manipulation on the part of corporations and individuals, while subtle, is every bit as much a form of violence as coercing an intoxicated person into intercourse or assaulting a defenseless person on the street. Indeed, when reflective judgment is short-circuited, all manner of violence may be wrought in people's imaginations and in their lives.[16]

Religious Education's Complicity in Forming Violent Imaginations

Few will dispute the claim that modern marketing often has a corrupting effect on people's imaginations, but we are less inclined to recognize the capacity of formal education, including religious education, for the same.[17] In truth, Christian institutions of learning have produced the very people who burnt supposed witches and heretics, and preachers citing Scripture have too often fueled bigotry and religious conflict. As Paolo Freire has argued, even when acting with the best of intentions, educators can unwittingly perpetuate cycles of violence through unexamined pedagogical methods.[18] In light of these considerations, we might wonder if the sparks of violent imagination that ignited the Walpole sexting scandal were somehow— perhaps inadvertently—fanned in Sunday services or religious education classrooms. In the hopes of avoiding more incidents like this one, I will draw attention to a couple of pedagogical miscues whereby religious educators may fuel violent imaginations.

The first of these is the failure to attend to the images already at play in learners' minds. Possessing a theologically rich, life-giving vision for how one hopes to form one's students does not guarantee that that vision will come to fruition. The difficulty is that education is never a work *ex nihilo*. Such is the central insight of constructivist theories like those of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, which is now generally accepted among educational theorists and practitioners.[19] Learners play a crucial role in constructing their own knowledge; it cannot be simply imposed

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[15] Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding, Volume 3*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, 5th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 1992), 565.

[16] I describe as "violent" any action that is detrimental to a person's wellbeing—physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual—regardless of whether or not the injured party somehow consented to the action in question or is fully conscious of the harm done. As suggested above, not all violence is physical. In truth, some of the most insidious forms of violence are those which mar the soul without leaving any marks on the body.

[17] Of course, not all advertising is negative. For a positive example, see this ad from Guinness: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Vxjh6KJi8E

[18] See Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1994).

[19] To affirm the basic claim that learners play an active role in constructing knowledge is not to ignore the challenges of deriving effective pedagogical approaches from this insight. For a multi-perspectival treatment of this issue, see, e.g., S. Tobias and T. M. Duffy, *Constructivist Instruction: Success or Failure?* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2009) as well as P. A. Kirschner, J. Sweller, and R. E. Clark, "Why Minimal Guidance During Instruction Does Not Work: An Analysis of the Failure of Constructivist, Discovery, Problem-based, Experiential, and Inquiry-based Teaching," *Educational Psychologist* 41 (2): 75–86.

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from without. Effective education, therefore, depends upon connecting with the images already at play in people's minds.

Attending to these dynamics of human cognition is especially important in the present era, in which our imaginations are utterly saturated with images from popular media and product marketing.[20] To simply refuse to acknowledge pervasive sexualized images or hedonism-inspiring music, as some educators and textbook authors elect to do, is not merely inadequate; it is outright negligent. It is likewise insufficient to merely denounce negative images. Our minds are not operated by switches that we can turn on or off at will. Rather, consciousness and thought are constituted by a continuous flow of images. Telling someone not to think about something will only succeed in bringing that image to mind. It is far more effective to modify the image or gradually replace it.[21] Along these lines, Philip Keane has suggested that a healthy sexuality requires allowing sexual images to come to mind, rather than repressing them, and then mentally modifying them.[22]

In the wake of the Walpole sexting incident, the superintendent of schools assured the public that the infraction had resulted from lack of good judgment on the students' parts, not from a failure of policy. However, we might wonder, Did the education these students received about sexting ever go beyond simple prohibitions? Did anyone ever make an effort to help these students address the sexualized images they are exposed to on a daily basis? Pitted against this flood of images, a flat prohibition on students exchanging such images themselves is unlikely to prove very influential. In order to counteract the violence being done to students' imaginations elsewhere, educators need to address those violent images directly.

Another way religious educators may become complicit in the formation of violent imaginations is by stifling learners' imaginations. The power of images derives in great part from their affective valence. The more concrete and deeply rooted in experience an image is, the greater its affective force. Concepts, doctrine, and abstract reasoning, by contrast, are more remote from experience and therefore have less affective force.[23] To be sure, concepts and doctrine have an important role insofar as they enrich symbolic language by providing greater explicitness and clarity.[24] Without them, an unbridled imagination can easily veer off into superstition and other cognitive errors.[25] Conversely, when educators fail to balance theory with

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[20] According to one estimate, the average North American sees some 6,000 marketing messages each day. See Valerie Scatamburlo-D'Annibale, "Beyond the Culture Jam," in *Critical Pedagogies: Living and Learning in the Shadow of the 'Shopocalypse',* ed. Jennifer A. Sandlin and Peter McLaren (New York: Routledge, 2010), 224.

[21] In the words of Niebuhr, "The errors and superstitions fostered by bad imagination in this realm cannot be overcome by eliminating ideas…but only by more adequate images of the same order" (*The Meaning of Revelation*, 79). Andrew Greeley similarly writes, "the only way it [church leadership] can guide and direct the development of that religious sensibility is not denouncing it, not trying to limit it or contain it, but rather influencing its direction and flow through works of the fine and lively arts" (*Americans Since the Council: An Unauthorized Report* (Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1985), 222).

[22] Phillip S. Keane, *Christian Ethics and Imagination: A Theological Inquiry* (Paulist Press, 1984), 162.

[23] On the greater proximity of images to experience than concepts see, e.g., Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, 93 and Ray L. Hart, *Unfinished Man and the Imagination: Toward an Ontology and a Rhetoric of Revelation* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), 231.

[24] On this point, see David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 294, n.57. Lonergan would add that theory enables us to know things as they are rather than merely as they seem to us.

[25] See Lonergan, *Insight*, 560–6.

imaginative modes of instruction, learners lose interest and grow lethargic in their thinking.[26] For example, students will be less engaged by a discussion of how the sacraments can be categorized into sacraments of initiation, vocation, and healing than they will be by a discussion of the symbolic meaning of the sacraments. Teaching that merely imposes information on learners, in the words of Freire, "inhibits creativity and domesticates (although it cannot completely destroy) the *intentionality* of consciousness."[27] Even if one begins from symbols, over-interpreting and imposing lengthy explanations on them can have the same effect.

The ultimate danger in this pedagogical blunder is this: Human beings are engineered to attend most carefully to the experiences and input that generate the strongest emotions, which means that the battle for the mind is first a battle for the heart.[28] Every day our students make their way through a world of advertisements and entertainment that is fine-tuned to maximize stimulation. If religious educators have any hope of counteracting the negative messages of this titillating machine, we need to stimulate students' imaginations through the sorts of images that will promote responsible Christian living. Returning to the example of Walpole, we might ask how these students were taught to respect the human body. Was an attractive vision of the goodness of the human body and of chaste living presented to them, or were they merely lectured about school policies and bland moral platitudes?

Sanctifying the Imagination

Though there is a dark potential to the human imagination and though the influences that sway it that way are ubiquitous, images can be the source of salvation. Indeed, as Richard Niebuhr reflects, conversion does not occur without them.[29] Therefore, religious educators need not feel helpless in the battle for students' imaginations. In addition to avoiding the sorts of pedagogical pitfalls just examined, educators can take a number of active measures to form their students' imaginations in a distinctly Christian manner. In Walpole, a local youth minister made efforts to do just that, providing us with a model for sanctifying imaginations in the face of vitiating influences.

Many of the Catholic students at Walpole High School are parishioners at a nearby Catholic parish, where most go through the Confirmation program during their freshman and sophomore years. Two weeks after news of the sexting scandal broke, the youth minister at the parish scrapped the scheduled agenda for the monthly Confirmation class and instead facilitated a presentation and discussion of relationships and sexuality, which reflected a number of the pedagogical considerations addressed in this paper.

First, she directly engaged the popular images already at play in her students' minds. Specifically, she drew attention to the sexualized images elicited by popular songs like Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines" and Katy Perry's "Dark Horse," which were receiving ample radio play at the time, and challenged her students to think about the negative effects of internalizing the messages of these songs. She also played a clip of a talk by Kerry Cronin, a popular young

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[26] See Damasio, *Descartes' Error*, 147 on the correlation between positive/negative body-states and fast/slow reasoning and generation of images. You might observe this phenomenon for yourself as you read this paper and others for the conference. Note when you feel more energized and when your thinking accelerates versus when you feel yourself losing interest and your thoughts slowing. In all likelihood, these changes will often correspond to sections of the paper that are more concrete or more abstract.

[27] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 64. Emphasis original.

[28] Damasio states the matter this way: "Somehow, what does not come naturally and automatically through the primacy of feeling cannot be maintained in the mind" (*Descartes' Error*, 154).

[29] See Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation*, 89.

professor at Boston College, in which the speaker addresses the "hook-up culture" that is so pervasive at BC and many other undergraduate institutions.[30] In this clip, Cronin relates stories of students who have shared with her their profound frustration with the culture of quick sexual gratification, thereby revealing the dark side of the sexualized culture that is typically glorified in popular media.

Showing this video clip had the double effect of not only challenging pernicious images of human sexuality but also providing students with an alternative image—that of a successful, well-adjusted woman who has been able to achieve a sense of fulfillment without objectifying herself or others for the sake of sexual gratification.[31] In addition to this video, the youth minister presented several other images of healthy personhood and sexuality. Displaying attractive images in a dynamic Prezi presentation, she evoked the Scriptural theme of humans' creation in God's "image and likeness" (Gen 1:26). She also showed a clip of Lupita Nyong'o, star of the film *12 Years a Slave*, speaking about her struggles with her black skin and gradually recognizing her own inner beauty.[32] Encouraging more active engagement, the youth minister later invited students to envision how they might practice chaste living in their own lives by setting some kind of goal for themselves and employing some symbol as a reminder of that commitment. Finally, it should be noted that, rather than simply lecturing the students on Catholic teaching about sexuality, she employed a variety of dynamic images and videos and engaged the students in conversation so as to stimulate rather than stifle thought and imagination.

What more could have been done? For one thing, although the youth minister made sure to ask students questions and to allow some time for personal reflection, she could have done more to promote authentic cognition on the part of her students. This is not a trivial critique because facilitating authentic cognition—that is, patterned acts of attending, understanding, judging, and deciding—is what separates persuasive instruction from manipulation.[33] Furthermore, without promoting such critical consciousness, religious educators have no hope for counteracting the barrage of sultry images that beset young people every day.[34] In the case of this parish program, the youth minister, beyond asking students about their understanding of the term "chastity" and inviting them to brainstorm ways to live it out, might have included explicit opportunities for students to raise questions about the vision of chastity she was presenting and to render their own judgments about the plausibility of this proposal.

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[30] The video clip can be accessed here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3eyFgTHmzE. The youth minister showed a segment from 5:00 to 7:00.

[31] While nearly every everything in the youth minister's presentation was equally applicable to boys as well as girls, it is worth noting that the strongest examples of positive role models were both women. As evidenced in the case at Walpole High, men and women face different challenges (as well as many similar ones) when navigating sexual relationships and often fall into different social scripts. Taking this fact into account, discussions of sexuality should ideally acknowledge these differences and address them appropriately, e.g., by presenting male role models, who refuse to objectify women or themselves, in addition to female role models.

[32] This clip can be accessed here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPCkfARH2eE.

[33] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 6–13; cf. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 66.

[34] Again, consider the fact that the average North American sees some 6,000 marketing messages each day (see n.18 above). That figure is likely higher for adolescents, who spend more time on smartphones and the Internet than the average adult. Religious education will never be able to match the world of marketing and entertainment image for image, nor do salutary Christian images generally compare in intensity with the sexualized images that are so pervasive in popular culture. Hence the importance of not only providing salutary images but also empowering young people to critically evaluate the images presented to them by the wider culture.

As a final note, all of the above should be done as a matter of course in religious education, not only in response to scandal. While religious educators will never be able to match popular media and marketing image for image, we stand to greatly improve our odds in the battle for students' imaginations by adopting a more intentional, systematic approach to the task.

Conclusion

The sexting scandal that occurred in Walpole earlier this year was not an isolated incident. Such occurrences are indicative of a culture in which a flood of violent images saturates our imaginations, inevitably leading to harmful actions. Immersed in such a culture, it is imperative that religious educators give serious attention to how they employ or neglect images in their teaching. Overwhelming though the challenges may seem, Christian educators have recourse to a vision of incomparable power—the vision of the reign of God bestowed on us by Jesus Christ. The images of modern media and marketing may be ubiquitous and dazzling, but they are incapable of satisfying the deepest longings of the human heart. For that only one image suffices—the image of the living God. As Christian educators, we are called to image Christ, who is "the image of the invisible God" (Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:49; Col 1:15). If we succeed in that, we greatly improve the likelihood that our students will themselves seek to become images of God rather than symbols of sex.

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Religious Education Association 2014, Chicago

Religious Education – Violation of university teachers' comfort zone?

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Abstract

In the Netherlands most of the academic curricula of teacher training for religious education (TT-RE) focus on shortfalls of students, like a lack of knowledge of the plurality in interpretations in their own Christian tradition.

In our research project the focus is on university professors and lecturers of the subject of 'religious education'. The main aim of the project is to gain a better insight in the complexity of academics' own *positionality* in the plurality of the roman catholic tradition they adhere to. For this investigation we made use of a research instrument based on the Dialogical Self Theory and its Self Confrontation Method for Teams (Ter Avest 2014).

In our presentation we focus on the intervention with this research instrument and present preliminary results. We reflect upon the results and formulate recommendations for further research.

Introduction

In the Netherlands, being one of the most secularized countries of Europe, only a small part of the generation of students entering university in the last decade is raised in a homogeneous

religious family and educational context. The greater part of students nowadays is raised in a secularized (Christian) family context, visited a secularized Christian or public secondary school and meets peers in membership groups outside the church or any other religious community. They know little about their own tradition and are confronted with different discourses regarding 'truth claims' of tradition(s) (Versteegt 2010, 72-74). This is so for students in different departments, including teacher training for religious education (TT-RE).

In this highly secularized and plural context regarding religious and secular worldviews, a successful completion of an academic career by obtaining an academic degree to be licensed as teacher in religious education can be problematic. This is so for secular(ized Christian) students, but even more so for students entering university with a well defined but unreflected exclusively interpreted religious conviction or a so called 'foreclosure' in the development of their religious or semi-secular worldview (Marcia 1980; Bakker & Ter Avest 2008).

For many students entering TT-RE it can be said that they know little about their own and other religious traditions, although they are not indifferent to secular and religious rituals and symbols. On the contrary, they show to be highly interested in worldviews, religiosity, spirituality and related traditions. This generation students are self defined members of 'unaffiliated spirituals' (Van de Donk *et al.* 2006).

Instead of focusing on *students'* deficiencies, like for example their lack of knowledge of religious and secular traditions, in our research we focus on *university professors and lecturers* of the subject of 'religious education' and their held religious beliefs and convictions. It is the task of university professors and lecturers to train their students to become 'good teachers of religious education' – a good teacher for students in secondary education – be it in schools with a Christian identity or in state schools. That means that in the first place the development of so called *instrumental professionalism* is central in the four years' training program. Students have to be taught *about* the Christian tradition – for some students the tradition their parents were related to in some way or an other – and about other secular and religious traditions people in the Netherlands adhere to; Islam beint the second religion in the Netherlands. Students also have to be taught in pedagogical strategies, classroom management, leadership styles, and the educational and political arena in the Netherlands. Next to that, in the curriculum of a TT-RE attention should be given to the reflection on students biographically rooted value orientation and its relation to their own positionality in the field of religious and secular worldviews and the politics of education. Instrumental professionalism subjected to a person's value orientation developing into an authentic positionality, is included in what is called by Bakker normative professionalism (Bakker 2014). In order to train students in their instrumental professionalism ànd coach them in the reflection on their value related positionality (normative professionalism), *academics themselves* should be aware of their own positionality with regard to the above mentioned aspects of instrumental and normative professionalism.

The stimulation and support of the academics (professors and lecturers) in their development to facilitate students' professional identity development includes a provocation and even seduction to leave the 'comfort zone' of held beliefs, to face uncertainty, to long for what is

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left behind (retrospective nostalgia) as well as to long for a new situation of high status for the implemented new curriculum of their roman catholic teacher training institute (prospective nostalgia) (Du Preez 2011).

Theoretical framework

We follow the analysis of Charles Taylor (2009) as presented in 'A secular world' for the description of the development of secularization as well as for its meaning for identity development of people today. According to Taylor it is the change in the process of identity construction that has had and still has a huge impact on the way people position themselves in their context. The main principle of organization and structuring a person's position in society (the hierarchical principle of status and belonging to a certain family, belonging to a group of respected craftsmen, belonging to a religious community) fades away to make place for the principle of dignity of all human beings, the dignity of citizens on a democratic society. In a democratic society there is equal recognition of people's dignity. Recognition of this dignity becomes an important issue, because it does not go without saying anymore like it was in earlier days recognizing people's status based on their place of birth; recognition in modern times is something you have to gain, and in the attempt to gain it you might fail. The result is an individualized identity, closely related to the ideal of authenticity. Whereas in earlier days knowing what to do to be a good member of society was based on knowing about good and evil as this was transmitted in the Christian tradition, in these days knowing what to do is the result of an inner process searching for 'the source of the good' in the Self. This inner process leads to an individualized way of being 'a good human', 'I do it my way'. In case a person cannot find the authentic own way 'I miss the point of my life'. 'In articulating the point of my life, I am also defining my Self (Taylor 2009, 31). However, according to Taylor, this process can only be successful in dialogue with 'significant others'; 'This crucial feature of human life is its fundamentally dialogical character (ibid., 32). 'We define our identity always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us. Even after we outgrow some of these others – our parents, for instance – and they disappear from our lives, the conversation with them continues within us as long as we live. We need relationships to fulfil, but not to define, ourselves (ibid., 33). Following Taylor we conclude that authenticity and recognition are two sides of the same coin. It seems that it is precisely difference as a constitutive part of a constructive dialogue in which identity is constructed, has been ignored, glossed over, and assimilated to a dominant or majority identity And this assimilation is the cardinal sin against the ideal of authenticity (ibid. 38), leading to a false homogeneity (ibid., 44). The need for recognition of dignity as well as the recognition of difference and autonomy, not only as a person but even more so as a starting professional, makes students vulnerable and makes professors and lecturers responsible for a pedagogy of challenge and care, a so called provocative pedagogy (ter Avest&Bertram-Troost 2009). The loss of cultural identity, that is the way out of the comfort zone of a well respected professor or lecturer in Re in the Dutch plural context is preconditional for facilitating new ways of normative professionalism of today's RE teachers in secondary education (cf. Roy, in Oudenampsen 2014).

For the description of the context of our research we further make use of theories on student's development of commitment of their religious or secular world view development as well as theories on the influence of peergroup and membershipgroups (constituting the life world) on youngsters' (religious) identity development (Marcia 1980, Bakker&Ter Avest 2008). According to Marcia identity develops in four phases: the phase of exploration being a crucial phase since in this phase a person explores a variety of value orientations and world views and the respective positions with regard to existential questions. This phase of exploration, or what could also be names as a phase of research, results in a stable commitment – with regard to a choice for a profession, a political stance and a 'companion for life'. In our view knowledge about and adaptation to this phase of identity development of students is crucial for professors and lecturers at teacher training institutes.

For the construction of the valuations we made use of Biesta's work on 'good education', Bakker's work on technical and normative professionalism (2014), next to the reports of the meeting in which professors and lecturers discussed about the core characteristics of teacher training in religious education. The main part of our theoretical framework consists of the core concepts of the VT (Hermans&Hermans-Jansen 1995) and DST (Hermans&Hermans-Jansen; Hermans&Gieser 2012).

Research Methodology

To investigate academics' positionality we make use of a SCM[1]-related instrument. At the basis of this instrument is the Valuation Theory (VT) and the Dialogical Self Theory (DST), developed by Hermans&Hermans-Jansen (1995) and reviewed, renewed and extended by Hermans&Hermans-Konopka (2010) and Hermans&Gieser (2014).

According the Valutation Theory (VT) persons are motivated by two basic motives: the S-motive aiming at strengthening self awareness and self esteem, and the O-motive directed towards care for others and belongingness to others. Through emotional responses to persons or situations the S- and O-motive become visible. For example the emotion 'tenderness' refers to the O-motive and the emotion 'pride' to the S-motive in a positive way. The VT states that a person can experience different emotions at the same moment or in a similar contexts. For example walking in the woods with my dog gives me a feeling of happiness while at the same time I feel powerless when the dog starts to chase a rabbit, and a feeling of pride when the dog immediately turns back to me when I call my dog.

According to the Dialogical Self Theory (DST) the different feelings represent different 'voices' in my self, voices who can flexibly change position in my self, as a result of change in context. For example the voice of 'I as a happy person' comes to the fore walking with my dog, but moves backward at the moment the dog chases a rabbit; at that specific moment the voice of 'I as a powerless person' comes to the fore. Or, in an other context, the voice of 'my mother' comes to the fore (for example ironing my clothes, I remember her showing me how

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[1] Self Confrontation Method (Hermans&Hermans-Jansen 1995).

to do that), but in the context of a seminary for colleagues the critical voice of 'my mother' will make place for the voice of 'my professor' whose constructive criticism still is supporting me in my mind. Validated lists of emotions visualize the direction of the motivational commitment (positive –P- or negative –N- directed) and the preference for the S- or the O-motive in a certain situation or towards a certain person.

In our research we make use of the Self Confrontation Method (SCM) adapted for groups and organisations (SCM-org.) An adapted list of emotions is constructed to gain insight in direction and strength of the motivational commitment of university professors and lecturers to a new and to be implemented curriculum for teacher training in religious education.

In a meeting of the university professors and lecturers the new curriculum was discussed, and core characteristics established. By way of example below some characteristic statements are presented:

An RE teacher trained at the roman catholic training institute (RCTI) is familiar with the catholic tradition and experiences this tradition in an authentic way.

An RE teacher educated at the roman catholic training institute (RCTI) is trained as a theologian as well as a pedagogue, and thus well equiped to explore existential questions with students in secondary education.

An RE teacher trained at the roman catholic training institute (RCTI) in the first place is a theologian.

Students of the roman catholic training institute (RCTI) learn about the catholic tradition, as well as about other religious traditions.

Society asks to include in my lessons youngsters' own culture.

FUTURE: We are highly respected in Europe as the Roman Catholic Training Institute (RCTI).

These core characteristic are presented to the university professors and lecturers in statements, so called 'valuations'. This is one of the interventions in this multi-facetted and multi-methodologically designed process -, aiming at insight in the own *positionality* on the personal level, regarding their adherence to the roman catholic tradition as well as the team's *positionality* regarding the roman catholic training institute (RCTI) as a whole and its relation to the roman catholic church and tradition.

The academics then are invited to score on a scale from 0 - 5 to what extent each of these valuations elicited each of a list of 16 feelings (referring to S- and O-motive, and related to P and N feelings). Below the list of emotions is presented, as well as the relation to the S- of O-motive, and the P- or N-direction of the respective emotion.

Self-esteem	S-motive
Strength	S-motive
Self-confidence	S-motive
Pride	S-motive
Care	O-motive
Tenderness	O-motive
Friendship	O-motive
Team spirit	O-motive
Enjoyment	Positive
Satisfaction	Positive
Inner Calm	Positive
Trust	Positive
Inferiority	Negative
Anxiety	Negative
Guilt	Negative
Anger	Negative

The scores of the participating academics are analyzed using software of Psycron. In sum 17 persons participated in the research, 3 woman and 14 men.

Presentation of data, results of analysis and recommendations

We present the data of our study on the development of insight in the 'voice' of tradition(s) with the help of different scatter diagrams of respondent's reactions on the so called valuations. These scatter diagrams were analysed together with the professors and lecturers, including them as co-researchers in our research. To enable them for their task as co-researchers we developed tasks with regard to the interpretation of outcomes of their reactions ('scoring') of the valuations.

As a result of the analysis and the interpretations of professors and lecturers involved, we wrote a 'state of the art', wording their positionality towards a new curriculum-to-be-

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constructed and the possible feelings of either being 'violated' or being invited to leave their comfort zone and enter the internal and external dialogue on the new curriculum-to-be-constructed; a curriculum aiming at recognition today's students' own culture in the construction of the identity of an RE teacher in secondary education (cf. Knausgard 2014).

Next to include professors and lecturers in the process of formulation of the so called valuations, and in the process of analysis and interpretation of the results, we recommend to include the research population in the validation process – a crucial process in the Self Controntation Method. The validation process consists of a growing awareness of each person's positionality with regard to the core characteristics (the valuations), the developmentof will power to leave the own comfort zone and create a shared commitment towards the new curriculum and last but not least reflect upon the process in order to learn from their shared history on their way to a shared future of the Catholic Teacher Training Institute as a highly respected institute in Europe.

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Thou Shall Not Kill:

The Ustaŝa Genocide and Religious Education Today

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Abstract

The involvement of Pope Pius XII with Anté Pavelić, a Catholic Croatian fascist leader, in the Ustaŝa Genocide (1941-1945) is a little known and a little explored fact of church and world history and is rarely, if ever, taught in religious educational circles. It may seem unfathomable to us today that the Catholic Church recognized *de facto* the Ustaŝa and its attempts to create a pure Catholic Croatia by use of extermination, deportation, and conversion. Many Catholic clergy, mostly Franciscan friars, joined the Ustaŝa in efforts to annihilate and remove any Jews, Roma (gypsies), and Orthodox Christian Serbs from Croatia. Particularly disturbing is the Catholic Church's support for Jasenovac, a Croatian concentration camp headed by a Franciscan friar, Tomislav Filipovic (nicknamed "Fr. Satan") where he and other Franciscan friars carried out mass killings.

Some scholars have nicknamed Pope Pius XII as "Hitler's Pope" for his alleged complicity with Adolf Hitler during the Holocaust; in a similar manner and relative to the Ustaŝa Genocide, Pius XII takes on an additional nickname: "Pavelić's Pope." Both Pius XII and Anté Pavelić saw fascism as a way to unite Europe and to fight against communism.

While situated within a complicated period of 20th century world history, the work of the Ustaŝa, along with the complicity of the Catholic Church, made it possible for approximately one million people to lose their lives. This paper explores the relationship of the Vatican with the Ustasha and explores ways religious educators today can use insights from the Ustasha Genocide as motivation to help their learners resist any temptation to use religion as fuel for violence.

Background on the Ustaŝa Genocide

The Independent State of Croatia (NDH, *Nezavisna države Hrvatska*), consisting of

modern day Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and some parts of Serbia, was declared on April

10, 1941 after the invasion of Yugoslavia by the Axis Powers, an alliance among Nazi Germany,

Hungary, and Italy. Two days later, Adolf Hitler granted Croatia "Aryan" status, a racialist

ideological term that defined who was the master race. From its beginning, the NDH was a

"puppet state" of Nazi Germany, its government a façade whereby it looked like a government

to the people while in fact it was maintained by military force and run by Anté Pavelić on

behalf of Hitler. As a result, Croatia was exploited by Germany and Italy and, as we will see

later, by the Vatican for its resources, money, and labor.

Much planning went into the startup of the NDH, and the Catholic Church had a hand in

it. In the years prior to 1941, members of the Catholic Church's clergy met secretly with Italian

fascists to prepare for the final destruction of Yugoslavia. They also helped the NDH in its

recruitment of members by providing meeting places in their churches, monasteries, and other

church properties.

> The leadership of the Church was well aware of the leading role it was expected to play
> in the soon to be independent, fascist Croatian state. In the years prior to 1941 the
> Croatian fascist movement recruited members of legal Croatian nationalist parties and
> from within the Yugoslav military with the help and encouragement of the Croatian
> Catholic Church. Not only did the Croatian Catholic clergy meet secretly in the years
> prior to 1941 with Italian fascist agents to help prepare for the final destruction of
> Yugoslavia, but they provided the Ustasha with all of the vast resources at its disposal,
> including its buildings an monasteries for meetings and safe-houses. The operational
> headquarters in which the plans for the Ustasha take-over were made was in the
> Franciscan monastery at Chuntch. Monasteries, parish houses, cathedrals, Franciscan
> high schools, seminaries, etc., throughout Croatia doubled as meeting places, recruiting
> centers, arms depots and staging areas for Croatian fascism and terror in the years prior
> to the war. We know this to be true because the Croatian fascists themselves boasted of
> it when they came to power in 1941 in their official publications and on the memorial
> plaques they affixed to these places.[1]

In 1939, Pope Pius XII, while hosting a pilgrimage to Rome, said this to Alojzije Stepinac,

a Nazi collaborator and the Archbishop (later Cardinal) of the Catholic Church in Croatia:

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[1] Lituchy, B. (2003). *The Holocaust Revealed: What is the Vatican Hiding?*
http://holocaustrevealed.org/Church/Vatican_Hiding.htm, 8.

The hope of a better future seems to be smiling on you, a future in which the relations between Church and State in your country will be regulated in harmonious action to the advantage of both.[2]

The Vatican was a sovereign state due to the 1929 Lateran Treaty that was signed by Mussolini and the Vatican and that detailed the Vatican's political and financial designations apart from Italy; overall, Vatican City was formed. The identity and function of both the Vatican and the Pope are complex, but are important notes to keep in mind as we investigate the role of the Vatican in the Ustaŝa Genocide: the Vatican is the spiritual center for the Western Rite of the Roman Catholic Church *and* it is a political headquarters for the Vatican as a sovereign state; the Vatican is a spiritual sanctuary *and* it is a diplomatic embassy; the Pope is the spiritual leader, the Vicar of Christ, for Catholics *and* he is the head of the Vatican as a sovereign state; the Pope brings the gospel message of peace to Catholics and to the world *and* the Pope once had authority over such military units as the Palatine Guard and the Noble Guard, both of which were abolished in 1970. Together, the Vatican and the Pope are a religious force *and* a political force.

The Vatican did not recognize the NDH *de jure*; it did not validate the NDH as a legal and legitimate country. But in a 1941 meeting with Pavelić, Pope Pius XII, who was as Eugenio Pacelli once the Papal Nuncio to Germany who forged with Hitler the 1933 *Reichskonkordat,* the agreement of the Catholic Church's place within Germany,[3] did recognize the NDH *de facto*,

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[2] Cornwell, J. (2008). *Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII,* 250.

[3] John Cornwell says this about the *Reichskonkordat:* Pacelli's acceptance of Hitler's deal poisoned the wells of Catholic moral and social integrity from the very outset of the Hitler regime. In order to lure Pacelli into a treaty that would ultimately benefit Nazism and politically paralyze German Catholicism, Hitler offered greater funding for Catholic schools in Germany—more teachers, more school buildings, more Catholic pupil places. At the same time, he was withdrawing wide ranging educational benefits from Jews. Hitler's 'generosity' toward Catholic education in Germany coincided with the mass dismissals of Jewish teachers and university professors and a drastic reduction in Jewish pupil places in schools. Pacelli's willingness to accept educational benefits from the

meaning that the Vatican, along with 17 other countries and governments, understood the NDH to have authority over Croatia. The Vatican therefore established diplomatic relations with the NDH.

Because of its involvement with the formation of the NDH, leaders of the Catholic Church knew that the NDH was a "puppet state" and they knew about Pavelić's ideology and intentions. Carl Savich, a Serbian-American, explains:

> The Vatican knew that Anté Pavelić was 'a totalitarian dictator,' a fanatical Croat ultra-nationalist zealot and Roman Catholic who was sponsored and installed in power by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. They knew Pavelić was a hardcore fascist who supported and endorsed Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. They knew about the anti-Serbian, anti-Jewish, and anti-Roma laws that the NDH had passed. They knew Pavelić was committed to the policy of forceful conversions of Orthodox Serbs to Roman Catholicism. Moreover, the Vatican knew that the NDH was a Nazi puppet state created by Nazi Germany that was under German military occupation and control.[4]

Thus, the Vatican supported the NDH and Pavelić. Consider these examples:

- In 1941, The Catholic weekly *Nedelja* praised Pavelić in this article:
  God, who directs the destiny of nations and controls the hearts of Kings, has given us Anté Pavelić and moved the leader of a friendly and allied people, Adolf Hitler, to use his victorious troops to disperse our oppressors and enable us to create an Independent State of Croatia. Glory be to God, our gratitude to Adolph Hitler, and infinite loyalty to chief Anté Pavelić.[5]

- Easter 1941, Archbishop Stepinac announced from the Cathedral of Zagreb the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, thus giving the solemn sanction of Church and Vatican to Pavelić's work.

- June 28, 1941, Stepinac, with other bishops, went to see Pavelić. After promising the wholehearted cooperation of the entire Hierarchy, the Archbishop solemnly blessed Pavelić, as the leader of the Croatian people: "While we greet you cordially as head of the Independent State of Croatia, we implore the Lord of the Stars to give his divine blessings to you, the leader of our people." Pavelić, it should be remembered, was the

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selfsame source of power that withdrew them from Jews signaled an eloquent collusion with, if not intentional endorsement of, Jewish persecution.

[4] Savich, C. (2011). *The Vatican Role in the Ustasha Genocide in the Independent State of Croatia*, 5. http://serbianna.com/analysis/archives/1182. Accessed October 8, 2014.

[5] *Nedelja,* April 27, 1941.

same man who had been sentenced to death for political assassinations: once by the Yugoslav courts, and once by the French, for the murders of King Alexander and the French Foreign Minister, Barthou.[6]

And then in 1998, Pope John Paul II beatified Alojije Stepinac, one step closer to being declared a saint within the Catholic Church, referring to Stepinac as a martyr for the faith.

Ustaŝa Croatian Liberation Movement

The Ustaŝa Croatian Liberation Movement was officially in existence from 1929 to 1945. Founded by and led by Anté Pavelić, The Ustaŝa (from *ustasi* in Croatian, meaning "to rise up") was founded on 17 principles known as "The Principles of the Ustaŝa Movement" *(Načela ustaškog pokreta).*[7] In essence these principles centererd on racialist ideology—ethnic cleansing—that led to the extermination of Jews and Roma (gypsies) living in Croatia (and Bosnia-Hercegovina) and to the forced expulsion and conversion of Serbs. In a 1941 speech in Gospic, Mile Budak, the NDH's Minister of Education and Faith, explained the religious foundation of this Croat fascist movement and its goals to exterminate, deport, and convert in order to create a Catholic Croatia:

> The movement of the Ustashi is based on religion. For the minorities—Serbs, Jews and Gypsies, we have three million bullets. We shall kill one part of the Serbs. We shall deport another, and the rest of them will be forced to embrace the Roman Catholic religion. Thus, our new Croatia will get rid of all Serbs in our midst in order to become one hundred percent Catholic within ten years."[8]

The Ustaŝa was the largest fascist movement (others at the time included Albanian and Macedonian), most likely due to support from the Vatican and from Archbishop Stepinac:

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[6] Manhattan, A. (1988). *The Vatican's Holocaust.* Springfield, MO: Ozark Books. http://www.reformation.org/holoc3.html#[5]. Accessed October 8, 2014.

[7] For an excellent discussion on these principles, consult Levy, M.F. (2009). "'The Last Bullet for the Last Serb': The Ustaŝa Genocide Against Serbs: 1941-1945," *Nationalities Papers, 37:6,* 811-812.

[8] Lituchy, 13.

The leader of the Catholic Church in Croatia, Archbishop Stepinac, fervently supported the Ustasha movement and welcomed the invading Nazi army as it entered Zagreb. On April 11th he met with Ustasha leaders and on April 12th he blessed the newly arrived Ustasha leadership in a public ceremony at his cathedral. In his Easter address of that month he compared the creation of the new fascist state to the resurrection of Christ. In his pastoral letter of April 28th he ordered the clergy and called upon all Catholic people of Croatian d Bosnia to follower their 'Poglavnk' (Fuhrer) Anté Pavelić, for he had seen in Pavelić 's rule 'God's hand in action.' The pastoral letter was read over the radio and in every Catholic parish in fascist Croatia.[9]

Catholic clergy held many high-level posts in the Ustaŝa; the Pope himself was appointed Croatia's military vicar. Bishops had reserved places on its cabinet. Other clergy served as priest-advisors. The leading racist theorist who insisted that Croatia had to be racially cleansed, Ivo Guberina, was a priest. The Ustaŝa Central Propaganda Office, which led a campaign of scapegoating Jews and Orthodox Christians for Croatia's difficulties, was led by another priest, Grga Peinovic.

By 1941, laws aimed at exclusion of Jews and Orthodox Christians from society were well underway. Publications using the Cyrillic script, the alphabet most often used by Orthodox Serbs, was banned. "The Aryanization of Jewish Property," the first racial law, was issued on April 18, 1941. Other laws included:

- Serbs must wear blue bands on their sleeves with the letter "P" (for Orthodox);

- Jews must wear a band with the Star of David and the letter "Z" (for Jew);

- Serbs and Jews forbidden from walking on sidewalks;

- Signs posted "No Serbs, Jews, Gypsies or Dogs Allowed!";

- Undesirable peoples (Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and anti-fascist Croats) told of their fate: rounding up, dispossessing of property, and send to death camps.[10]

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[9]Lituchy, 10-11.
[10]Lituchy, 12.

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Catholics (and other Christians) may find it astonishing that the basis for such laws can be found in many Christian writings throughout the centuries. For example, Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* in the 2nd century; Thomas Aquinas' "On Disbelief" from his famous *Summa Theologica* in the 13th century; Martin Luther's *On Jews and Their Lies* in 1543; and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* a 20th century fabrication of Jewish leaders' discussion and plans for worldwide domination, which Henry Ford allegedly placed in all glove compartments of the cars he had made. Karl Marx, the 19th century German philosopher and economist wrote *On the Jewish Question;* also in the 19th century famed computer Richard Wagner not only wrote *Judaism in Music* that referred to Jews as the enemy of humanity, but also wrote many operas that contained antisemitic words.

Such writings are a result of 2000-year history of teachings of antisemitism (belief that Jews must convert to Christianity and belief in the racial inferiority of Jews expressed as prejudice and hatred toward Jews) and anti-Judaism (the opposition to and disdain for Jewish beliefs and practices) that stem from its false accusation of deicide (that Jews killed Christ), and teachings of supersessionism (the claim that the New Covenant as expressed in Jesus Christ replaces the Old Covenant with Israel). Consider these select Catholic teachings on Jews[11]:

- Jews and Christians not permitted to eat together (Synod of Elvira, 306)
- Burning of Talmud and other books (12th Synod of Toledo, 681)
- Jews not permitted to patronize Jewish doctors (Trullan Synod, 692)
- The marking of Jewish clothes with a badge (4th Lateran Council, 1215)

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[11] Hilberg, R. n.d. *Canonical and Nazi Anti-Jewish Measures.* http://www.voxclamantis.nl/1files-sub/hilberg.htm. Accessed October 8, 2014.

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- The Crusades where mass extermination of Jews took place under direction "exterminate all heretics" (4th Lateran Council, 1215)
- Compulsory ghettos (Synod of Breslau, 1267)
- Jews not permitted to obtain academic degrees (Council of Basel, 1434)

Also, in 1054, disagreement over pneumatology and thus the *filioque* resulted in the Great Schism that left a division between Eastern Rite Catholics (who broke all ties with the Vatican and with the Pope) and Western Rite Catholics (who maintained ties with the Vatican and with the Pope and claimed to be the "true religion" from which the Eastern Rite Catholics fell away). The division remains to this day.

When such teachings are repeated over and over in word, song, and prayer from religious leaders and teachers who, for their learners are expected to know and teach the truth, it is logical that such feelings of resentment and hatred toward people of these groups develop over time. Is it any wonder, then, considering the religious underpinnings of the World War II genocides that Hitler, in weeks before signing the *Reichskonkordat* with Pacelli in 1933, declared: "I believe that I act today in unison with the Almighty Creator's intention. By fighting the Jews I do battle for the Lord."[12] Built up resentment and hatred turn into laws. Laws turn into racial and religious exclusion. Racial and religious exclusion turns into genocide.

Genocide

The term genocide (from the Latin *geno,* meaning tribe or race and from the Latin *cide,* meaning killing) is a relatively new term, having been coined by Raphael Lemkin in the 20th century to define the atrocities of the Holocaust and "a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of

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[12] Giblin, J.C. (2002). *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler.* New York: Clarion, 76.

annihilating the groups themselves."[13] Due to tireless work done by Raphael Lemkin, the United

Nations approved the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

that determined what is genocide:

> Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
>
> (a) Killing members of the group;
>
> (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
>
> (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
>
> (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
>
> (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.[14]

The genocides that took place during World War II, whether they happened in such

places as Croatia, Germany, or Poland, were not instances of a new phenomenon. Consider

some other genocides that have taken place during the 20th and 21st century:

- Hereros
- Armenia and Assyria
- Tibet
- Hutus
- Al-Anfal (Kurdish)
- Assyria
- Iraq
- Rwanda
- Darfur

In fact, the killing of people deemed inferior—genocide—is a result of many factors,

including colonialism (taking over another country), imperialism (using diplomatic or militaristic

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[13] U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. *What Is Genocide?*
http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007043. Accessed October 8, 2014.
[14] Ibid.

force to gain power), and religious fervor to incite violence. Such an understanding of genocide

helps explains the Vatican as both a political and religious force in the world and its

involvement in the Ustaŝa Genocide. According to Barry Lituchy:

> To understand the Vatican's role and motives in the Holocaust in Yugoslavia we need to understand the phenomenon of genocide as a product of modern imperialism. Genocide is a direct consequence of imperialist wars of conquest aimed at territorial expansion for economic, political and military domination. After World War I the Vatican was determined, like its fascist partners of Italy and Germany, to destroy the Yugoslav state and reconstitute in that region the power and influence the Papacy had lost with the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire…The Vatican was also determined to destroy Yugoslavia, though for its own reasons. The dismemberment of the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire was a catastrophe for the Catholic Church. The Vatican was no longer the supreme religious authority in Central and Eastern Europe and had lost the state foundations on which citizens owed a dual allegiance to Church and state. Its disappearance marked a sharp decline in the Church's world power and influence. Worse still was the replacement of the Austro-Hungarian Empire with states dominated by other religions in which Catholics sank to a minority status. The worst of the bunch was Yugoslavia which was ruled by a King of the Serbian Eastern Orthodox faith, a church that the Vatican viewed as a 'schismatic sect.' From the Vatican's point of view, this schismatic-sect was a cancer, to be eliminated. [15]

Beginning in 1941, the Ustaŝa maintained 14 death camps in Croatia alone (9 death

camps were only for children), killing upwards to 1 million Jews and Orthodox Serbs. Many

scholars and survivors of the genocide contend that the killings were done in the most horrific

and torturous ways that even the German Nazis could not fathom. Catholic clergy were part of

and even led many of the Croat killings, as Cornwell notes:

> Priests, invariably Franciscans, took a leading part in the massacres. Many went around routinely armed and performed their murderous acts with zeal. A Father Bozidar Bralow, known for the machine gun that was his constant companion, accused of performing a dance around the bodies of 180 massacred Serbs at Alipasin-Most.

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[15] Lituchy, B. (2003). "The Vatican's Complicity in Genocide in Fascist Croatia: The Suppressed Chapter of Holocaust History" in *The Holocaust Revealed: What is the Vatican Hiding?*, 5-6. http://holocaustrevealed.org/Church/Vatican_Hiding.htm. Accessed October 9, 2014.

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> Individual Franciscans killed, set fire to homes, sacked villages, and laid waste the Bosnian countryside at the head of Ustashe bands. In September of 1941, an Italian reporter wrote of a Franciscan he had witnessed south of Banja Luka urging on a band of Ustashe with his crucifix.[16]

After they were tortured, many people were tossed into mass graves where they slowly died. It is important to note that forty years later and 10 miles away from the graves, the Catholic Church erected in 1981 the Međjugorje shrine in honor of its belief that the Virgin Mary appeared to 6 children there and spoke to them about world peace. It is estimated that over 40 million people have visited that shrine. Do they know of the atrocities that occurred nearby?

Fr. Tomislav Filipović was of the Petricevac Franciscan Monastery, the same monastery where later in 2003 Pope John Paul II beatified Ivan Merz, who founded the Croatian Eagles in 1922; the Croatian Eagles were comparable to the Hitler Youth. Filipović was in charge of the Jasenovac Concentration Camp[17] where over 600,000 Orthodox Christians and Jews were killed, many of whom were children. Many people were thrown alive into the furnace; others were gassed with Zyklon B, the same deadly gas used by the Nazis in their own death camps; others fell victim to attacks and assaults from prison guards. Filipović had a nickname of "Fr. Satan" due to his brutal and sadistic methods of terror, torture and extermination, including his favorite form of torture: hanging.

Borislav Ševa, a Jasenovac survivor who was 22-years old when he was sent to Jasenovac, offers a testimony to what he experienced at that camp:

> They told me nothing. They only said I am to be sent to the Jasenovac camp--the two of us, me and Rade Zrnić. They tell us to get ready. They take us from the cells. They tie us.

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[16] Cornwell, 254.

[17] For a more in-depth analysis of the Jasenovac Camp, the reader is urged to consult The State Commission of Croatia for the Investigation of the Crimes of the Occupation Forces and Their Collaborators, ed. Sinisa Djuric, 2003. http://www.rastko.rs/cms/files/books/47cec18d78325. Accessed October 9, 2014.

I was tied to Rade. I did not know any of the other prisoners. To the trucks--and the direction: Jasenovac. There were at least 30 people [loaded] in the truck. People were exhausted, thin--pure misery.

At the gates of the concentration camp Jasenovac, there is a coat of arms with the Ustasha symbol: 'U.' That *[sic]* is that large, metal gate. They opened the gate, and the truck brings us in. We all got out of the truck. They untied us as we entered the cam   As we arrived, immediately they all came out, all officers--Ljubo Miloš, Matković, Picilli, Luburić. That was their headquarters. They were all there--standing. They watch and say, 'Right here! Now, this is good for us' [to have fun with them].

Those nine [sick ones] were taken farther away. I see that two of the Ustashas are leading them. We are just standing and watching. The officers are here, too. They took them to the Brick Factory. The ovens were about 50 meters [150 feet] away. They took them there. They opened the doors to the oven, took them by the arms and legs and threw them into the oven--nine of them. Those two were not the only ones throwing [men in the brick oven]. There were more of them who were throwing. The oven had large, metal doors. They can be opened as a door to a room. Two Ustashas grab one [victim]. They do not topple him [to the ground]. They [simply] grab him by the arms and legs and throw him into the oven, into the fire. I was watching with my own eyes. We all watched.[18]

Forced conversions were well supported by Catholic clergy as they saw the opportunity to cleanse the NDH from the Orthodox Serbs by saving their "hopeless souls" and converting them Catholicism, which they considered to be the one true faith. Orthodox churches were looted and destroyed. Those to be converted were first forced to pay a fee. For the Orthodox Serbs, Pope Pius XII had hoped that "the separated Christian brethren would see the error of their ways and return to full union with the Pope and Rome."[19] Yet, disagreement grew within the Ustâa regarding how the conversions ought to take place. As Levy points out:

Many clergymen embraced these conversions as a way to increase the number of Church members; some even sought to convert already doomed Serbs and Jews at the very last moment, to be certain that they died as members of the "true faith." But the

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[18] Mr. Borislav Ševa's Testimony in Lukajić, L., translated by Petar Makara (2005). *Friars and Ustashas Are Slaughtering.* Belgrade. http://www.srpska-mreza.com/History/ww2/book/Lukajic/Borislav_Sheva.html. Accessed October 9, 2014.
[19] Cornwell, 265.

Vatican recognized only "good faith" conversions, rather than conversions forced upon desperate individuals. To complicate the matter further, on 14 July 1941, the Ustaša's Ministry of Justice decreed that no educated Orthodox Christian artists, intellectuals, or merchants could be converted, despite its campaign of forced conversion. This made it even more difficult for clergy to determine the appropriate action to take. Nevertheless, whole villages of Serbs were forcibly converted. Of those, most were later murdered despite their conversions.[20]

End of the War

At the conclusion of World War II, the Vatican helped establish and maintain escape routes for Ustaŝa (and other Nazi) leaders, particularly to the United States and to Argentina. For example, the Collegio San Girolamo degli Illirici (College of St. Jerome of the Illyrians), which once housed Croatian priests studying at the Vatican and was under Vatican protection, became a headquarters for Ustaŝa criminals to receive false passports and false identities from the Red Cross and the International Refugees Association.[21]

Much debate has gone into whether Pope Pius XII did enough to save the millions of victims of the Holocaust overall and if he did enough to stop the atrocities occurring in Croatia under the Ustaŝa regime in particular. Yes, he opened safe houses for Jews; he hid children; he did not personally kill anyone. But Pope Pius XII's actions and involvement with the Ustaŝa show how he was a recipient of millennia worth of antisemitic teachings and was both a religious and political leader of the Vatican.

> That failure was implicit in the rifts Catholicism created and sustained—between the sacred and the profane, the spiritual and the secular, the body and the soul, clergy and laity, the exclusive truth of Catholicism over all other confessions and faiths. It was an essential feature of Pacelli's ideology of papal power, moreover, that Catholics should

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[20] Levy, 816.
[21] Cornwell, 266.

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abdicate, as Catholics, their social and political responsibility for what happened in the world and turn their gaze upward to the Holy Father and, beyond, to eternity.[22]

It is this author's conclusion that Pope Pius XII failed humanity for the sake of political power. He was Pavelić's pope.

The Role of Religious Education

Decades later, what does the Ustaŝa Genocide have to say to religious educators? What about the genocide are we to learn and how do we pass that learning along to our learners in efforts to help them refrain from using religious fervor and erroneous teachings to fuel hatred and violence?

First and foremost, we must teach about the Ustaŝa Genocide and not sweep it under the rug in our religious educational settings. By many accounts, the Holocaust began in Croatia, and any teaching on the Holocaust ought to give attention to the Ustaŝa Genocide. Furthermore, the relationship between the Vatican and the Ustaŝa must be taught.

Second, given the fact that the Vatican and the Pope play a duel role in the world as religious and political forces, we must call upon church leaders to provide the necessary religious and moral leadership in times of political distress. We must hold them accountable for any actions that cause violence against people and their cultures, whether they themselves committed the act or were complicit any act of violence. Furthermore, we must help them take

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[22] Cornwell, 295.

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a moral ground when violence occurs, especially in the name of religion, and help people see

that violence against people and their cultures is never OK in the eyes of God.

Third, we must bring to light the dark of church history. The Catholic Church—and all of

Christianity—is made up of sinful human beings. We acknowledge such sinfulness when we

teach about the Ustaŝa Genocide; when we teach about the religious influences of the

Holocaust and all genocides; when we teach our antisemitic and anti-Jewish past. But we

cannot stop there. We must help our learners determine how to recognize and rely upon God's

grace when studying such difficult topics. In so doing, they may honor the victims of the many

who suffered due to Christianity's exclusivist and racialist past and pledge to change our ways

of thinking about other people.

Fourth, we must honor holy sites but also recognize and honor what may have

happened there or nearby. Would erecting or visiting any holy site open old wounds or inhibit

relationships from developing between people who may have a political or religious history with

the site?

Finally, we cannot underestimate the significant role we religious educators have in

helping form moral sensibilities within our learners. Learners look to us for moral guidance and

leadership to help them discern right from wrong. While we cannot supply the answers, we can

supply our learners with the tools they need to discern the will of God in ways that bring good

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to the world, end any destruction of people and cultures, and ultimately make real the reign of

God here and now.

DRAFT

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Plagues and Possibilities: A Reconsideration of the Religious Education of the Young Child in Light of Peace Education

In light of correspondence between the enculturation of children and the cycle of violence, I consider the impact of religious education on the cultivation of moral courage in young children. I explore two programs-traditional and Montessori. First, I compare the scope and sequence of each, considering the influences of the texts presented. Second, I compare the influence of the respective pedagogies. Based on these comparisons and studies done on the benefits of the Montessori environment for peace education, I suggest the latter program as tool to interrupt the cycle of violence.

Plagues: Considerations of Moral Consciousness in Religious Education of Young Children

> My daughter's Kindergarten Sunday school class had been studying Moses. One day, when I went to pick her up, I learned that morning's story had been about the ten plaques. Everyone was working intently on a mural, when a five-year-old girl, Abby, smiled up at me from her drawing, and said, "Look at my dead puppy! He has sores!" Indeed, she had drawn a purple puppy, lying belly up, and was adding the red blotches as she spoke.

It may not have been what her teacher intended, but Abby had internalized the biblical message. While it is probably safe to say that no religious educator goes into their classroom intending to see drawings of dead puppies, many of the biblical stories taught to young children contain such startling details.[1]

Abby's teacher and the authors of her curriculum probably intended for the students to learn about God's great power and liberation of the Israelites from Egypt. In fact, they may have been so familiar with this uplifting interpretation of the Exodus story that they did not think anything of the sixth plague, in which:

> …the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from the kiln…and [it] shall cause festering boils on humans and animals throughout the whole land of Egypt." (Ex 9:8-9, NRSV)

However, the *Spark Story Bible* that Abby's class read describes each plague vividly, recounting the boils as: "Oozy, gooey, icky sores / On everybody's skin."[2] While it goes onto describe

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[1] Other examples include Noah and the flood, Daniel in the lion's den, the battle of Jericho, and even the parting of the Red Sea; to say nothing of New Testament narratives such as the escape to Egypt or the house on the rock, though these latter accounts tend to be painted with a softer brush in most Christian children's literature.

[2] Patti Thisted Arthur et. al., *Spark Story Bible* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009) 81.

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Moses' victory and the Israelites' liberation, for Abby, it was the pain of the animals that sunk in.[3] God is a God who frees the Israelites. God is also a God who gives puppies oozy, gooey sores.

This disconnect left me to question the result of presenting too much unmediated information into the concrete world of young children before they are capable of abstracting specific morals out of the details. Is it possible that we are teaching our kindergartners that some dogs (and people) deserve sores? And what about the other 'classic' Bible stories we tell our children?[4]

In 2007 my church body issued a call that I believe is applicable across denominations: "That the whole church become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered, and sent by the Word."[5] As an educator, I remain committed to the full inclusion of young children in the body of Christ, including giving them access to the Christian Scriptures. However, this experience left me questioning how such access is being provided—especially when the Scriptures the children first encounter are not translations, but illustrated paraphrases themselves.

To that end, this paper proposes an intentional scope and sequencing of curriculum material intended to familiarize children with the biblical message while remaining appropriate to their spiritual and developmental capacities. Because such capacities are vast and each deserves intensive consideration, this paper focuses specifically on those capacities that foster peace in opposition to judgment and conflict. I set as the determining criterion of an appropriate curriculum the proper development of a young child's *moral consciousness*. The goal in such a curriculum is thus to present biblical material that forms young children in intentional peaceful habits rather than unintentionally fostering the opposite results. In order to test the feasibility of this goal, two curriculum types for the young child (age 3 – Kindergarten) are considered—first, Spark Sunday School (published by Augsburg Fortress) as representative of a traditional Bible foundation approach and second, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, as developed by Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi, as representative of a Montessorian spiritual based approach.

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[3] This is not surprising given her inability, at the age 5, to yet think in abstractions. Jean Piaget's theory of development outlines four developmental stages: Sensorimotor, Preoperational, Concrete Operations, and Formal Operations. While this theory has been nuanced and developed, the general premise that children in the second stage (between 2 and 7 years old) "are not yet able to conceptualize abstractly" remains widely accepted (cf. Jean Piaget, *Origins of Intelligence in the Child*, [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1936]).

[4] The same children's Bible depicts the sad and frightened residents of Jericho peering over the city walls as Joshua and the Israelites march around and eventually topple their walls. Nothing is said about what happens to these people when "Huge stones crashed to the ground." In the final illustration, only the triumphant priests and a pile of rubble remain. (Arthur et. al., 102-105). Here might we be inadvertently condoning the knocking down of other children's block towers? Or worse? What about Noah's flood? Or the celebration of the destruction of the house of the foolish man in the parable of the men who build their homes respectively out of sand and rocks?

[5] ELCA Churchwide Assembly (2007) cited in *Opening the Book of Faith: Lutheran Insights for Bible Study* by Diane Jacobson, Mark Allan Powell, and Stanley N. Olson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008) vii.

Programs: A Comparison of Augsburg Fortress' Spark Sunday School Curriculum and Sofia Cavalletti's Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

According to its publishers, the *Spark Story Bible* is intended for children between age 2 and 2nd grade.[6] It is published along with a grade specific *Spark* Sunday School curriculum and together they are representative of traditional approaches to Sunday School education available on the contemporary market.[7] It contains 150 individual stories and is advertised to "[open] up God's Word to kids through colorful art and rich retellings of…the most popular Bible stories."[8] This large collection of "favorite" or "popular" Bible stories is determined by the adult editorial team and publishers and then paraphrased in accessible language in order to acquaint children with as wide a foundation on the biblical narrative as possible.

Such an aim is explicitly reflected in Augsburg Publishing house's description of their *Spark Story Bible,* which they tout as "an excellent foundation for a biblical education" that "encourages imagination through images and text that's engaging, thought-provoking, and fun!"[9] Indeed, my anecdotal experience with Abby seems to have proved these goals a success—Abby certainly understood and creatively engaged with the details of the story which she was presented. Paradigmatically, then from this description can be drawn two explicit aims of this Bible and the curriculum to which it is attached. First, is to build a broad foundation for biblical literacy at an early age—not surprising given the publication date of the Bible by the publishing house of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America two years after the adoption of the above quoted resolution to foster biblical literacy across the church. And second is to do so in a way that encourages thoughtful engagement and identification with the texts at what can implicitly be inferred as an age appropriate level. One way in which this latter aim is achieved is through discussion questions appended to the end of each individual story, asking such things as, following the narrative of Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 37-50), "Have you ever had an

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[6] "Spark Story Bible," accessed 3 September 2014, http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/8122/Spark-Story-Bible. Used here as representative of a traditional Sunday School story Bible and curriculum.

[7] The Zondervan *Beginner's Bible* (2005) contains more than 90 Bible stories, including the 10 plagues (cf. 104-110) and the American Bible Society's *Read and Learn Bible* presents "a collection of favorite stories from the Old and New Testaments paraphrased for young readers" in line with the society's "single mission of making the Bible available to as many people as possible so that all may experience its life-changing message" and lists 106 separate narratives— including two dedicated to the imposition of the plagues on Egypt—in its table of contents (Eva Moore, *Read and Learn Bible* [New York: Scholastic Inc., 2005] iii). Moreover, while more condensed story Bibles, such as the *Rhyme Bible Storybook* (1996), another Zondervan publication, includes only 35 stories, but manages to fit in an abbreviated account of the plagues as part of Moses' story condensed under the heading, "Out of Egypt" (cf. 122). Typical curriculums used in conjunction with each of these story Bibles aim to present the details of the story in order to give the child a foundational knowledge of the events, often attached with a cursory moral lesson.

[8] "Spark Story Bible."

[9] "Spark Story Bible."

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exciting dream? What was it about? How did it make you feel?"[10] Or, returning the plagues, "What plague would you least like to have come to you and your family? Why?"[11]

As an alternative, I compare this curriculum, representative of a traditional educational approach, to the first level of Sofia Cavalletti's Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a Montessori based religious education program developed for children between age 3 and Kindergarten. The aim of the first level of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is to "announce God's love and help the child to experience and enjoy it in prayer and reflection."[12] This is in response to what Cavalletti identifies as "the child's fundamental need [in early childhood] to be loved with a protective love, and to have someone to love."[13] In the course of religious education, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd assumes that God—particularly, "[f]or the younger child, the 'face of God' [seen in] Jesus, the Good Shepherd," serves as an ideal source and object for their love. Gianna Gobbi explains, "The parable of the Good Shepherd (found in John 10) [on which the Catechesis curriculum is centered] contains a message of the totality and universality of God's love."[14] To this end, the curriculum is concerned less with a breadth of material—providing a foundation for biblical knowledge—and rather with a depth of material—providing a foundation for moral and spiritual formation, alongside the reception of biblical truths.

This encounter with God's love is achieved through the selective presentation of 8 narratives from Jesus' life and the life of the church, along with 5 prophecies about the coming of Jesus, 1 psalm, and 8 parables from his teachings, for a total of 22 stories. These stories are drawn, not from a traditional story Bible, but instead from the text of the same Bible translation used in the child's primary worship environment. For the convenience of the child, the catechist is encouraged to transcribe these texts from the Bible in individual pamphlets to accompany each story, or can purchase Cavalletti's translation of the original Greek and Hebrew texts into such pamphlets through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd association. Cavalletti justifies the narrowing of this scope with an intentional aim toward cultivating a deep relationship between the young child and Jesus. She explains, the adult "should not offer too many stimuli [to the young child]. We should not alter too often or too rapidly the object of the child's attention, in which case the child would defend himself with intentional indifference to this kind of wearying, continuous movie. If the child does not have time to dwell on anything then everything will come to seem the same to him and he will lose interest in all things."[15] The foundation that the Catechesis curriculum seeks to build is therefore based upon a unity of message rather than a diversity of experiences at this point.

In later levels of her education program, this depth is built upon as children are exposed to the greater breadth of biblical narratives at more developmentally appropriate ages—usually after

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[10] Arthur et. al., 53.

[11] Arthur et. al., 83.

[12] Sofia Cavalletti, *The Religious Potential of the Child,* trans. Patricia M. Coulter and Julie M. Coulter and ed. Barbara Schmich Searle (Mt. Ranier, MD: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Publications, 1992) 153.

[13] Cavalletti, 152.

[14] Gianna Gobbi *Listening to God With Children: The Montessori Method Applied to the Catechesis of Children,* trans. and ed. Rebekah Rojcewicz (Loveland, OH: Treehaus, 1998) 89.

[15] Cavalletti, 140.

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the age of size years old. At such later developmental stages, children are better able to abstract about themes such as liberation and oppression and to discern common themes and appropriate moral behavior even from the more difficult biblical texts. Gobbi explains, "[D]uring this period—from age 6 to 9—there is a sensitive period for moral reasoning. The child of this age has a particular sensitivity toward and interest in distinguishing good from evil, as well as between right and wrong actions. If we try to engage the child in moral reasoning at an earlier age, when a natural interest in moral issues has not yet awakened in the child, we risk making him or her either over scrupulous or insensitive."[16] In other words, when a very young child is taught morality she is likely either to internalize the lesson into her still developing sense of order, thus taking it to the extreme—what Gobbi describes as "over scrupulous"—or to become overwhelmed, as Cavalletti describes in the case of overexposure to a diversity of stimuli, thus shutting down the child's moral capacities altogether such that she becomes "insensitive." To this, I add the related risk, given the vivid language and illustrations in many children's Bibles and curricula available today, of misinterpreting or confusing the moral message with the possible consequence of again shutting down the child's moral compass due to a lack of ability to differentiate.

To illustrate this danger, Cavalletti describes a vignette similar to that of my experience with Abby in the Sunday school classroom:

> If we tried to give the child [from three to six years] a direct moral formation we would have the same result as a nursery school teacher who wanted to tell the children about the parable of the prodigal son; the children's only reaction to this parable was the question: 'What happened to those pigs?' …The children responded in the only way appropriate to their age: Since they are in a sensitive period for protection, they were struck only by the fact that the swine were left abandoned, and the whole problematic of sin and conversion completely escaped them.[17]

In psychic and religious terms, the children approach each story that they hear in relation to their deep need for security, order, and trust. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd seeks to meet these needs through a carefully orchestrated encounter with God's love that responds "to the child's silent request: 'Help me to come closer to God by myself.'"[18] In developmental and pedagogical terms, the child, who has not yet reached an age of abstraction, is unable to differentiate the broader themes of the parable and instead latches onto the concrete details of the story, such as the well-being of the pigs, which are more representative of her concrete stage of reasoning. This same analysis could also be applied to Abby's concern for the animals affected by the plagues, rather than the broader theme of liberation, which the curriculum intended to present.

Possibilities: A Proposal of Where to Go From Here in Fostering Peace Education

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16 Gobbi, 88-89.
17 Cavalletti, 151.
18 Cavalletti, 45.

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When one moves beyond the need to win a popularity contest among (or sell books and curriculum to) an adult population, concern the spiritual and developmental appropriateness and impact of particular biblical stories comes to the forefront in selecting a religious education curriculum for young children. Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi believe they have found this formula in the implementation of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.[19] However, when one moves beyond the respective goals of the Catechesis curriculum to connect children deeply with God and the curricula such as Spark to provide children with a broad foundation in the biblical narrative, both within what their own researched and implemented developmentally appropriate means, the question remains, which curriculum best forms young children to be faithful citizens of the world. To this end, I turn to the criteria given by Jesus to all of his disciples (including the youngest among them) to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Lk 10:27, NRSV).

While the emphasis on the development of a relationship between God and the young child may at this point seem clear within the Catechesis curriculum, and already points to the fostering of love in general rather than hatred, I propose a deeper consideration of the potential for this curriculum over and against standard curricula specifically lives out the latter half of Jesus' commandment—the love of neighbor. To this end, I resonate with Maria Montessori when she writes, "True peace…suggests the triumph of justice and love among men: it reveals the existence of a better world wherein harmony reigns."[20] In order to live out Christ's command to love the neighbor, the establishment of peace is a prerequisite. Experiencing the assurance of the constancy of God's love through the presentations in Catechesis provides the beginning steps towards the construction of such harmony in the child's family and public life as well. D. Vidulich rightly notes that "Montessori education in its great respect for each child is inherently nonviolent."[21] Within the Catechesis curriculum, lessons in silence, prayer, and concentration, as well as the order of the room itself—building confidence through the child's natural desire for order—all contribute to this sense of well-being.

What is needed is a curriculum that moves a children towards their natural inclinations towards love and security as valued moral aims. In this way, the educator can begin to take seriously the child not as an object of dependence to be taught, but rather as "a regenerator of our race and of society" with and from whom we can learn.[22] This, at its heart, is an education toward peace. Indeed, as Montessori concludes, "Preventing conflicts is the world of politics, establishing peace is the work of education."[23] To this end, the confidence and independence of the child are

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[19] With regard to their curriculum's aim of "education to wonder," Cavaletti explains, "It is the educator's task…to offer the child's wonder an object capable of taking the child always farther and deeper into the awareness of reality, an object whose frontiers are always expanding as the child slowly proceeds in the contemplation of it. We believe that the Gospel offers us such an object" (Cavalletti, 140).

[20] Maria Montessori, *Peace and Education* (Adyar, Madras, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1943) 7.

[21] D. Vidulich "Montessori program aims at peace in a world of violence," *National Catholic Reporter* 33:1 (1997) 28.

[22] Maria Montessori, *Peace and Education*, 16.

[23] Montessori, 27.

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crucial. Cheryl Duckworth explains, "While these qualities [confidence and independence] may not be immediately associated with peace education, I would concur with the theory of Paulo Freire, among other peace educators, that independence and confidence are both crucial for helping students develop the ability to think critically and act with moral courage to work for social change, an essential outcome of peace education... In this light, the Montessori method of allowing students to question and explore becomes particularly essential."[24] By fostering within the child an encounter with God, free to ask questions and rest in the security of God's love, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd lays a foundation, not for immediately for a multitude of biblical knowledge, but for the demeanor of peace and love given pride of place in the Gospels.

In order to offer an effective peace education within a religious curriculum for a young child, it is therefore crucial that the dignity and the personhood of the child take first place. The child must be considered within his or her developmental plane, not as an object to be taught, but as a person who is forming him or herself based upon what is presented in his or her environment each and every day. As a religious person, the child's relationship with a God who loves and cares for him or her must be given pride of place.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a program aimed at cultivating wonder and excitement in the youngest child as he or she experiences God. Selected Bible stories are presented (explicitly not "taught"), with the goal of giving each child the space to creatively interact with God, through the materials, and to ponder God's presence in their lives. By encouraging children to ask their own questions and come to their own realizations about God and their spirituality, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd moves beyond moral education that directly instructs in particular values, to develop in children the capacity for what Paulo Freire calls "moral courage"[25]—the ability to critically assess and respond to a situation from one's own being in contrast to acting according to a pre-defined moral compass.

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Catholic Schooling for Tomorrow's Adult Laity:
Projecting the Status Quo or Planning for Change?

Abstract

North American Catholicism currently faces two trends that will likely influence its future. First is the widespread disagreement among Catholics on issues of ordination and sexual morality (Bibby 2009; Greeley 2004), and second is the numerical decline and aging of clergy and religious (CARA 2013). Importantly, these trends exist within the post-Vatican II context where theoretical questions have arisen concerning lay participation in Church governance (Nilson 2000). The salient issue for Catholic schools is how, if at all, they might respond to these phenomena as part of their mission to educate Catholic students for participation in the current and future Church. This study uses interview data from students in a diocesan Catholic high school to illustrate how, in theory and practice, the address of these issues presents a choice between practices that reflect aims to teach descriptively about a Church that is not changing, or prescriptively about one that is.

Introduction

How do the Catholic students in a Catholic school experience that institution preparing them as the lay participants in today's and tomorrow's Church? While Catholic schools provide the service of education to all, including non-Catholics and non-Christians, its Catholic students are ostensibly distinct insofar as the school aims to promote their participation in the Church. Although Church documents state that parents are the primary educators of their children (Vatican Council II 1996a, no.3), the Catholic school is unique for being the public institutional intersection of several families' religious views. In this sense the Catholic school assumes some responsibility for the education of the future's lay adults.

In today's North American Catholic Church two major trends appear to be salient for the laity's experience of its future. First, there is widespread disagreement among Catholics regarding Church teachings on the ordination of women and sexual ethics (Bibby 2009, Greeley 2004). This trend signifies the fact that, whether these teachings change or remain constant, for many Catholics ecclesial participation involves some measure of coordinating disagreement with belonging. Second, the number of clergy and religious is declining, and those who remain are, on average, aging (CARA 2013). The implications are that the accessibility of sacraments and nature of worship may change if parishes cannot be suitably staffed. These trends also occur

alongside the theoretical tensions concerning the laity's participation in Church governance in the aftermath of Vatican II. In particular, theologian Jon Nilson proposes that the current structure that presumes juridical-administrative franchise to descend from sacramental power, and not competence, is problematic in its own right, and moreover only reinforces the laity in a position of dependence, rather than complementarity (2000, 405-6). So in an age where the laity is divided on certain matters, the clergy is in decline, and the Church's understanding of lay participation is not theoretically without trouble, the question for Catholic schools remains how, if at all, they are responding to this situation.

This paper draws from an interview study with 16 Catholic students to show that their diocesan high school adopts a posture that provides them with a solid general perspective on their role as lay persons in the Church. In this regard students are fluent with the concepts like religious freedom and as well conceive of lay persons as recipients and distributors of tradition. As these subjects are drawn from the explicit content and methods that students encounter, it seems safe to conclude that their school focuses on preparing students for a Church that will not experience much change.

Past these general topics, however, when it concerns the discussion of controversial Catholic issues, the declining priesthood, and the role of lay persons in the Church, student perspectives illustrate how the school devotes much less to the particularistic claims about how students, and the laity generally, should respond publicly to these phenomena. The data illustrate the presence of much diversity among students in this regard, ranging from those who would admit married and female clergy, to those who find that the school is not emphasizing enough a bold presentation of doctrine in its current form. Preparation for lay roles in this school thus eschews students' particularistic responses to the future Church's concerns, and focuses more on decontextualized, although not unimportant, approaches to educating for lay participation.

Methods

This argument is based in literature with interview data used to illustrate the existence of its claims in practice. It focuses on adolescents because they are at the existential stage that coordinates the institutional and relational aspects of Church (Fowler 1981). As they spend a major part of their day in a Catholic school, it follows that their experiences there significantly influence how they frame this task. All 16 participants self-identify as Catholics and attend a private Canadian Catholic diocesan high school. They represent grades VIII through XII, and include 8 women and 8 men. All participants were recruited with the assistance of the school, and, with parental permission, volunteered for a 60-90 minute semi-structured interview with me.

There are two possible limitations with this method. First, it may have attracted only participants who are already highly engaged with the institutional Church and/or their own personal practice. Hence it may not be representative of all Catholic students within that school, or across all Catholic schools. Second, although students bring their own views to the school that reflect values in their homes and parishes, the results may also be narrowed by the effect of one teacher or a group of teachers in the school. This second limitation may be mitigated,

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however, by my observation that students tended to refer generally to the school rather than individual teachers when discussing the pedagogical treatment of controversial issues.

Theoretical Framework

My analysis differentiates between, on the one hand, what might be an emphasis on students' opinions of what the Church should be, and on the other hand general concepts like religious freedom or the fact that lay persons hand along tradition, all in their neutral sense. To illustrate the practical difference between these aims in the education of lay persons, consider Gerard Mannion's concern about "problems like "the chronic shortage of priests, disagreements about how to disagree, competing ways of being Church, and episcopal inadequacies in addressing scandals of abuse and secrecy, financial impropriety, and accountability" (2007, 196) as a framework that emphasizes ecclesial transformation in a particular way. While abstract concepts are important in their own right, to seriously convert Mannion's views into educational aims would quickly challenge any claim that a Catholic school should emphasize decontextualized conceptual neutrality. Specifically, he prescribes the necessity of learning from ecclesial experiments that "[broaden] ecclesial horizons, casting light on systemic problems that the church faces across the globe," and the necessity to "avoid choosing non-controversial ideas and practices, and leaving aside the challenging aspects of transformed church structures and active political engagement" (2007, 197). For a student to learn about religious freedom or lay participation in a generic sense, therefore, while important, does not cross into this aim. The advantage of sustaining a generic approach, however, may satisfy a prudential hope to avoid conflict in the school and a belief that it should provide students with factual knowledge about their Church, and not stoke uninformed opinion. If this is indeed the status quo in Catholic educational practice, in theory it collides with theologians' observations about the inadequacy of current ecclesiological structures. Anne Hunt notices, for example, that while lay Catholics are increasingly "well-educated—including theologically well-educated" (2014, 13), in the years since Vatican II's recognition that laity are more than simply the remnant of the Church that is not clergy (Lakeland 2003, 13), and can at least cooperate in ecclesial decision-making (Pope 2004, 8), nonetheless "they [continue to] have little influence and involvement in the decision making and governance of the church as such" (Hunt 2014, 14). Current sociological conditions suggest that the future Church may feature more expressions of lay particularity: the implication for Catholic educational theory is thus in how to respond.

Findings

Generic Catholicism: Sustaining the Status Quo

When presenting and discussing controversial issues the school can emphasize aspects of Catholic teaching that can accommodate a wide variety of views while also not substantially challenging the structures of Church authority. In this way it provides crucial learning about concepts within the Church without making any explicit prescriptive statement about how one's stance relative to Church teaching speaks to how one is positioned as a lay person in the Church.

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Participant 6 describes this in terms of how the concept of religious freedom underscores the school's receiving student disagreement with teachings that are controversial among Catholics:

> They will always say what the Church believes and they will try to
> explain why they believe that and if the person is comfortable maybe ask
> them why they believe that and try and get them to understand again like
> what we believe but it is not like they will force it on them.

In the register of personal belief this approach follows Church teaching to protect students from coercion (Vatican Council II 1996, nos. 2 and 4). It also does not push them into a position where they are alienated and unhappy with their experience. But when analyzed in terms of how this emphasis positions the disagreeing student as a lay person, in bare descriptive terms, it simply leaves the student alone in a negative space where it is implied that lay persons in the Church receive, but do not cooperate publicly – at least outside the classroom, in the discourses surrounding controversial issues.

Three participants relate their conceptualization of the laity primarily in terms of participating in and distributing the Catholic tradition as they themselves have received it. Participant 5 describes his role as a necessary contributor to the Church's growth, as lay persons are indispensible to sustaining the Church's tradition:

> Like my role I think would be to help build the Church up. Like the lay
> people are like the foundation of the Church because there is so many
> more than priests or nuns. So I think like kinda like the pillars like the
> corner stones sort of. Kinda just like be there and help it to grow … and
> trying to give what you can … just constant support.

Two other participants suggest that for them the laity's role begins (perhaps) simply with "being there" or "being present." Participant 6 states that the laity's role beings with "just being there. It is good to just be there. The more people the better." Her formulation of *presence* noticeably suggests that it has importance for her as an individual, but that it also extends beyond herself as individuals aggregate into community. One is therefore present for self, God, and others. Participant 9's articulation of the difference between her presence in the worshipping community and the other activities she performs in the Church reveals a similar view of the multiple aspects of *presence*: "I am a participant in the Mass and I am a child of God and things like that. I guess that is my role is just to like, is to be present and be there and to pray and be part of the community as well as the more concrete [things I do]."

Neither Participants 6 nor 9 say anything which suggests that their comments imply only the minimum of one's attendance counts as a sufficient presence in the Church. In fact, one could easily infer from Participant 6's remark that "It is good to just be there" and Participant 9's observation that presence implies her praying and being "part of the community" that they have some clear idea or ideas in mind of how their presence and participation are qualitatively linked. In this way they *are* the Church insofar as they constitute it. For all these participants, however, their expression of the laity's role can be contingently described in terms of an institutional model of Church that regards the laity as the beneficiaries of the grace mediated through the

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clergy (Dulles 2002, 33). In descriptive terms, then, the laity in this model is only active within the boundaries set by the institution, and does not take a role in responding to changes in the Church. To the degree that this conceptualization of the laity sits within these boundaries, these reports sit within a generic understanding of the laity's role within a Church that does not change.

Projecting into the Future: Addressing Controversial Issues

The findings also reveal two contrasting approaches to Catholic religious education and the Church that demonstrate the presence of differing expectations among lay students. The first is Participant 2's view that the laity needs to be better informed about Church teaching on controversial issues. His concern is that a curricular emphasis on content knowledge has been subordinated to an approach that opens the discussion of student opinions. I count this view as "particularistic" because it reflects a unique perspective on the laity's role in responding to controversial issues. To the degree that this perception is accurate, it suggests that a deficiency in "basic" knowledge of Church teachings leads to distortions when discussing controversial issues. He stresses it is essential that young Catholics acquire this knowledge because it provides them with a clear picture of their religious beliefs and culture. Being raised within the structures of a Catholic family, parish, and community – while important – is nonetheless insufficient to achieving this end, because, "A recent convert would probably know more about the faith than I would because they are forced to learn the basics. But here you are brought up in a way that you don't really need to learn the basics." This knowledge is important both for his personal belief and so that he can accurately represent the Church to others:

> [I]n order for me to talk about abortion and issues like euthanasia and issues like
> you know abstinence and things like that, I need to know essentially what the
> Church believes in order to talk about questions like that with people around me.

Noticeably, his conception of "Church" in this statement is predicated upon corporate unity of belief on these questions, and so could easily be synonymous with *magisterium*. And his stance her resonates with Participant 4's comment that more and better education is required for a recovery of ordained and religious populations:

> I think one of the problems as to why we are getting fewer and fewer priests is
> that people are leaving the Church because they are not being taught correctly or
> they are not getting enough information to understand so I guess some of them
> don't realize the importance of it so they just leave the Church. And if there are
> fewer people in the Church then there are less people to be called and realize
> that their calling is to be a priest.

These particular views, however, contrast with Participant 3's own particularity. Her concern with ordination is not *how* it is taught, but *what* is taught. She maintains that the current teaching on ordination diminishes the female role in the Church:

> I think that women need to have an equal chance to become preachers of God or
> something because in God's eye everybody's equal … I think that means that

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boys are equal to girls. I think that means that everybody needs to have an equal chance to do what they want. And if a woman wants to become a priest right now, they can't and I think that they should have that chance to become a priest or a pope or a bishop or come up and do that, because they need to have a say in the world as well.

Her conception of fairness, rooted in this view of equal opportunity, extends from more than her desire to see women perform the same work as the male priesthood, like presiding at Mass, administering sacraments, or overseeing a parish, for instance, and into the larger scope of ecclesial politics, so that women can exercise greater participation and influence to the point where they have a fair opportunity. Such is the theo-ecclesiological basis of her disagreement with Participants 2 and 4. In pedagogical terms the question for curriculum design and for the school is how to position these two contrasting particularistic views of the laity: one which would intensify the normative focus on Church teaching and discount the entry of student opinion, and another which, if given a voice, would look for more ways to become involved in the reform of the Church. It is apparent from the sample that neither of these orientations prevail in the school and that it has found some (tacit) agreement in a generic middle ground which coordinates Church teaching and the sharing of personal opinion within a conception of laity that listens to and receives its direction from the hierarchy.

Conclusion

If one of the school's distinguishing marks is its position of coordinating the particularities of multiple students and families in its community, these juxtaposed views raise questions about what role the school has in responding to the larger reality of the Church. My analysis here does not evaluate the responses adopted at the participants' school, but only demonstrates an instance in practice where a Catholic school must choose, explicitly or implicitly, what to do. Emphasizing general educational aims and so leaving the concerns about controversy, declining priests and religious, and the theological ambiguities of lay participation outside the school has some prudential advantages in terms of its focusing on legitimate religious learning that does not arouse strong feelings of difference that might alienate some students and families from the school. If a school were to, for example, follow any particularistic view to its educational end, it would do so at the potential cost of alienating those who felt that their concerns were left unaddressed – possibly diminishing their feeling of welcome in the Church. One might offer an attempt at compromise, say, where curriculum following both of these particularistic interests were given something of an equal share or emphasis, although this idea quickly unravels when one notices that it does not fully satisfy Participant 2's desire for greater rigor that admits less personal opinion. The data also reveals that the school does not perceive a false binary choice between competing particularities, and has recognized that a reasonable solution simply involves bypassing or suspending particularities in favour of emphasizing some generic theological aspects of being a lay person. Thus no particularistic viewpoint is totally satisfied, but neither is it completely alienated. The questions in theory remain for another study to consider: Is this compromise the only or best choice available: does it merely trade one false binary for another, and what might be the limitations in this apparent choice between generic and particularistic pedagogical approaches?

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Deconstructing Eschatological Violence against Ecology: Planting Imageries of Ecological Justice through Religious Education of the Green Apocalypse

Abstract:

This paper explores the relation between ecology and eschatology focusing on how religious education can construct what Catherine Keller calls "the green apocalypse." This paper first investigates the discontinuity between ecology and eschatology, and then attempts to reconstruct the Christian theology of "ecological eschatology." In doing so, I develop an imagery of "settling accounts" (Matthew 25) as an effective pedagogical tool to teach Christian ecological eschatology. I argue in this paper that the purpose of teaching ecological eschatology is to help Christian believers realize their ethical responsibility to protect, preserve, and restore our ecological system in an *anticipation* of the full realization of ecological justice in God's eschaton.

I.

One of the charges brought against Christianity regarding the worldwide ecological crisis is its "otherworldly" eschatology.[1] If the earth is inevitably coming to an end, there is no need or responsibility for us to develop any programs or practices of sustainable use of natural resources. The neo-fundamentalist imagination of rapture out of this world renders it even more futile and useless for us to care for our natural environment. The hope for an *afterlife* has effectively diminished our focus on *life itself* at least in Christian world, and as Catherine Keller notes, "the disregard of creation and environment does indeed seem to be endemic to the culture that has called itself Christian."[2] The purpose of this paper is to address the following questions. "Can there be a greening of Christian eschatology?"[3] Is it possible for us to construct a new ecological eschatology? If yes, how is it biblically and theologically possible? How could Christian religious education facilitate the unlearning of the mundane eschatology as well as the learning of a new ecological eschatology? In this paper, I attempt to answer these questions by focusing on two key fronts: theological examination of different versions of eschatology and pedagogical endeavor to deconstruct eschatological violence against ecology.

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[1] Perhaps the most famous charge against Christianity is presented by Lynn White, Jr.'s 1967 article "The Historic Roots of our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155: 1203-7. In this article, White develops an argument that Christianity is blamed for environmental degradation because its anthropocentric message (humans have dominion over creation) has somehow shaped and promoted an "instrumentalist" view of nature.

[2] Catherine Keller, "Eschatology, Ecology, and a Green Ecumenacy," *Ecotheology* 2 (1997): 84-99, 87-88.

[3] Ibid., 92.

II.

Eschatology has been traditionally understood as the study of the "last things" (or "end-time") and the doctrine that issues from such study.[4] According to Peter C. Phan, in the history of Christian theology, there has been a struggle between two basic metaphors in addressing the Christian account of the last things: the metaphor of "ascent" and the metaphor of "migration to a good land."[5] He calls the former "the spiritual motif," the latter "the ecological motif." The spiritual motif is characterized by its total severance of the relation between God and humanity on the one hand and nature on the other, whereas the ecological motif emphasizes the connection and thus humanity's dwelling in history and rootedness in the earth.[6] There are many different versions of eschatology modelled after the spiritual motif, and they are commonly known as "otherworldly" eschatology. Origen is one of the earliest Christian thinkers who promote the otherworldly eschatology. According to Phan, Origen's otherworldly eschatology is marked by his dualistic worldview. "The material world was not intended by God in his original creative plan; it was subsequently made as the place into which souls are consigned as a punishment for their pre-temporal fall . . . In the end-time the world will not share in eternal beatitude and will presumably fall back into nothingness."[7]

The neo-fundamentalist Christian imageries of a total annihilation of this wicked world are largely in this line of Origen's dualistic theological vision. At the center of these types of eschatology lies a skewed perspective which encourages us to live in orientation toward a spiritualized heavenly home while discouraging us to turn away from this world. Unfortunately, this view has promoted an attitude of indifference toward nature in many believers. If the material world is inevitably coming to an end, there is no need for us to protect and conserve our natural environment and natural resources. This becomes an important reason why the otherworldly eschatology is not just a matter of theological stance on the final status of the material world; it is even more an ethical issue in that it is deeply related to the shaping our ethical attitude toward our natural environment. In this respect, Francis Bridger's following argument seems convincing: "The rise of a Christian ecological ethic based on eschatology must be set within an understanding of the overall relationship between eschatology and ethics."[8] We may find a more ecologically friendly version of eschatology in different theological works.

Differing from Origen, for instance, other early Church Fathers such as Irenaeus and Augustine developed a different theological view on the matters of the end-time. Irenaeus, for example, upholds a contrasting view rejecting Origen's Gnostic dualistic notion. He writes, "neither the substance nor the matter of the creation will be annihilated . . . but the form of this world passes away, that is, in those things in which transgression was committed."[9] In a similar vein, Augustine also emphasizes eschatological transformation of the physical world without attempting to spiritualize human resurrected bodies. According to Phan, Augustine rather "insists

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[4] Keith Innes, "Towards an Ecological Eschatology: Continuity and Discontinuity," *Evangelical Quarterly* 81.2 (2009): 126-44; 126.

[5] Peter C. Phan, "Eschatology and Ecology: The Environment in the End-Times," *Dialogue & Alliance* 9.2 (Fall/Winter, 1995): 99-115, 103.

[6] Ibid., 100-101.

[7] Ibid., 106.

[8] Francis Bridger, "Ecology and Eschatology: A Neglected Dimension," *Tyndale Bulletin* 41.2 (1990): 290-301, 294.

[9] Cited in Peter C. Phan, "Eschatology and Ecology: The Environment in the End-Times," 107.

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strongly on the identity between the earthly body and the risen one, the latter retaining all its organs, even those which have no functions in eternal life, such as the sex organs, and acquiring a great beauty."[10] From a vantage point of ecological justice, we may discover a much stronger ethical relevance and significance in Irenaeus's and Augustine's theological accounts of the last things. According to these views, nature is no longer recognized to have only instrumental value for humanity's anthropocentric purpose; instead, it has now intrinsic value, and we become aware of our ethical responsibility to protect and preserve our natural environment and natural resources.

According to Timothy Hessel-Robinson, eschatology bas been renewed as one of the "defining" themes of twentieth-century Christian theology.[11] Even though the otherworldly eschatological vision, represented by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins' *Left Behind* series or Hollywood style apocalyptic movies, has been widely popular, there has been also a significant theological engagement to develop an ecological eschatology. For instance, Jürgen Moltmann lays a theological ground to develop a new ecological eschatology in light of his theology of hope. Concurring with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Moltmann strongly opposes the dualistic otherworldly eschatology by calling it "religious escapism." He writes, "Christ doesn't lead people in the afterworld of religious escapism, flight from the world, but he gives them back to the Earth as its faithful people."[12] Moltmann makes it clear that Christian theology of hope is deeply earthbound rather than transcendent. According to him, Christian hope leads human beings to the Kingdom of God that comes to Earth, rather than leading them away from Earth to Heaven.[13] He summarizes his earthbound eschatology as follows: "The 'life of the world to come,' as the Nicene creed says, is the life at the new earth. I believe in the 'resurrection of the flesh,' not only of the human body but also the life of the whole groaning creation (Rom 8:19 ff). Why? God Creator remains faithful to God's creation even as the God redeemer. God 'does not forsake the works of his hands.' God does not give anything up as lost, he does not destroy anything God has made, for God is God."[14]

Biblical scholars such as Douglas J. Moo ratify Moltmann's theological positioning on ecological eschatology. According to Moo, "Romans 8:19-22, along with Col 1:20, is the NT text most often cited in literature on biblical environmentalism,"[15] and when Paul wrote this passage in Romans, he was referring to various prophetic expectations, especially those verses in Isaiah 24-27. Paul's dependence on Isaiah's prophecy in Romans 8 is important because it suggests that "his conviction about the physical restoration of the entire world is to some extent derived from the prophetic hope for the restoration of Israel to her land—a restoration that in these chapters, and in a manner typical of Isaiah's prophecy, ultimately encompasses the whole world (esp. 24:21-23; 27;6,13)."[16] Echoing Isaiah's prophetic hope for the restoration of Israel to

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[10] Ibid., 108.

[11] Timothy Hellel-Robinson, "Nurturing Hope in the Face of Ecotastrophy: Advent, Eschatology, and the Future of Creation," *Liturgical Ministry* 19 (Winter 2010): 9-20, 12.

[12] Jürgen Moltmann, "The Resurrection of Christ and the New Earth,"*Communio Viatorum*, 49.2 (2007): 141-149, 148.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., 149.

[15] Douglas J. Moo, "Nature in the New Creation: New Testament Eschatology and the Environment," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 49.3 (Sept. 2006): 449-88, 459.

[16] Ibid., 463.

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her land, Paul's hope for the liberation of creation expressed in Romans 8 clearly implies that "the destiny of the natural world is not *destruction* but *transformation*."[17]

In a similar vein, N.T. Wright and George O. Folarin also point out that creation and environment are within the scope of God's eschatological vision of transformation. For instance, Wright writes, "Paul's expectation was more specific: 'the life of the coming age' (an expanded translation of *zoe aionios*) was to be enjoyed, not in 'heaven' as opposed to 'earth,' but in the renewed, redeemed creation that has itself shared the Exodus-experience of the people of God."[18] According to Wright, it is important to note that when Paul talks of the work of Christ, he uses explicit 'new covenant' language to do it, because according to regular prophetic Jewish literature, the result of the renewal of the covenant is the renewal of creation. In this respect, thus, "When God does for his people what he intends to do for them, the whole cosmos, the whole creation will be renewed as well."[19] Concurring with Wright, Folarin emphasizes that what Paul is saying in Romans 8 is that "God wants the creation transformed and set free from destructive force."[20] Folarin summarizes the theological implication of the biblical eschatology of Romans 8 as follows: "It is the will of God to totally restore the environment to its original state of perfection, fruitfulness and friendliness, and that the empowerment of the Holy Spirit has equipped the redeemed to better protect the creation and the environment in line with God's concern that the creation itself is worthy of being transformed and liberated."[21] Briefly though, we have seen above how it is theologically as well as biblically possible to reconstruct a new ecological eschatology by reviewing some of key theological sources and biblical texts. Our next question is, then, how could Christian religious education facilitate the learning of this new ecological eschatology as well as the unlearning of mundane eschatology?

III.

I attempt to answer this question by providing a concrete pedagogical approach as well as a clear projected outcome. As for the concrete pedagogical approach, I first would like to focus on the pedagogical significance of *religious imageries*. Religious imageries are powerful in that most people understand the religious concepts more easily through the medium of various imageries, rather than through the doctrinal ideas or pure concepts. For example, we understand the creation stories of Gen. 1-3 through the imageries of the Garden of Eden, rather than through some doctrinal positions on the event. Indeed, imageries are useful and even powerful not because they are necessarily correct, but because they can help us shape our perspective and attitude to the subject matter. In Christian history, various imageries have been employed to help believers understand the concept of eschatology. James Murray, for instance, discusses the imagery of the "urban earthquake" as a "Johannine innovation" in first century apocalyptic. Murray writes, "[T]he apocalyptic urban earthquake demonstrates the victory of God over Caesar, for the cities which once were saved from seismic destruction by imperial benefaction, now experience a

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[17] Ibid. Italics is mine.
[18] N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, (London: SPCK, 2003), 59. Cited in R.J. Berry, "Eden & Ecology: Evolution & Eschatology," *Science & Christian Belief*, 19.1:15-35, 33.
[19] Ibid.
[20] George O. Folarin, "From Primordial Curse to Eschatological Restoration: Ecological Challenges from Genesis 3:14-20 and Romans 8:18-25," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32.1 (2011): 1-7, 5.
[21] Ibid.

divine judgment against which Caesar can offer no help."[22] Other imageries such as the "rejection imagery" in the synoptic parables (Matthew 13) are discussed by other scholars[23] as a way to understand the concept of eschatology.

In this paper, I attempt to reimage the Christian doctrine of eschatology by proposing a new imagery: the "settling accounts" imagery, which originates in Matthew 25:14-30. I put forward this imagery because it can effectively address the aspect of our ecological responsibility and justice, which has been largely underdeveloped in the previous eschatological educations. Matthew 25:14-30 is often picked up by preachers in order to address the Christian attitude to work in the context of investments; but, this passage has also a strong eschatological theme in that while the returning of the master may be interpreted as the coming of Christ (v. 19), the different amounts of entrusted capital (v. 15) can be analogically viewed as a different set of ecological capital. In this perspective, the behaviors of the three servants may denote how differently they fulfill their ecological responsibilities with their entrusted ecological capitals. The final scene of the master's act of settling accounts with the servants (20-30) is then the realization of the ultimate ecological justice.

The imagery of "settling accounts" emphasizes that all Christian believers are held accountable for their different amounts of ecological responsibility depending on their social, political, and economic positions as well as geographical and environmental locations. The "settling accounts" imagery renders it possible to interconnect between the ecological eschatology (discussed above) and the ethics of ecological responsibility and justice. How is this interconnection, then, possible? In my view, there are two types of interconnecting between eschatology and ethics: 1) the type of bringing the future events to the here and now; 2) the type of leading the here and now to the anticipated future. While the former is "future oriented," the latter "future directed." These two types are not opposite; but there is a meaningful difference between the two. The first type may be represented by Moltmann's *Theology of Hope*. For him, the promise of future is central, and in the promises, "the hidden future already announces itself and exerts its influence on the present through the hope it awakens."[24] Ethics is then conceived in light of "What the future is bringing . . . through the Christ event of the raising of the one who was crucified."[25] Moltmann's theology of hope is liable to a criticism, though, because, as Lucy Bregman argues, he links eschatology so exclusively to hope. She writes, "By linking eschatology so exclusively to 'hope,' and then in turn linking both to movements within history for social justice and liberation, the problem of death—individual and collective—is repressed."[26]

It is not my intention to reject Moltmann's theology of hope, but I argue there is an alternative way of interconnecting between eschatology and ethics. The key motif of this alternative type is "anticipation" rather than "hope." Going back to the imagery of "settling

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[22] James S. Murray, "The Urban Earthquake Imagery and Divine Judgment in John's Apocalypse," *Novum Testamentum*, XLVII. 2, 142-162, 142.

[23] See, Karl E. Pagenkemper, "Rejection Imagery in the Synoptic Parables," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153 (July-September 1996): 308-31.

[24] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Theology of Hope*, (New York: Harper &Row, 1965), 18.

[25] Ibid., 229.

[26] Lucy Bregman, "The Death of Everyone: Robert Lifton, Christian Theology and Apocalyptic Imagery," *Horizons* 13.2 (1986): 306-320, 317.

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accounts," what seems to be evident is that their actions are all deeply shaped and affected by their *present* "anticipation" of the master's returning, rather than their "hope" for his *future* comeback. Differing from the "future oriented" hope, anticipation is basically "future directed," and it can actually form and reform our actions. Edmund Husserl's phenomenological account of anticipation is helpful because he clarifies the "future-directed" nature of anticipation. He writes, "In every action we know the goal in advance in the form an anticipation that is 'empty,' in the sense of vague, and lacking its proper 'filling-in,' which will come with fulfillment. Nevertheless we strive toward such a goal and seek by our action to bring it step by step to concrete realization."[27] We can say then that the motif of anticipation enables us to strive toward the goal of the eschatological vision of the full realization of ecological justice.

As one can imagine, Christians' present struggle toward the full realization of ecological justice in an anticipation of God's eschaton become their ethical responsibility. Indeed, the future directed motif of anticipation helps us have a better understanding of our ethical responsibility and ecological justice. To be more specific, in an anticipation of the full realization of the ecological justice, Christians are to organize their actions to bring it to concrete realization step by step. In this respect, we can say that the development of ecological eschatology and the enhancement of ecological justice are in fact deeply interconnected. As Timothy Hellel-Robinson notes, "earth justice and justice for humans are interconnected."[28] It is important for us to see that the fulfilment of one's ethical responsibility to strive toward the full realization of ecological justice in his/her eschatological anticipation should be expressed not only through our efforts to preserve and restore our ecological system, but also through our resistance against ecological violence and environmental destruction. In this respect, the religious education of green apocalypse should ultimately aim at fostering not only the eschatological anticipation, but also ethical commitment to ecological justice.

IV.

Above, we have seen that the way we understand Christian theology of the last things (eschatology) has essentially to do with the formation of our ethical responsibility and the realization of ecological justice. We have rejected the otherworldly type of eschatology because it obscures Christians' ecological responsibility to promote ecological justice. Instead, we have adopted a new ecological eschatology, which emphasizes not only the continuity of this world and the world coming, but also our ethical responsibility to sustain our nature and its ecosystem in an anticipation of the full realization of ecological justice. We have also seen that the imagery of "settling accounts" (Matthew 25) is an effective pedagogical tool to teach Christian ecological eschatology to believers. Christians are to take up their ethical responsibility to protect, preserve, and restore our ecological system in an anticipation of the full realization of ecological justice. The role of religious education of ecological eschatology is then focused on fostering Christians' ethical responsibility to strive after the full realization of ecological justice beyond one's own familiar perimeters.

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[27] Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen* 4th ed. (Halle: Niemeyer, 1928), 149. Cited in Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, trans. George Walsh & Frederick Lehnert (Evanston, IL: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1997), 58.

[28] Timothy Hellel-Robinson, "Nurturing Hope in the Face of Ecotastrophy: Advent, Eschatology, and the Future of Creation," *Liturgical Ministry* 19 (Winter 2010): 9-20, 13.

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Challenges from Genesis 3:14-20 and Romans 8:18-25," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32.1 (2011):
1-7.

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141-149, 148.

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(July-September 1996): 308-31.

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Lehnert (Evanston, IL: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1997).

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PLURATIONALISM AND THE UNMAKING OF VIOLENCE

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Abstract

Fundamentalist religious education (RE) inculcates generalizable emotionalism and willful irrationalism that may predispose trainees to impulsivity and unquestioning prejudice, evoking violence. A universal solution to unmaking violence hence may be to propagate in RE the social meme of public commitment to more consistently use everyday reasoning regardless of our worldviews -- also known as pluralistic rationalism (plurationalism). Historical, neuroscience and sociological, and community-practices research confirms this methodological practice reduces emotive attacks and prejudice underlying violence.

INTRODUCTION

Fundamentalist religious education (RE) inculcates two psychologically compatible but socially incompatible ways of thinking -- willful irrationalism (expressed as denialism and dogmatism) and emotionalism. Using these subjective filters in conceptualizing one's perceptions and cognitions has been postulated to predispose one to impulsivity and unquestioning prejudice, which can trigger violence. RE scholars have consequently called for teaching *cross-cultural study*[1], *critical reflection* (including skill in hermeneutic interpretation of one's doctrine and worldview)[2], and *cross-religious dialogue*, including about the symbols and parables exemplifying our desired thoughts and behaviors.[3] Moderators of extant interfaith groups have

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[1] Moore DL. (2014). Overcoming religious illiteracy: Expanding the boundaries of religious education. *Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association*, 109:4, 379-389, DOI: 10.1080/00344087.2014.924765

[2] Vermeer P. (2010). Religious education and socialization. *Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association*, 105:1, 103-116, DOI: 10.1080/00344080903472774

[3] Manning PR. (2014). Engaging our symbols, sharing our world: Forming young people around symbols for participation in the public sphere. *Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association*, 109:4, 440-454, DOI: 10.1080/00344087.2014.924784

similarly touted "*facilitated civil conversation*" that moves away from debate and toward asking questions, to increase our intellectual and emotional understanding of others, if not to alter our disparate worldviews.[4]

But what do these different RE tactics all have in *common*, and how can their commonalities best be propagated *memetically* -- spontaneously from the ground up, rather than imposed from the top down? The common properties of these RE tactics are the same as their memetic ones -- their fundamental, practicable goal: That we *accept reality*, *question assumptions,* and *master emotions*; and that as a moral tenet we employ these three axiomatic practices consistently, in both our private thoughts and our social lives.[5] These RE tactics remind us to simply practice living on earth as a *sapient* human being, whether we are religious or not.

These axiomatic practices to more sapiently comport one's existence are the three methodological embodiments of Rationalism, the "use of Reason as our chief *source*, *test*, and *conduit* of knowledge."[6] But since the 19th-century, the term "rationalism" has become conflated with exclusionary worldviews such as atheism, secular humanism or objectivism, in an attempt to sever the lifeline between Reason and Faith. Yet rationalism is a practice, not a worldview -- both the religious and non-religious have an equal right to use Reason to more capably evaluate and live "in the world we've *all* inherited, whether from God *or* Darwin."[7]

Hence a universal solution to "unmaking violence" may be to propagate in RE the social meme of public commitment to more consistently use everyday reasoning regardless of our worldviews -- the social practice also known as "pluralistic rationalism" (or "plurationalism.")[8]

HYPOTHESES & EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

I will examine *historical*, *neuroscience*, *sociological*, and *community-practices* research to vet the argument that antipodal roles are played by fundamentalism and plurationalism in RE -- a propensity of fundamentalist RE to create violence, and a unique efficacy of plurationalism in RE to unmake violence:

Hypothesis 1. *Fundamentalist RE, independent of context or situation, universally creates violence, by undercutting rational thoughts, actions and forms of communication.*

Hypothesis 2. *Plurationalism's practice and its memetic spread in both RE and the public square are capable of lessening practitioners' prior propensity toward denialism, dogmatism and emotionalism, as precursors of religious and generalized violence.*

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[4] Cowles R. (2014). Hearing another, not as "the other." Minneapolis *Star Tribune* (Commentary), August 12, www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/270989361.html

[5] The Circle of Reason. (2014). Tenets. The Circle of Reason, www.circleofreason.org

[6] The Circle of Reason. (2014). What is Pluralistic Rationalism? (About Us & FAQ). The Circle of Reason, www.circleofreason.org

[7] The Circle of Reason. (2014). What are plurationalist practices? (About Us & FAQ). The Circle of Reason, www.circleofreason.org

[8] Harvard Pluralism Project. (2012). Promising Practice: Finding Common Ground Through Difference. Harvard Pluralism Project, www.pluralism.org/interfaith/twin_cities/practices/secular_bible_study

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RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Historical Evidence of the Need for Plurationalism in Fundamentalist RE

The antipode of plurationalism among theists is, in almost every respect, a religious cult -- the epitome of fundamentalist RE. Do cults' and fundamentalist religious ideologies' diminishment of their followers' independent reasoning permit and incite violence (and submission to violence)? And do those fundamentalists who successfully moderate their more extreme RE teachings do so through the plurationalistic practice of reasoning cogitation?

Jim Jones' People's Temple and Do's & Ti's Heaven's Gate community both practiced mass suicide, on the shared but largely unquestioned assumption that after death their souls would either journey to paradise (People's Temple) or to a paradisical extraterrestrial planet on a ship following the tail of comet Hale-Bopp (Heaven's Gate).[9] These assumptions were indeed questioned by some members of each community during their final days (including in the last audio-recordings to posterity by Heaven's Gate members), but were neither acted on nor debated.

The River Road Fellowship reached a different end, due to emergent independent thinking by its most-victimized members.[10] Dubbed in newscasts the "Maiden Cult," the Fellowship was an isolationist Christian fundamentalist community of tight biblical proscriptions upon work and lifestyle. Its charismatic pastor, Victor Barnard (now a fugitive wanted on 59 counts of alleged child sexual molestation, who fled for rural Washington with the bulk of his still-loyal fellowship), convinced its families to donate 10 of their female children to serve him as "virginal maidens" at his isolated "Shepherd's Camp," where for the next decade he sexually abused them (in some cases with the explicit blessing of their parents, who believed the pastor was an anointed prophet of God). A few "maidens" and Fellowship members publicly abandoned the cult after questioning their doctrine's and pastor's contradictions, as highlighted in a *Star Tribune* editorial (by this author):

> *"As pluralistic rationalists, we feel both sympathy and admiration for the escape of Lindsay Tornambe and another woman from the religious cult that trapped their families...But also as plurationalists -- both theists and atheists who commit to more consistently use everyday reasoning, regardless of our worldviews -- we know their escape wasn't simply from a religion, but from something so insidious it traps many of us. That evil was identified by Lindsay herself: 'We didn't really have a chance to think for ourselves.'"[11]*

Fundamentalist Christian U.S. politicians recently enjoined Ugandan Christian ministers and politicians to legislate religious dogma-based laws that criminalized, with life imprisonment, the

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[9] Wessinger C. (2000). *How the Millennium Comes Violently: From Jonestown to Heaven's Gate*, Seven Bridges Press, ISBN 978-1-889119-24-3.

[10] Louwage P, Ross J, Walsh P. (2014). "Maidens" called to God but then lived through hell. Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, Apr 16, www.startribune.com/local/255322011.html?page=all&prepage=4&c=y#continue

[11] Burton F. (2014). The real power is in independent thinking. Minneapolis *Star Tribune* (Commentary), Apr 17, www.startribune.com/opinion/letters/255571071.html?page=all&prepage=1&c=y#continue

practice or support of consensual adult homosexual behavior.[12] This religious fundamentalist movement triggered murders, tortures, and unjustified incarcerations of members of LGBT Ugandans and their human-rights supporters.[13] Uganda's opprobrium against its LGBT members was fueled by fundamentalist disinformation (e.g., homosexuals are pedophiles; homosexuality is the only way to spread AIDS; sexual preference is a choice and thus evil rebelliousness against God) and by the Ugandan President's, religious leaders' and public's unwillingness to question or vet those false assumptions.

Religious violence by ISIS ("Islamic State of Iraq and Syria") isn't being sustained contextually or situationally, but universally, by fundamentalist RE suppressing reasoned thought and communication: Youths are being recruited to fight for "the real deal" -- a "Great Islamic Caliphate" -- by radicalized local fundamentalist recruiters[14] and professional, emotionally-compelling YouTube ads, which have attracted young ISIS and al-Shabab fighters from many nations and cultures, including converted Christians[15]; women[16]; parents and their adolescent children[17]; and in the U.S. Midwest not just Somali-Americans[18] but Caucasian-Americans and African-Americans[19]. ISIS has also transformed childhood education in its conquered cities. According to an ISIS defector, the *first* step of ISIS' fundamentalist schooling is *depriving children of the tool of independent reasoning*:

"Philosophy is prohibited. They canceled it as a kind of blasphemy." [20]

ISIS' religious violence and misogyny isn't imbedded in the Qur'an, which preaches non-aggression to peaceful unbelievers and supports using one's intellect and mind ('aql) and one's

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[12] Muhumuza R. (2014). Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, signs controversial anti-gay bill. *The Huffington Post* and *Associated Press*, Feb 24, www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/24/ugandan-president-signs-anti-gay-bill_n_4845722.html

[13] Brydum S. (2014). LGBT Ugandans Attacked, Killed as Tabloid Lists "Top 200 Homos." *The Advocate*, Feb 25, www.advocate.com/world/2014/02/25/lgbt-ugandans-attacked-tabloid-lists-top-200-homos

[14] McEnroe P, Shah A. (2014). Federal grand jury targets local terrorist pipeline. Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, September 6, www.startribune.com/local/minneapolis/274233901.html?page=all&prepage=1&c=y#continue

[15] Schmidt MS, Schmitt E. (2014). Terrorists lure Americans to Syria. *New York Times*, Aug 28, www.startribune.com/world/273129771.html

[16] McEnroe P, Shah A. (2014). St. Paul woman recruited to aid terrorists in Syria, relative says. Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, Sept 4, www.startribune.com/local/stpaul/273870181.html?page=all&prepage=1&c=y#continue

[17] Withnall A. (2014). Iraq crisis: Australian national fighting for ISIS in Syria tweets photograph of son holding up severed head and writes, "That's my boy." *The Independent*, Aug 11, www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/iraq-crisis-australian-national-fighting-for-isis-in-syria-tweets-photograph-of-son-holding-up-severed-head-and-writes-thats-my-boy-9660624.html

[18] McEnroe P, Shah A. (2014). Second Minnesota man may have been killed fighting with terror group in Syria. Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, Aug 29, www.startribune.com/local/west/273128841.html?page=all&prepage=1&c=y#continue

[19] Forlili A. (2014). High School buddies followed similar path into militant Islam -- and met the same end. Associated Press, Aug 29, www.startribune.com/local/273095721.html?page=all&prepage=1&c=y#continue

[20] Damon A, Yan H. (2014). Inside the mind of an ISIS fighter. *CNN*, Sept 4, www.cnn.com/2014/09/04/world/meast/isis-inside-look/index.html?hpt=hp_c2

critical reflection, or "inner struggle" (ijtihad) to counterbalance religious obedience (taqlid) and calls to defensive holy war (jihad).

The horrors being committed by the nominal Muslims of ISIS differ in context from those committed by the nominal Christians of the Ugandan anti-gay mobs, River Road Fellowship, and People's Temple, or earlier nominal Christians of the Ku Klux Klan, the Nazi German Christian party, or U.S. abortion-clinic and gay nightclub bombers; as well as from the horrors committed by the nominal New Age Spiritualists of Heaven's Gate, or the nominal Atheists of the communist parties of Russia, China, Cambodia and North Korea. But all these horrors are in their essential aspect *one* horror: The horror of *universal*ly teaching our fellow sapients to blind themselves to the light of reality, to bow beneath the weight of falsehoods, and to bare their stampeding emotions. This one horror is the absolute evil of *willful irrationalism* -- "anti-sapience."

Neuroscience Evidence of the Utility of Plurationalist Practices in Unmaking Violence

Neurobiology studies show that correlates of plurationalism (reasoning with emotional integration) counter correlates of predisposition to violence: Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) during tasks to control impulsivity shows less facile volitional prefrontal cortex activity (executive reasoning) and less cortical-limbic communication (integration of reasoning with emotional perceptions) in subjects diagnosed with antisocial or borderline personality disorders, and criminal psychopaths.[21, 22] Among normal subjects, one's judgment of what is *moral* becomes impaired while transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) suppresses one's temporoparietal cortex, the cortical region that provides one's understanding of other peoples' mental and emotional states.[23] Modern dialogue formats, as detailed later, now encourage discussants to practice integrating their volitional reasoning with their emotions and empathetic "mirror-neuron" brain circuits, by listening and questioning instead of emotively arguing.[24, 25, 26]

Sociological Evidence of the Utility of Plurationalist Practices in Unmaking Violence

Some plurationalist methods are *institutionally* endorsed by a few modern religions or secular communities. The Baha'i Faith emphasizes acceptance but rational vetting of all prior religions'

[21] Völlm B, Richardson P, Stirling J, Elliott R, Dolan M, Chaudhry I, Del Ben C, McKie S, Anderson I, Deakin B. (2004). Neurobiological substrates of antisocial and borderline personality disorder: preliminary results of a functional fMRI study. *Crim Behav Ment Health*. 14(1):39-54.

[22] Contreras-Rodríguez O, Pujol J, Batalla I, Harrison BJ, Soriano-Mas C, Deus J, López-Solà M, Macià D, Pera V, Hernández-Ribas R, Pifarré J, Menchón JM, Cardoner N. (2014). Functional Connectivity Bias in the Prefrontal Cortex of Psychopaths. *Biol Psychiatry*. Mar 14. pii: S0006-3223(14)00160-7. doi: 10.1016/j.biopsych.2014.03.007.

[23] Young L, Camprodon JA, Hauser M, Pascual-Leone A, Saxe R. (2010). Disruption of the right temporoparietal junction with transcranial magnetic stimulation reduces the role of beliefs in moral judgments. *Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci. USA* 107 (15), Apr 13, 6753–6758.

[24] Public Conversations Project. (2011). The Enemy Within. *Dialogue: A Virtual Workshop, Section 1, Neuroscience and Conflict*, © 2011, Public Conversations Project, Publishers, Watertown, Massachusetts, www.publicconversations.org/video-series/virtualworkshop/sec1

[25] Strickler J. (2009). Secular Bible Study casts wide net. Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, Feb 20, www.startribune.com/lifestyle/39916382.html?refer=y

[26] Harvard Pluralism Project (2012), op. cit.

holy books and prophets ("sequential revelation"). Its followers consequently reject jihad and other forms of religious violence. Among secular groups, declared Atheists tout neuroscience- and/or reason- based ethics as their guide to personal moral behavior (although some atheists still engage in non-plurationalistic, emotive *ad hominem* communication tactics against theists).

Hence one way to determine whether plurationalist practices have historically unmade violence would be to compare the percentage of Baha'i and declared Atheists among convicted violent criminals, relative to their percentage within the general U.S. population. The U.S. Bureau of Federal Prisons, which houses mostly violent criminals (murderers, rapists and thieves), performed such a study for all religious adherents as well as declared atheists:

Declared Atheists represent 0.7% to 1.6% of the U.S. general population but only 0.07% of the U.S. federal *prison* population -- hence Atheists are 10- to 20-fold *under*-represented among violent criminals.[27] Similarly, 0.05% of the U.S. population but only 0.0005% of the U.S. federal prison population (only one inmate) is Baha'i -- a *100-fold* under-representation among violent criminals. In contrast, Catholics, Protestants, Christians, Jews, and Buddhists are roughly *proportionately* represented between U.S. and criminal populations, while Muslims are 7- to 10- fold *over-represented* in the violent criminal population compared to their U.S. population.[28] These data imply that the Baha'i Faith's and Atheism's *uniquely institutionalized* plurationalist practices inhibit generalized criminal violence, *apart* from their ethical injunctions shared with other religions; and that other religions' practicing, to variable extremes, of fundamentalist irrationalism creates generalized criminal violence, in *spite* of their ethical injunctions.

Community-Practices Evidence of the Utility of Plurationalism in Unmaking Violence

The 1989-founded Public Conversations Project (PCP) is a family therapy-inspired "deliberate dialogue" program that substitutes emotive debate with first-person testimony and empathetic listening.[29, 30] The Circle of Reason (COR), founded in 2000, is the first international society for plurationalism, whose diverse theists, atheists, conservatives and liberals believe in public commitment to more consistently use everyday reasoning regardless of their different worldviews.[31] These organizations respectively sponsor "facilitated civil conversations" and "transbelief reasoning dialogues" that share some plurationalist practices, but not all.[32, 33] Their

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[27] Mehta H. (2013). What Percentage of Prisoners are Atheists? It's a Lot Smaller Than We Ever Imagined. *The Friendly Atheist (Patheos)*, July 16, www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2013/07/16/what-percentage-of-prisoners-are-atheists-its-a-lot-smaller-than-we-ever-imagined/?webSyncID=aec7a405-09b4-9c19-a2d0-bc7597a113b9&sessionGUID=ec6680cb-74a2-2e3b-7200-60692a7388e1#disqus_thread

[28] Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. (2013). Statistics on religion in America, Report 1: Religious affiliation. *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey*, Pew Research Religion & Public Life Project, www.religions.pewforum.org/reports

[29] Chasin R, Herzig M, Roth S, Chasin L, Stains Jr R. (1996). From diatribe to dialogue on divisive public issues: Approaches from family therapy. *Mediation Quarterly* 13(4), 323-344.

[30] Herzig M, Chasin L. (2006). Fostering Dialogue Across Divides: A Nuts and Bolts Guide from the Public Conversations Project. © 2011, Public Conversations Project, Publishers, Watertown, Massachusetts

[31] The Circle of Reason. (2014). About The Circle of Reason: The First Society for Pluralistic (Methodological) Rationalism. (About Us & FAQ). The Circle of Reason, www.circleofreason.org

[32] Herzig M, Chasin L. (2006), op. cit.

[33] Harvard Pluralism Project (2012), op. cit.

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similarities? Civility (no *ad hominem* fallacies); non-leading questions (to encourage understanding the facts, assumptions and emotions undergirding others' views); no "*You people*" statements (*strawman* fallacies); and relationship building from increased understanding of the other's worldview. Their differences? Plurationalism's encouraging debate (as long as it's reasoning, i.e., employs facts, questions and vets assumptions, and refrains from insults); and plurationalism's *memetic* potential to propagate as an individual and social practice beyond its use solely for invited dialogues.[34, 35] For example, the influence of PCP-like dialogues is often limited to the dialogue events themselves, a potential shortcoming in scope noted by Chakraverti:

> *"Conflict resolution practitioners repeatedly find that when people return from an encounter in which they have shifted their way of relating to their adversaries and to the issues that lie between them and their adversaries, they are faced with the choice to be 'different,' with all the challenges that brings, or to revert to the dominant and stuck conflict understanding of their group. This indicates one of the limitations of dialogue, even when dialogue groups are large. Rarely can dialogue reach large proportions of a population."* [36]

In contrast, plurationalism is not itself a top-down dialogue practice like PCP, but a bottom-up public meme -- with the consequent potential for broader scope and influence (although perhaps only over multiple generations), through individuals spontaneously adopting plurationalism's practices to improve their personal lives and local society.

Regardless of their sponsors' long-term potential for broader social influence, both the diverse attendees of COR's transbelief reasoning dialogues and the invitees of PCP dialogues -- including two descendant programs, the Minnesota Council of Churches' adult "Respectful Conversations Project" (RCP) and the Minneapolis YMCA's teen "Racial Justice Facilitation" (RJF) program -- show reduced verbal aggression, predisposing to unmaking violence:

In Boston, Massachusetts, PCP detected within its participants less irrationalism in the form of less emotive verbal antagonism, a feeder of social violence. As recounted by its attendees and by PCP Facilitator Trainer and Harvard and St. Paul, Minnesota, Luther Seminary Professor Mary Hess, long-term participants in a pro-life *vs.* pro-choice PCP dialogue became both "strengthened in their own worldview and *more respectful* of others' worldviews [italics mine]." [37]

Rich Cowles, a Minneapolis, Minnesota, facilitator of the recent PCP-inspired adult RCP and teen RJF dialogue groups, noted that by supplanting debate with "focusing on *how* people came to their views, and *how* they became part of participants' value systems," and by striving "not to

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[34] The Circle of Reason. (2014). How did Plurationalism get started? (About Us & FAQ). The Circle of Reason, www.circleofreason.org

[35] Cirkel van Rede. (2014). Eindig Maar Onbegrensd ["Finite But Unlimited"]. www.sites.google.com/a/vandendriest.com/maarten/cirkel-van-rede

[36] Chakraverti M. (2008). Deliberate Dialogue. Handbook on Building Cultures of Peace, Joseph de Revera, editor, Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, pp. 259-272 [quote p. 268].

[37] Fowler A, Gamble NN, Hogan FX, Kogut M, McComish, M, Thorp B. (2001). Boston Globe Report on Public Conversations Project: Talking with the enemy. *Boston Globe*, Jan 28, http://pubpages.unh.edu/~jds/BostonGlobe.htm

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change minds but to develop mutual understanding on issues through *human* connection and *civil* conversation," many participants expressed "chagrin that they've laughed at 'jokes' [about others] they *no longer* find funny [italics mine]."[38]

Two COR-sponsored transbelief reasoning dialogues recommended by the Harvard Pluralism Project as a "Promising Practice" are the Twin Cities' 2009-founded "theist + atheist" Secular Bible Study (SBS) and the 2010-founded plurationalist "nature walk & transbelief reasoning dialogue" group First Minneapolis Circle of Reason (FMCOR).[39] After their theist and atheist members participated long-term with the St. Paul, Minnesota, Council of Churches' interfaith dialogue group, the Council of Churches became the first in the country to change its dialogue group's name from "interfaith" to "interbelief," to become more inclusive to secular humanists and atheists with no religious faith but philosophical or ethical beliefs.[40, 41]

These Twin Cities community-practice outcomes reveal that "family therapy" rules-based or more overtly plurationalist practices-based public reasoning dialogues reduce participants' propensity toward prejudice, anger, aggressive and emotive verbal antagonism, and exclusionary tribalism -- precursors of religious and generalized violence.

How do the public reasoning dialogues of PCP, RCP, RJF, and COR-sponsored SBS and FMCOR succeed in unmaking these precursors of violence? Because, COR contends, they are public exemplars of the one *moral* tenet of plurationalism -- that as sapient beings we should all consistently strive to be objective, open-minded and equable, rather than subjective, close-minded and emotional, regardless of our disparate worldviews:

> "*Reason is not a tribe; it is the only way to enlighten all tribes.*
> *Reason is not a speech; it must be the air that carries all speech.*
> *Reason is not for an elite; it must be for all.*" [42]

Perhaps of broader importance to our species' and Earth's ultimate survival, plurationalism as a social initiative not only encourages us to practice reasoning in our *external* dialogues, but to practice reasoning in our *internal* dialogues. To commit ourselves to accept, in *every* aspect of our thoughts and lives, that:

> "*What is, is; what is not, is not; and what is or is not, is paramount.*" [43]

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[38] Cowles R. (2014), op. cit.

[39] Harvard Pluralism Project (2012), op. cit.

[40] Mehta, H. (2014). Minnesota Interfaith Group Changes Its Name to Become More Inclusive of Atheists. *The Friendly Atheist (Patheos)*, July 9, www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2014/07/09/minnesota-interfaith-group-changes-its-name-to-become-more-inclusive-of-atheists/

[41] Shaw, B (2014). St. Paul's atheists are coming out of the closet. St. Paul *Pioneer Press*, Aug 4, www.twincities.com/localnews/ci_26275289/minnesotas-atheists-are-coming-out-closet

[42] The Circle of Reason. (2014). Where does Plurationalism fit in the pantheon of philosophies? (About Us & FAQ). The Circle of Reason, www.circleofreason.org

[43] The Circle of Reason. (2014). What are plurationalist practices? (About Us & FAQ), op. cit.

Pluriationalism's *universality*, as an organic blossoming of reason, can wend beyond the well-tended gardens of invited dialogue. Pluriationalism can seed itself.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Qualitative historical data confirm fundamentalist (religious or secular) education, in proportion to its level of irrationalism, creates religious and generalized violence.

Whither then RE? To the extent that fundamentalist RE discourages using facts, questioning assumptions, and mastering emotionalism, it licenses ideological, verbal and physical usurpation of others' free reasoning will -- all forms of aggressive violence. Major tactics of fundamentalist RE (as well as of secular "anti-theism") include emotive domination, including *ad hominem* invective, which inculcates prejudice and impulsiveness justifying violence. (The cherished Golden Rule conveniently no longer applies to those we call subhuman.) Pluriationalists consider an insult to be fundamentally immoral, because it undercuts listeners' rationality; and suggest we start questioning our moral comfort with our verbal jabs. Also, pluriationalists question the presumption that religious violence is sustained contextually and situationally. Rather, they maintain it is sustained *universally*, by too-ideological RE -- that RE must face the conundrum that it seeks to extinguish flames it itself kindles by encouraging its trainees to accept ideological worldviews without encouraging (or often even tolerating) their trainees' rational human impulse to question and vet them. Nor is this conundrum limited to RE, but applies more broadly -- to intolerance of religion by secular anti-theism, and to economic or political extremism. The war between rationality and irrationality belongs not to religion, or to any ideology. It belongs to each human being.

Quantitative neurological and sociological research and community-practice sources confirm that pluriationalist practices unmake precursors of violence.

Whither then pluriationalism? Distinct from secular humanism, Rand's objectivism, or atheism, which conflate "rationalism" with naturalist or anti-theist worldviews, pluriationalism (also called "methodological rationalism")[44] considers rationalism a practice, not a worldview -- thus practicable both for the non-religious *and* the religious. This social movement, as a meme, simply encourages "reality's acceptance, assumption's denial, and emotion's mastery" (i.e., the practice of reasoning thinking, behavior and communication in all people, irrespective of their worldviews); and simply *discourages* denials of reality, unquestioned assumptions (potentially false realities), and emotive arguments or actions (dissociation from reality), including discouraging *ad hominem* insults as immoral.[45] Hence pluriationalism predicts that religious (and secular) parents and educators, by espousing the simple practice of reasoning regardless of what worldviews they also teach, will reduce and someday eliminate the societal consequences of welcoming denialism, dogmatism, and emotionalism to the parlor rooms of civil society. By removing our religious sanction for irrationalism, we will help eliminate its inevitable sequelae

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[44] The Circle of Reason. (2014). About The Circle of Reason: The First Society for Pluralistic (Methodological) Rationalism. (About Us & FAQ), op. cit.

[45] The Circle of Reason. (2014). Where does Pluriationalism fit in the pantheon of philosophies? (About Us & FAQ), op. cit.

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of war, corruption, discrimination, despoilment and poverty, attaining humanity's next major step in moral evolution: To *deserve* the name *Homo sapiens*, "Wise Humans."

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Building a Non-Violent Organization

Abstract: Leadership literature asks how to build healthy organizations; conflict literature asks how to make global peace. Both ask how people are shaped by leaders, but connections between organizational and peace theories are minimal, as are connections between peace in local and global contexts. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the role of leaders in building non-violent organizations and the role of organizations in cultivating habits of peace, thereby preparing people as peacemakers. The education of leaders and leaders' education of organization have power to foster peace in the larger world.

As a dean of a theological school, I am aware of mighty challenges facing leaders as they seek to inspire vision and build robust communities of leaders in their own contexts. Every day I encounter the overwhelming responsibilities carried by leaders, the vital mission of the institutions in their care, the complexity of structural and cultural systems, the challenges of changing institutional structures and ethos, and the complex human personalities in living tender communities. These very challenges point to the value of the emerging field of leadership studies. They also point implicitly to the potential for a fruitful dialogue between the research on leadership and that on peacemaking in situations of conflict. Both fields of study are generating new insight on leadership in complicated human situations in which the quality of human lives and the goals of human communities are at stake. This is an educational task that has potential to shape a culture of just peace.

Leadership literature engages questions of building healthy organizations, while conflict literature addresses global peacebuilding. Both are concerned with how human persons are shaped by leadership practices, but connections between organizational and peace-building theories have not been fully made; nor have connections between just peace in local and global contexts. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the role of leadership in building non-violent organizations and the role of organizations in cultivating habits of peace, thereby preparing people as peacebuilders. The education of leaders and leaders' education of organizations have power to foster peace and justice in the larger world.

This study will draw upon case studies in dialogue with literature on leadership, organizational behavior, and peacemaking. The brief cases are not from my own leadership setting, but are merged from two or more cases in diverse settings, thus offering a case for reflection without identifying markers. The dialogue between these cases and the literature promises to yield a multi-faceted perspective on the potential of human communities to embody and build peace. It also promises an approach to leadership and peacemaking in organizations that cultivates what Pierre Bourdieu described as *habitus*. The hope is that the dialogue and the

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leadership toward which it points will contribute to a life-bearing theology, the *habitus* of honoring the dignity of all persons, lessons in peacemaking, and vision for the future.

Four major themes in the peacemaking literature are important to this study: (1) dignity; (2) empathetic listening, or the mutual hearing of issues and hurts; (3) building relationships; and (4) imagination. The connections among these practices need further investigation, as do the connections between these practices in small communities, complex organizations, and larger societies. Alongside the peacemaking literature is an increasingly robust literature on leadership and organizations, focusing on: (1) the dynamics of change; (2) the importance of centered, ethical leadership; (3) the importance of leadership practices attuned to contextual realities; and (4) the potential of leaders to effect change. This literature suggests a dynamic interplay among the practices of leaders, the dynamic movements of communities, and the complexities of cultural-political contexts. As leaders take account of these many influences on themselves and their communities, they have potential also to take account of the relationship between the communities they lead and the larger world.

What is needed is a merging of theories to shed light on the values that are essential for peacemaking in organizations and larger societies, the qualities of leaders to cultivate those values, and the potential of peace-rich organizations to foster the human qualities, skills, will, and hope to foster peacemaking in other contexts. These are the goals of this study. The initial dialogue leads to four major themes, or practices for building a non-violent organization: honoring dignity, cultivating empathy, building a community of leaders, and leading toward vision.

Honoring Dignity

Case Study in Educational Institution: A group of students is angry about an event in their community, and they express their anger with force. They direct it first toward the person who is seemingly most to blame but, receiving no satisfying response from that person, they turn their anger to the community in general and to the leader who can supposedly intervene and solve the problem. That person is faced with alternatives: to step in and seek to resolve the practical issues at stake, to create a conversation among the several parties, to speak individually with all of the players, to insist that the person responsible for the particular concern find a way to resolve it, or to do some combination of all four. In this case, the leader decides to do all four, beginning with individual meetings, working with the leader who has responsibility in the areas of concern, convening a sharing session with all of the parties, and resolving some of the issues through direct administrative action. The leader also deliberates with others the deeper issues beneath the immediate one and then seeks ways that the community can continue to name and address those larger issues over the coming months.

Having been in multiple situations that resemble the one in this case, I am aware of how much time is involved in any of the actions taken here, much less in taking all of the actions in turn. I am also aware that those actions do not produce guaranteed results, and they certainly do not produce quick changes that satisfy all concerned parties. While the leader might exert major effort to respect the dignity of all involved in such struggles, some of the leader's actions may be interpreted as aggressive, apathetic, micro-managing, and/or overly passive. The leader is then faced with accusations or silences, which tempt the leader to harbor blame or anger against one

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or more of the parties or to create emotional distance from the fray, thinking of all parties in negative terms in order to preserve one's own sanity. All of these responses are natural and any one of them can be appropriate in a given situation; however, the leader may be sorely tempted to ignore the dignity of all the players in the midst of a chaotic situation, especially when the leader is giving his or her best to facilitate resolution, to cultivate a non-violent culture of dignity, and to do so without losing a sense of centeredness and balance.

The case itself and my initial reflections on it reveal both the urgency and the challenge for leaders to honor the dignity of all parties. The challenge is to create a culture in which all persons honor the dignity of all others in the community, and to foster one's own valuing of others' dignity. In times of cultural or institutional change, this is particularly difficult; however, the literature on dignity and on leadership and change are both helpful. Donna Hicks (2011) has identified dignity as having a central role in resolving conflict, an idea that arose from her work in international peacemaking as she "came to understand the traumatic and emotional experiences of war as assaults on people's dignity" (xii). She came also to recognize that peace negotiations can often be undermined by "emotional riptides" arising from the emotional undercurrents of political issues. She concluded that, at such times, the strong human reactions that undermine negotiations are "the result of primal insults to dignity" (xiii). Her hope for such situations, and for all relationships near and far, is to make dignity "a way of life" (xv). In Hicks' view, and also in that of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (2011, ix-x), dignity is a practice that stands at the center of peacemaking and it can be learned.

One needs to ask of the case study how can dignity be magnified and taught as the several players seek to resolve an anger-filled stalemate. In this case, all of the leader's responses were appropriate on the surface. Listening to the individuals is attending to their voices and honoring their dignity as people with views and responses that matter. Encouraging them to listen to one another is encouraging them to honor one another's dignity. Encouraging the responsible leader to resolve the issues is honoring that person's dignity as a leader, but can also be seen as a lack of trust in the other leader's past and present actions. Stepping in to resolve some of the immediate issues oneself is respecting the dignity of the people bringing the complaints (honoring their complaints), but might be interpreted as undermining the other leader. The case, though short, reveals how important and how challenging it is to embody dignity within a situation of conflict.

These challenges are informed by the leadership literature, particularly studies on the dynamics of change. To honor dignity in the real world, a leader needs to comprehend the dynamics of cultural change and the resistances to change within individuals, communities, and larger societies. This work has been addressed freshly by Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey (2009), who emphasize the inner work that is needed for individuals and communities, recognizing that this inner work can reshape one's leadership. What is needed is "your ability to develop yourself, your people, and your teams" (11). Kegan and Lahey recognize that change is difficult, requiring a great deal of support. Because external pressures are mixed with internal ones, they advocate self-reflection as "a central aspect of any organizational work" (78), an emphasis found also in the peacemaking literature (Gopin 2012, 6-7). Kegan and Lahey recognize that both individuals and organizations "are in the grip of competing commitments and constraining big assumptions," which add to tensions and resistances to change (87). This is why change requires a holistic approach. In popular language, they urge people to lead from the gut

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(internal motivations), head and heart (thinking and feeling simultaneously), and hands (engaging mindset and behavior simultaneously) (210-222). A single narrow approach will not be sufficient.

Returning to the case study, the leader did take a holistic approach, which is to be applauded. The brief case does not give details about the responses and counter-responses of the various parties, nor about the internal struggles and self-reflection of the leaders. In such a case, dignity will only be honored if all of these factors are taken into account. The actual cases upon which the brief composite was based became messier before they became more settled. Dignity was honored in many of the actions taken, and it was undermined in others, pointing to the ongoing need to build a culture of dignity that will never be fully realized but can potentially contribute to a healthier organization and also to the dignity-bearing of a people. Viewed from the theological perspective of a theistic tradition, this kind of action is a way to honor the goodness of God's creation; it is a way of wonder and appreciation for God and the gifts of God. In the words of Abraham Joshua Heschel, "There are three ways in which we may relate ourselves to the world – we may exploit it, we may enjoy it, we may accept it in awe" (1986, ///). Honoring dignity is the pathway of awe.

Cultivating Empathy

Case Study of Interpersonal Conflict: An educational leader is faced with two staff members who are angry with one another. Each has reason to be angry, but the depth of their anger is quickly escalating and each is gradually involving others. The leader in this case speaks with each person individually, and with others who have been brought into the conflict. The leader asks the key players if they are willing to have a conversation together, which they are both willing to do. The purpose is to give space for each person to express the anger and the reasons for the anger, and to give space for each to hear the other. The hope is that the mutual listening will lead to awareness (even acceptance) of what cannot be changed and to some ideas regarding how to proceed in the future. The three people do not have high expectations for this meeting, but they are all open. The meeting begins, the conversation is intense, each person speaks directly and clearly, each person listens intently, and the small dialogue surprises all three by moving the conflict to a new place of honesty, acceptance, and even respect. None of the problems can be undone, nor can the attending hurts, but the angry parties agree to move on to a new place in their work together.

This composite case reads like a success story, albeit one that was risk-filled. Not every case of this sort will have positive endings and the two cases from which this composite case was drawn both had residues of tension. Even so, the change in each case was dramatic and surprising to the participants, pointing to the wisdom in Marc Gopin's belief that real movement toward peace comes when people listen carefully to one another's stories and the pain therein. That includes both personal and community stories (2004, 83-126, 177-198; 2012). Such thinking makes its way into blog posts on peacemaking as well. Cat Zavis (2014) writes about recent outbursts of violence in Israel and Palestine:

> It is not enough to know … that people are doing things that are causing great harm and suffering and that this needs to stop, you need to understand how to contribute to a healthy discussion of what are strategically sound and smart ways to respond – ways that

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will lead to empathy, compassion, understanding and ultimately peace rather than feed the fears of either or both sides.

Such a perspective represents a minority voice in the popular media, but it is a common theme among people engaged in peacemaking and reconciliation – people who recognize that empathy has potential for renewing human relationships even in the most difficult situations.

What is needed is empathic listening and then the exercise of centered, ethical leadership that is informed by that listening. The empathy generated may be of a deep personal nature, or it may be more generalized, as in the case of understanding-based empathy, which arises from close listening to others' ideologies to grasp why others hold a particular view strongly. Wesley Wildman (2012) makes a strong case for the potential of understanding-based empathy to enable people to disagree respectfully and peacefully even when they disagree strongly.

Empathic listening is not a panacea to problems, and it is difficult to do. It requires a retraining of one's natural reflexes, a suspension of one's own need to assert one's position over all others, and a willingness to walk into messy situations without guaranteed outcomes. The three people in the composite case expressed this kind of willingness, simply by being willing to talk individually and then to come into a common space in which the aggrieved parties could talk with one another in the presence of a leader. This takes courage; it is an approach to human relations that requires people to "build the bridge as you walk on it" (Quinn 1996, 83-90). It does not allow escape from the messiness of a situation, but engages people in the chaos and messiness of reality and asks them to look carefully at the whole situation and its interconnected parts. In fact, it begins with a recognition that human beings cannot control chaos; rather, "we are being called to encounter life as it is: uncontrollable, unpredictable, messy, surprising, erratic" (Wheatley 2005, 125).

The case itself reveals this messiness and lack of predictability, but it also reveals the potential that comes from such a situation for empathetic listening and restoration of relationships. This calls forth the inner strength of everyone involved – the courage to face into the messiness and to listen to another human being, or many others, even when the messages are difficult to hear. The same leadership theorists who encourage such listening recognize the complex systems and structures in which the listening takes place and the depths of trust and integrity that are needed for leading others in empathic listening. Some of these theorists emphasize the importance of the inner spiritual journey in leadership (Palmer 2000, 73-94), and others emphasize the potential of such leadership to reshape the larger social world toward gentleness, decency, and bravery (Wheatley 2012, 123). Wheatley argues that brave leaders know how bad the social systems are, and they continue their work anyway: "They know how systems of power work and they try to discern wise actions … they strive to keep their hearts open and not to succumb to anger and aggression" (7).

At no time in history has the need for centered, ethical leadership been more important (Fluker 2009; Barsh and LaVoie 2014). One of the cornerstones of such leadership is empathic listening, which contributes to a full-bodied exercise of leadership, embracing what Fluker describes as the interactive dimensions of character, civility, and community. To build a non-violent organization, and to shape a society of just peace, people need to embody and teach empathic listening in every aspect of their community life.

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Building a Community of Leaders

The last pair of themes is deeply rooted in religious traditions, which are often shaped in moments of rapid change themselves. Rather than begin with contemporary cases, I will refer instead to narratives in Jewish and Christian scriptures. Consider, for example, the Israelites wandering in the wilderness forty years after they crossed the Red Sea, leaving their slave masters in Egypt and moving into a new world that required them to reshape all of their life patterns. Ronald Heifetz (2014) argues that Moses' leadership of the people out of Egypt was the easy role he had to play as a leader (Exodus 3-15). The people were convinced they wanted to be free and God provided immediate, visible support to Moses. The difficult leadership challenge came after the people had crossed into freedom and faced the long, slow tasks of creating a new culture (Exodus 16-40; Leviticus; Numbers). One sees similarly difficult leadership issues in the early Christian church of Acts, as revealed in the tensions between gentiles and Jews and the clashes regarding eating taboos and factional loyalties. Similarly the church of Corinth was torn as people tried to discern how to live the ways of Jesus in a society that was socially and economically stratified and divided by diverse perspectives and values (I Corinthians). These glimpses into biblical narratives reveal the challenge of building a community of leaders and inspiring a vision.

Building a community of leaders is hard work but it begins with listening. Even the biblical narratives paint pictures in which listening permeated critical moments of community-building. God listened – to the cries of the people and to Moses' pleas. Moses listened to God's call from a burning bush and many other calls thereafter. The early church leaders of Acts and Corinth listened to the turmoil of their communities and to God's revelations. They also listened to one another, both in conflict and agreement. The relationship between listening and community building can be pursued more thoroughly in another work, but the concern for community is compelling in these narratives, both when it is present and when it is absent or torn asunder. The hope for community continually asserts itself as a value.

The value of community-building is also a major theme in the leadership literature. Two of the primary features of adaptive leadership, according to Ronald Heifetz (2009), is giving the work back to the people and generating more leadership. Studies of effective leaders corroborate this community-building theme. In one recent study, Jessi Micah Steward interviewed 20 women leaders in public universities of the Pacific Northwest U.S. She discovered that these women shared certain primary leadership practices: "collaboration, communication, and information sharing." She also discovered that the women described their approach to conflict in terms of community building: they "addressed conflict to build relationships, establish trust, and inspire a shared vision" (2009, xii). Building on these accents is the strengths-based model of Tom Rath and Barry Conchie (2008), who draw upon Gallup studies of executive teams, discovering that "the most cohesive and successful teams possessed broader groupings of strengths" (22). Their work illustrates the virtue of team leadership to join diverse people with diverse strengths. In sum, the leadership literature is clear in accenting the importance of spreading leadership (Heifetz) and building teams (Rath and Conchie).

The peacemaking literature adds another accent, often highlighting the urgent need for building interpersonal and communal relationships. Drawing upon biographical accounts and case studies, this research reveals that building friendships invigorates efforts to bring equality,

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nonviolent social change, and reconciliation to warring peoples (Gopin 2012). The picture that emerges from peace and leadership studies, taken together, is one that accents the potency of relationships, including friendships, in peacemaking and the potency of collaboration, responsibility-sharing, and team-building for effective leadership. With this in mind, the effort to build a non-violent organization will require the development of trust-worthy relationships in which people engage with one another on matters of importance to their community, including those matters that evoke conflict. It will also require the development and implementation of shared goals, which leads to the final theme.

Leading toward Vision

In the three biblical narratives cited above, the larger vision is clear. The Israelites responded to the promise of freedom and a new life with God in a new land, but it required many small and large steps along the way. The early Christians sought to be "followers of the Way," but that required them to construct new patterns of living. This summation is overly simple, but it points to a critical element in peace studies – imagination – and another in leadership studies – purpose. Imagination and purpose have potential to inspire a new culture and to guide the practices that can shape it.

I made a case in an earlier study (2006) that imagination is essential to peacemaking, and this is a major theme of John Paul Lederach (2005). Lederach draws upon case studies and historical analysis, noting critical moments when imagination marked the turning point in peace building. Similarly, leadership theorists have accented purpose. One of the early leaders of the contemporary field , James MacGregor Burns (1978, 19), described the "crucial variable" in leadership as purpose: "I define leadership as leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations – the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations – *of both leaders and followers*." One finds similar accents among other leadership theorists, who focus on leaders' ability to effect change in the direction of a communal, social, or organizational vision (Hagiya 2013; Sandberg 2013; Coutts 2013; and Livermore 2010). Building a non-violent organization is a particular vision that does indeed require imagination and a strong common vision if its counter-cultural potential is to become a reality.

Vision is not a simple phenomenon, however. Another strong theme in the leadership literature is the distinction between visionary leadership and maintenance. One of the earliest theorists to emphasize this distinction was Burns, who distinguished between transactional and transforming leadership: (1) transactional leadership involves the exchange of valued things (e.g., goods, votes, or hospitality) to satisfy existing desires or needs, and (2) transforming leadership engages leaders with others to raise motivation and morality, thus mobilizing and inspiring people toward goals (Burns 1978, 19-20). More recent theorists argue that Burns did not take sufficient account of contexts, so the entire idea of transformative leadership has been nuanced in more recent years. The new literature retains the power of vision as a motivating factor in leadership, but it is seen as more entangled with social realities. One example of this nuancing is Ron Heifetz's appeal to adaptive leadership, as contrasted to technical. Heifetz (2009, 31) emphasizes the need for leaders to meet adaptive challenges, but this requires considerable diagnosis of the social situation, e.g., analysis of the adaptive challenges and envisioning of adaptive responses. He defines leadership as a practice of "tackling tough

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challenges," mobilizing people to make progress on these challenges to contribute to a challenging world.

Such thinking places a high value on vision, but another nuance is needed. Gil Rendle argues that the world is changing and leaders need to be increasingly flexible and imaginative to lead agile and purposeful organizations. He builds upon the work of Charles Handy to describe the difference in terms of convergent and divergent environments. A convergent environment is "one in which the question is the same for everyone and the answer is the same" as well (2011, 1; 2007; Handy 1998). A divergent environment is "one in which the question is the same for everyone but the answers are different" (ibid). Rendle argues that organizations are increasingly dominated by divergent questions and a divergent ethos; they face complex situations that cannot be defined as problems with solutions, but as "conditions of a changed world" (2007, 1).

I suggest that such a world requires a third conceptual alternative beyond convergence and divergence; it requires people to be open to transvergence. Though I invented this word, it can be found in works on art, architecture, digital discovery, and globalization, to name a few. In all of these areas, it is associated with the unexpected, the novel discovery, new forms of integration, breaks with convention, and a transcending vision that holds together radical differences. Leadership that is open to transvergence will be drawn into paradigm shifts that *no one* knows in advance – the unexpected new direction that breaks through and claims the community for the next moments of time. I suggest that building a non-violent organization is itself a transvergent possibility. Even as we honor dignity, cultivate empathy, and build a community of leaders, we lead toward a vision that seems elusive, but may just break through as a transvergent possibility in a form that we cannot now imagine.

What I have offered here is a vision of building a non-violent organization, along with leadership practices that can potentially foster that vision. What remains for the future, even as people engage the vision and the practices, is to discover, invent, and be surprised by the shape of a non-violent organization that fosters a justice-building, peace-making world. Is this possible? I hope so!

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Cultivating Compassionate Living Grounded in a Christian Approach in the Violent World

We live in a world in which violence prevails. The violence happens within ourselves, our families, interpersonal relationships, society, in situations between countries, even religions. Whether the violence is intentional or not, whether it is serious or slight, we are likely to be not only the victims but also the offenders —those who hurt people. This implies that we are very closely related with violence in a violent world. How do we live with the pervasiveness of violence? Should we admit defeat and adjust to the violent structure and vicious circle as victims or criminals? Or, instead, should we resist violence and its structure or circle and work to make the world peaceful and compassionate?

Today, I will explore a spiritual path that will enable us to nurture compassion within our lives as the way to resist violence. Thus, I will define violence and its cause as a spiritual crisis. Moreover, I will provide compassion to overcome violence and its structures, explaining the meaning of compassion and the practice of compassion that is based on Triptycos and CEC. I hope that this article contributes an alternative spiritual way to free ourselves from violence and to cultivate a compassionate life.

Definition, Natures, and Categories of Violence

How can we define violence? Are there standards to measure violence or ways to define violence? Violence can be differently defined according to different views and perspectives. Some define violence as terror and terrorism. Others define violence as war and colonialism. Still others define violence as racism or sexism or classism. However, it is very difficult for us to define violence as a word or form or type. The reason is that "violence is a complex phenomenon and needs to be addressed in a more comprehensive and holistic manner."[1] In other words, violence has various forms and aspects. Moreover, violence can be differently defined depending on how we see it or what views we hold.

Nevertheless, we need to seek the most common and fundamental definition of violence to overcome and remove it from our world. The World Health Organization perceived the seriousness and pervasiveness of violence and published a report ,'World Report on Violence and Health,' about the definitions, forms of, and approaches to violence. In the report, The World Health Organization defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."[2]

Although we have this common definition of violence, it is an undenible fact that violence has various and different aspects. Samual Kobia explains that violence has three faces: personal, interpersonal, and collective.[3] Violence happens in the collective form such as wars

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[1] World Health Organization, "World Report on Violence and Health: Summary," World Health Organization 2002, accessed Sep. 1, 2014, http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en, 3.

[2] World Health Organization, "World Report on Violence and Health: Summary," 4.

[3] Samuel Kobia, "Overcoming Violence: An Ecumenical Christian Task," in *Violence and Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Conversation*, ed. Emmanuel Clapsis (Geneva, Switzerland: Brookline, MA: WCC Publications; Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007), 9.

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and genocide as well as in the interpersonal form like discrimination, oppression, and deprivation, and in personal form like suicide. The World Health Organization also divides violence into three categories with broad perspectives: "self-directed violence; interpersonal violence; and collective violence."[4]

In the nature of violence, the victim can be affected in one of four ways: physically, sexually, psychologically and through negligence or deprivation toward the victim. In this respect, Samual Kobia explains the natures of violence as: "physical, pcychological, sexual or in the guise of negligence and deprivation"[5] viewing violence from the same the perspective as The World Health Organization.[6] In the perspective, Kyriaki Karidoyanes Fitzgerald defines violence as "profound physical and/or sexual abuse," unwanted "physical contacts," and physiological threats such as fear and intimidation in the relationships between those who hold power and the powerless.[7]

These categories that describe the nature of violence are divided into various and specific types. Especially, The World Health Organization has analyzed various types in three broader categories; self-directed, interpersonal, and collective violence. In the self-directed violence, there are suicidal behaviour and self-abuse. Interpersonal violence, can be divided into two divisions: family and intimate partner violence and community violence; this includes child abuse, domestic violence, rape, and sexual abouse. The collective violence is divided into the social, political, and economic forms such as wars, genocide, terrorism, etc.[8]

I am in complete agreement with the perspectives and analyses of violence as articulated by The World Health Organization. But I argue that the definition and perspectives do not include spiritual or religious aspects of violence. It means that the study or report disregards the fundamental and radical causes of violence. In this respect, Ioannis Petrou adds religious to the sub-categories of violence, defining violence as "exploitation and oppression of various kinds — social, financial, political and religious, as well as social exclusion, sexism and the abuse of women, etc."[9] Moreover, Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan emphasizes mental, religious, and spiritual aspects of violence in various forms: psychological, emotional, physical, mental, spiritual, economic, religious, cultural, racial, sexual, verbal, and attitudinal.[10]

Violence as Spiritual Crisis

Why does violence exist in our world? How do the violence pervaside our lives as various forms? The reason is that we are faced with a spiritual crisis. According to Ronald Hecker Cram, "human violence is an expression of spiritual crisis."[11] Violence in personal, interpersonal, and collective relationships is a sign of spiritual crisis. I maintain that violence as spiritual crisis emerges from disconnection with the sacred, including the divine, the Self, and all sentient beings. Disconnection from the sacred causes violence in our world.

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[4] World Health Organization, "World Report on Violence and Health: Summary," 4.

[5] Kobia, "Overcoming Violence: An Ecumenical Christian Task," 9.

[6] World Health Organization, "World Report on Violence and Health: Summary," 5.

[7] Kyriaki Karidoyanes Fitzgerald, "Domestic Violence at Home: Cursory Observations," in *Violence and Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Conversation*, ed. Clapsis Emmanuel (Geneva, Switzerland: Brookline, MA: WCC Publications; Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007), 157.

[8] World Health Organization, "World Report on Violence and Health: Summary," 5.

[9] Fitzgerald, "Domestic Violence at Home: Cursory Observations," 25.

[10] Cheryl A. Kirk-Duggan, *Violence and Theology*, Horizons in Theology (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 2.

[11] Ronald Hecker Cram, *Bullying: A Spiritual Crisis*, 1st ed (St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2003), 17.

Disconnection from the divine brings about "a one-eyed view." This one-eyed view emerges from a way of thinking that is based on fact, reason, and intellect, and it characterizes many people today. A one-eyed view produces a mechanical, scientific, secularized, and commercial or material viewpoint. Sacred realities, moments, and values are negated by those who are engrossed in a one-eyed view. In this respect, they have lost the "wholesight" to see both phenomenological reality based on fact, science, and reason and spiritual and heart-centered reality based on values. [12] Thus, the one-eyed view separates them from God or the divine, causing them to disregard encounters with the divine and spiritual values.

In relation to the Self, the disconnection from the Self means becoming separated from the true Self that is "open, mature, wise, curious, loving, compassionate, and connected."[13] Those, who are disconnected from the true Self, measure the value of a person from a mechanical, secularized, and commercial or material viewpoint, disregarding the humanity and dignity of the Self. Also, in the disconnection from the Self, we have distorted views, judgments, biases, and partialities so that we criticize and judge ourselves without any compassion. Thus, we lose the balanced guidance of the Self and an extreme inner part or parts or hidden inner movements take over our inner worlds. Inner movements include "reactive emotions such as anger, fear, despair, and disgust; internal voices such as self-loathing, perfectionism, blame, or judgment; and behavioral impulses in unawareness."[14]

The more our extreme characteristics are activated, the more we disconnect from the true Self that is our spiritual core. In other words, violence toward self happens as a result of inner movements by which we are separated from our true Self, the sacred within.

Finally, disconnection from all sentient beings results in a dualistic perspective in which all entities are separate and independent. The dualistic view disrupts any idea that we are interconnected and interdependent beings. Thus, dualism causes disconnection between self and others, self and nature, and self and the world, violently disrupting all our relationships, although in reality we are not separate beings but interdependent.[15] The disconnection naturally causes violence such as war, genocide, sexual abuse, racism, and classism.

These disconnections from the sacred including the divine, the Self, and all sentient beings cause us to become fragmented beings who bring about a violent world. Thoughtful awareness of violence and its causes challenges us to explore encounters with the sacred, including God or the divine, the Self, and all sentient beings, for gaining peace, restoration, justice, healing, reconciliation, and hope in our world.

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[12] Parker J. Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), xxiii. Palmer explains that "wholesight" has two types of sight. One type emerges from the mind based on fact and reason. The other sight is grounded in the heart with love. In my use of the word, "wholesight," my perspective is that one sight comes from the mind, as Palmer states, while the other is a spiritual sight.

[13] Jay Earley, *Self-Therapy: A Step-By-Step Guide to Creating Wholeness and Healing Your Inner Child Using IFS, A New, Cutting Edge Psychotherapy* (Minneapolis, MN: Mill City Press, 2009), 7. According to Earley, there are many parts in our inner worlds. They interact with each other under the guidance of a true Self. Also, each part has its own role, belief, feeling, motivation, and memory in its harmonious and compassionate relationship with the many parts. However, when we lose the leadership of the true Self, the extreme parts, like guards seeking to protect us, can take over. See Jay Earley, 16-29.

[14] Frank Rogers Jr., Mark Yaconelli, and Andrew Dreitcer, *Practicing Compassion: Following the Spiritual Path of Jesus* [Claremont School of Theology], forthcoming, 20.

[15] Dalai Lama, *The Power of Compassion: A Collection of Lectures by His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama* (London: Thorsons, 1995), 103.

Compassion to Overcome Disconnection with the Sacred

What makes us to restore disconnected relationship with the sacred, including the divine, the Self, and all sentient beings? What leads us to free and liberate from the violent structures and circles?

I argue that compassion is a way to free people from violence, connect them with the sacred, and bring about their flourishing as they live compassionately. Compassion also helps people become aware of their violent structures or circles or states. The awareness of violence is a first step to free from violence. It cultivates the skills, heart, will, motivation, attitudes, and behaviors needed to overcome violence. Specifically, compassion is a spiritual way to restore connection with the sacred, including the divine, the Self, and others, across the many boundaries that separate us. Restoring connection with the sacred enables people to overcome violence and to experience restoration, healing, reconciliation, and hope in our world.

In terms of the divine or God, compassion enables us to experience the presence of the divine as a compassionate source. God is a sacred and compassionate being. When we are connected with God or the divine, compassion flows within and over us. On the other hand, when we are disconnected from the divine presence, the compassionate core within us gradually disappears or dissipates. Entering the road of compassion is to restore connection with the divine. Thus, compassion helps us to engage in divine union, love, fellowship, and awareness of our compassionate God as the sacred Source.

In relation to the Self, compassion restores connection with the Self as the sacred within so that freedom from suffering and healing might be found. Compassion helps us see what is happening to us in our inner worlds. In particular, it facilitates the process of becoming aware of the inner part or parts that cause inner movements, including thoughts, emotions, desires, impulses, and inner voices, that bring about violence toward self in our lives. Thus, compassion nurtures the Self, as a compassionate essence, into conversing with and caring for the inner part or parts hidden in inner movements and assists it in understanding the parts' sufferings, needs, wants, and fears. In other words, compassion invites us to restore connection with the Self so we may live more compassionately.

In terms of relationships with others, compassion restores connection with others, including loved ones, neutral persons, and difficult persons. Compassion for others emerges from connection with the Self and the divine. In particular, it helps us to recognize the fears, needs, wants, and sufferings of others. Thus, compassion invites us to be aware of the humanity of others as sacred beings and to stand in others' shoes in order to understand their positions, attitudes, and sufferings. In other words, compassion becomes the bridge that is able to restore connection with others, making it possible for us to recognize that we are interdependent beings.

4. The meanings of Compassion

Buddhism defines compassion as the desire that all human beings be free from suffering and achieve happiness. The theoretical rationale for such a definition is that human beings have the right to be happy and to be free from suffering. The practical approach is to recognize that we are not separate beings but interdependent beings in the scheme of existence. This awareness leads us to desire that all human beings be free from suffering and be happy. In order to achieve freedom from suffering and happiness, Buddhism has explored understandings and causes of suffering and practical ways to overcome suffering, such as the meditation of calm abiding from the Dalai Lama, Lojong practices, and Metta practice. In sum, all Buddhist theoretical approaches and practices focus on freeing people from their suffering and helping them achieve

happiness.

In the scientific and social scientific perspectives, compassion is not defined as an idea or a concept. The reason is that compassion can be expressed in diverse dimensions. However, I have inferred four general meanings of compassion from various sources. The first meaning is participating in another's suffering. Paul Gilbert defines compassion as being open, sensitive, and responsive to the suffering of self and others without any defensive or judgmental views.[16] In terms of the second meaning, some scholars, including Lynn Understood, David Graber, Maralynne Mitcham, and Hans-Werner Bierhoff, define compassion as participating in another's feelings.[17] The third definition is authentic connection with another's suffering and emotions.[18] Fourth, compassion is defined as viewpoints and actions that require active participation in the suffering and feelings of another.[19] The ultimate purpose of compassion according to these four meanings—participating in the sufferings and emotions of others, connecting with them, and actively getting involved in others' feelings and sufferings because of one's convictions—is to relieve the suffering of others in the formation of self-compassion. In order words, compassion is a way to free others from their suffering. Consequently, it results in achieving happiness in our lives. Diverse secular fields, such as physiology, psychology, family studies, genetics, and neuroscience, have explored understandings of human beings and how people develop compassion. Many studies have found that the desire to alleviate others' suffering and increase others' happiness begins from compassion for the self. Thus, the studies have explored secure attachment in psychology, genes, caregiving systems, the physiological soothing and contentment system, a new brain and mind, and self-expansion model in the area of cognition. The ultimate goal of these studies is cultivating compassion for the self and others with the aim of freedom from suffering and happiness. In sum, the secular areas focus on understanding human beings themselves from different perspectives.

From a Christian perspective, Triptykos and the CEC aim to free people from suffering and to cultivate their flourishing in an inclusive sense. While Buddhism is much more interested in the causes and awareness of suffering and the secular areas focus on understandings of human beings, Triptykos and the CEC have various approaches for compassion formation. Triptykos centers on the threefold spirituality of loving God, self, and other. In order to free people from suffering and vitalize their lives, compassion is named as a spiritual way to connect one with a compassionate source, restore one into one's original humanity in the image of God, and cultivate compassion toward others. When I compare Triptykos's definition of compassion with Buddhism's and secular fields' definitions, the most distinct difference is the inclusion of

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[16] Gilbert, "Introduction and Outline," 1.

[17] Lynn G. Underwood, "Compassionate Love: A Framework for Research," in *The Science of Compassionate Love: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Beverley Fehr, Susan Sprecher, and Lynn G. Underwood (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 9.David R. Graber and Maralynne D. Mitcham, "Compassionate Clinicians: Exemplary Care in Hospital Settings," in *The Science of Compassionate Love: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Beverley Fehr, Susan Sprecher, and Lynn G. Underwood (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 346.Hans-Werner Bierhoff, "The Psychology of Compassion and Prosocial Behaviour," in *Compassion: Conceptualisations, Research and Use in Psychotherapy*, ed. Paul Gilbert (London: Routledge, 2005), 148.

[18] Sheila Wang, "A Conceptual Framework for Integrating Research Related to the Physiology of Compassion and the Wisdom of Buddhist Teachings," in *Compassion: Conceptualisations, Research and Use in Psychotherapy*, ed. Paul Gilbert (New York: Routledge, 2005), 104. Salena Brody et al., "Compassionate Love for Individuals in Other Social Groups," in *The Science of Compassionate Love: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Beverley Fehr, Susan Sprecher, and Lynn G. Underwood (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 285.

[19] Underwood, "Compassionate Love: A Framework for Research," 4.

connection with a divine or compassionate source. In Triptykos' perspective, connection with the Sacred is the precondition for compassion. Triptykos sees compassion as involving connection with the compassionate source, restoration of our authentic humanity, and bringing about the flourishing of others' lives.

Although the approaches to defining compassion are very diverse among these perspectives, they all include an understanding of compassion as the desire that human beings experience freedom from suffering and achieve happiness or the flourishing of life.

Compassion Practice Based on Triptykos and CEC

The Triptykos School of Compassion and the Center for Engaged Compassion (CEC) at the Claremont School of Theology have developed a curriculum for compassion formation with a Christian approach. The compassion practices will contribute to freeing people from their violent structures and cultivate flourishing in their lives. Thus, in this part, I will offer a brief history of the Triptykos School of Compassion and the CEC. I will also explore core principles, essential components, compassion practices, and the curriculum for compassionate living.

Brief Introduction to the Triptykos School of Compassion and the Center for Engaged Compassion: Dr. Frank Rogers, Dr. Andrew Dreitcer, and Mark Yaconelli founded the Triptykos School of Compassion in 2009. The ultimate purpose of Triptykos, which means "threefold," is to equip people with the skills, will, thoughts, emotions, and desires for compassionate living through diverse practices. At its formation, Triptykos had a basic and core question for developing principles and practices: "How does a person become a radically compassionate person?" After struggling with the question, the founders came up with the idea of a "threefold spirituality" as the radical way of Jesus: to love God, love self, and love others.[20] From this perspective, cultivating a threefold spirituality frees people from their suffering and offers them a way to flourish through compassionate living. Thus, Triptykos has explored practices for compassion formation through a variety of formats, such as retreats, workshops, and research projects. The principles, teachings, projects, and practices conducted by Triptykos have become compassion practices for compassionate living.

Core Teachings of the Triptykos School of Compassion and the Center for Engaged Compassion. The teachings and life of Jesus are foundational to the Triptykos School of Compassion and the CEC. Triptykos and the CEC emphasize that the spiritual way which Jesus embodied is "radical." His teachings and life emerged from his fundamental and deep faith in God. In this view, these provoked revolutionary changes to religious and institutional faith.[21] So the spiritual way of Jesus is called "radical." Especially, the spiritual way of Jesus is summarized as a threefold spirituality: loving God in every dimension that a human has, cultivating abundant and flourishing life for oneself, and loving others as created in the image of God as much as oneself is. Jesus embodied this threefold spirituality in his life. Frank Rogers states, "the path of Jesus is a way of radical compassion."[22]

Thus, Triptykos and the CEC developed the threefold spirituality of Jesus into a spiritual path of radical compassion with three aspects. The spiritual way of radical compassion "deepens

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[20] Triptykos, "About Triptykos," accessed Oct. 16, 2013, http://www.triptykos.com/teaching.

[21] Frank Rogers Jr., Rhythms of Radical Compassion: The Way of Jesus as a Threefold Spiritual Path [Claremont School of Theology], n.d., 10.

[22] Rogers, *Rhythms of Radical Compassion*, 10.

one's connection to a compassionate source, restores one to a humanity fully loved and alive, and increases one's capacities to be an instrument of compassion towards others in the world."[23] In other words, there are three movements, including connection with a compassionate source, restoration of original humanity, and cultivation of compassion toward others.

Triptykos and the CEC describe these three movements as emerging from God's heart by using an analogy of the human heart. In their explanation, the heart goes through a threefold rhythm: gathering problematic blood cells into the center, restoring them to their originally natural and healthy condition, and returning them to the body to transfer oxygen, absorb carbon dioxide, and provide nourishment. In this respect, God's heart also pulsates in a threefold movement: connecting a wounded person to the radically compassionate sacred source, reinstating whole humanity through relationship with the compassionate source, and returning the person into the world to heal wounds and the suffering of others with a compassionate heart.[24] In essence, God's heart is filled with compassion. God instilled in all creatures God's compassionate essence Thus, all creatures pulse in the rhythms of compassion as the essence of God. The teachings and life of Jesus themselves also pulse in the heartbeat of God.

Six essential components of compassion. Triptykos and the CEC name the six essential components of compassion as follows: (1) paying attention (or contemplative awareness), (2) understanding (or empathic care), (3) loving with connection (or all-accepting presence), (4) sensing the Sacredness (or spiritual expansiveness), (5) embodying new life (or desire for flourishing), and (6) restorative action.[25]

The first of the six components of compassion is paying attention (or contemplative awareness). Paying attention is the first step toward compassion. It allows us to be aware of another's or our own authentic humanity without any distorted judgments or prejudices. We often project our own perspectives and experiences onto the lives and behaviors of others. This results in distorted views, bias, and partiality. According to Rogers, paying attention or contemplative awareness is the "the non-reactive, non-projective apprehension of another in the mystery of their unique particularity."[26] It helps us to disentangle distorted and entwined lenses and to have the whole sight to perceive another as he or she is in his or her humanity.

The second component of compassion is understanding (or empathic care). When we perceive the humanity and dignity of another or the self, we enter into a process of understanding them. In other words, paying attention to another or the suffering self invites us to stand in the other's shoes with empathic care. In this stage, when we understand the other's or self's sufferings, wounds, desires, emotions, and thoughts with an empathic heart, we are touched in our compassionate core.

When we really understand the inner and deep entity of another with empathic care, we approach the third component of loving with connection (or all-accepting presence). Understanding another leads to an embracing connection with and care for him or her. Thus, we become an all-accepting presence that is open, receptive, sensitive, responsive, and connected to another. As a result, we participate in the suffering and delight of another with loving connection.

The fourth component of compassion is sensing the Sacredness (or spiritual

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[23] Rogers, Yaconelli, and Dreitcer, *Practicing Compassion*, 4.

[24] Rogers, Yaconelli, and Dreitcer, *Practicing Compassion*, 4.

[25] Frank Rogers Jr., *The Compassion Practice: Calibrating the Pulse of Our Lives to the Heartbeat of Love* [Claremont School of Theology], forthcoming, 24–30.

[26] Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 25.

expansiveness). When we are an all-accepting presence for another, we sense that the Sacred source of compassion flows over and inside us. The reason is that our human compassion and capacity for care emerges from compassionate sources. Compassion is the essence of the Sacred as God and emerges from God's heart. Thus, when we are connected with the suffering of another, we sense the existence of the Sacred flowing within us and it is that Sacredness through which our spirit of compassion is expanded.

Sensing the Sacredness gives rise to the fifth component of embodying new life (or having a desire for flourishing) for the suffering self and others. While we are engaging in the suffering of another with empathic care, we want the other to be free from suffering. We also desire that the other's sufferings be transformed into peace, delight, happiness, and freedom. Thus, we seek flourishing life.

The desire for flourishing and new life seeds the sixth component of compassion, restorative action. Compassion requires us to take specific action to alleviate the suffering of others and to nurture their flourishing in the fullness of compassionate living. If restorative action does not occur, compassion just remains in the mind and its power is reduced. Restorative action contributes not only to changing the suffering of another, it makes compassion flow into and fill the world.

These six components constitute the pulse of compassion. Each component interacts with the other components. If one decreases or disappears, the pulse of compassion is diminished. Compassion includes all six components. The first letters of the first through five components spell *PULSE*: *P* = paying attention, *U* = understanding, *L* = loving connection, *S* = sensing the Sacredness, and *E* = embodying new life. In other words, the components become the pulse of compassion.[27]

Considering these six components, we realize that compassion is not simply awareness or emotion or thought or desire or action. Compassion emerges from diverse capacities of humans. Triptykos and the CEC emphasize that "compassion is an experiential gestalt, a holistic complex that involves and integrates the full range of human capacities – perception, emotion, cognition, physiology, motivation, and behavior."[28]

The Compassion Practice. Through integrating the six essential components and five core principles, Triptykos and the CEC have designed The Compassion Practice for nurturing our compassion. The Compassion Practice is based on the radical way of Jesus and the pulse of God. It centers on restoring connection to the sacred, self, and others and is divided into four movements.[29]

The first one is to "get grounded (or catch your breath)."[30] Getting grounded enables us to solidify our foundation. Rogers expresses this movement as "finding solid ground."[31] In this stage, we distance ourselves from our strong feelings, thoughts, inner voices, drives, and impulses when we are overwhelmed by them. The best practice for distancing is to catch our breath, which hardens the ground. Moreover, through taking deep breaths, we are invited to restore our connection with a compassionate resource or our truest essence. The spiritual methods of getting grounded with the sacred can be very diverse according to individuals'

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27 Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 30.
28 Rogers, Yaconelli, and Dreitcer, *Practicing Compassion*, 17.
29 Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 31.
30 Rogers, Yaconelli, and Dreitcer, *Practicing Compassion*, 26–27.
31 Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 32.

preferences: taking a walk, resting in silence, meditating, listening to music, and so on.[32]

       The second practice is to take our PULSE (or cultivate self-compassion). When we are enmeshed in negative emotions, inner voices and monologues, drives, and impulses, we first cultivate compassion for ourselves by taking a "U" turn or turning inward after getting grounded to the divine presence or compassionate essence. Inner movements bring about our sufferings, but they are not our enemies; they are aspects to heal, care for, and pay attention to. Triptykos and the CEC emphasize that the compassion practice to nurture compassion for ourselves is to take our PULSE. The meanings of PULSE were delineated previously in the discussion of the six essential components. In sum, *P* means "paying attention" to our own internal movements without any judgment or prejudice. *U* signifies "understanding empathically" our inner movements, reflecting their fear, longing, aching, and gift. *L* refers to "loving with connectedness," offering a compassionate heart and care toward any reactions or parts provoked from interior movements. *S* means "sensing the Sacredness" and inviting the compassionate Sacred into one's suffering or inner parts. *E* refers to "embodying new life," and desiring restoration of our humanity and flourishing in fullness within.[33] Through taking our PULSE, we are invited to nurture self-compassion, which reconnects us with our compassionate resource and essence. Thus, our heart pulses in the heartbeat of God as compassion.

       The third movement is to take others' PULSE (or cultivate compassion for the other). When we are grounded with the sacred and connected with ourselves, we can cultivate compassion for others by taking their PULSE. However, when we nurture compassion for others, if our inner movements–such as rage, avoidance, and suffering—happen within us, we need to retake a "U" turn for ourselves. The reason is that inner parts or egos have something to listen for, heal, and care for. If we do not have any inner turbulences and our pulse is not erratic, it is a proper time to nurture compassion for others. The practice of PULSE for others is the same as for the self except that it is directed toward others. We first *pay attention* to the existence of another without any judgment or prejudice. When we see the humanity of another, we understand empathically his or her emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, reflecting on the other's fears, longings, aches, and hidden gifts. Understanding empathically invites us to become an all-accepting presence toward another. We love with connectedness with another, extending care and compassion to the other's suffering and flourishing. As we are connected with the suffering of another, compassion flows over and within us. At that time, we sense the Sacredness and our spiritual expansiveness. As a result, we are invited to embody new life, being free from the suffering of another and bringing about the flourishing of our life in the fullness of happiness.[34]

       The final stage is to "decide what to do" (or discern compassionate action). When we are deeply connected to the self and another in the grounding of the sacred, we engage in restorative actions for oneself and the other. Compassion leads us to decide what to do for freedom from suffering and for promoting life's flourishing. In this respect, Rogers emphasizes that we should discern compassionate action in two dimensions. The first is that compassionate action aims toward freedom from suffering and flourishing for ourselves. The second is that compassionate action extends healing, freedom, justice, and restoration to another.[35] Thus, compassionate action makes the humanity of ourselves and others alive and vibrant in the rhythm of the compassion of God's heart.

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[32] Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 32.
[33] Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 34.
[34] Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 34–35.
[35] Rogers, *Compassion Practice*, 36–37.

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Creating Safe Nonviolent Space in the Classroom:
Contemporary Challenges and Responses

Abstract:
This paper will explore how we might create, as religious educators, safe space in our classrooms where creative and imaginative responses to our world might be generated. Students at every level need to experience nonviolence and safety in our classrooms, both in process and content, if they are to explore content that may nudge them out of their personal safety zones. How do we deal with the issues of difference and diversity in ways that all participants feel safe (but not necessarily always comfortable)? What additional challenges are presented by distance learning in creating safe space? Where is safe space found for the educator him/herself? Case study/narratives will be used to explore possibilities for action.

Every class I teach, at every level, begins with a simple exercise. Each member of the class is asked to make a circle with each hand, bring those circles up to their eyes, and look around the room through their glasses. We all look foolish for a few minutes, but it is a physical embodiment for where we will go next: the awareness that we all wear glasses. Our glasses are made up of every single thing that has happened to us in our life – where we were born, to whom we were born, where we grew up, who has loved us and hurt us, our class, race, gender, sexual orientation, educational status, religious affiliation or not, spiritual practices, everything. It's an introduction to hermeneutics, the lenses through which we interpret the sources we engage, or the sources that engage us; it allows for every course to be a hermeneutics course, wondering about both our sight and our blindness. The privileged place of religious education is to create the space where one's glasses can be identified ("I wear glasses"), corrected ("That particular lens blurs my vision and I should get it checked"), cleaned ("The dirt on my lens makes some parts of what I think I see impossible to see"), and affirmed ("I see more clearly"). Tom Groome reminds us that as educators we "must remember the interests, perspectives, and 'tinted lenses' we bring to the text of the Christian Story/Vision from our own social and cultural situation."[1] I am suggesting this is the work of every theology or religious studies classroom that is intentional about both information and formation, and that the lenses are much more complex than we might imagine.

The journey is catechetical and spiritual, intellectual and affective, developmental and imminent. Part of the complexity of the journey is that it must also be a communitarian journey, since there are corporate lenses (of churches, religions, nations) in our glasses, each one altering our vision, each one offering both insight and blindness or blocked vision. It is also a communal act to understand the many different sets of glasses within a group – in a family, in a class, in a church. Just as all the members of the same family do not recall a singular event in the same

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[1] Thomas Groome, *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1991), 229.

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manner, so too all the members of an ecclesial community or economic class or race or gender or sexual orientation don't wear identical glasses that allow one way to see the world, challenging the notion of one singular objective sight. The metaphor of the glasses invites conversion that is ongoing, and sets a path for a life-long attention to grow in age and wisdom and grace (Luke 2:52). It encourages one to "probe" their life, what Mary Elizabeth Moore describes as "a never-ending quest that encourages people to continue learning, wondering, and questioning."[2] The metaphor of the glasses also serves as a reminder that humans have always worn glasses; a deficit in vision or dirt on your lenses isn't a permanent status but one that can be corrected and made clearer. As Gabriel Moran rightly argues, "they ought to know that the quest for a unity beyond all divisions of nation, gender, and species is not a creation of the twentieth (or twenty-first) century,"[3] but rather part of the human story over time. Bernard Lonergan suggests "One has to keep developing one's knowledge of human reality and potentiality as they are in the existing situation. One has to keep scrutinizing one's intentional responses to values and their implicit scales of preference. One has to listen to criticism and to protest. One has to remain ready to learn from others."[4] We have to check our glasses.

   This process of working with our glasses requires safe space within which to explore and wonder, both for teaching and learning. How might we create, as religious educators, safe space in our classrooms where creative and imaginative responses to our world might be generated, where our interpretive lenses are owned, challenged, critiqued, and affirmed? Students at every level need to experience nonviolence and safety in our classrooms, both in process and content, if they are to explore content that may nudge them out of their personal safety zones, if they are to probe. How do we deal with the issues of difference and diversity in ways that all participants feel safe (but not necessarily always comfortable)? What additional challenges are presented by distance learning in creating safe space? Where is safe space found for the educator himself/herself? I offer three case studies to explore the issues, each framing a contemporary challenge to creating safe space in the classroom: changes in boundaries, changes in diversity and technology, and changes in expectations for educators.

Case Study: Changes in Boundaries

   In an attempt to help first year undergraduate students explore the concepts of religion, faith, spirituality, and to ground them in a methodology of practical theology, I invite students to reflect on their family in whatever configuration, using the framework of a genogram. The physical depiction of their family invites a reflection that is both deeply personal and communal. A series of questions about the religious practices of people in their families, good people without religious practices, and those with religious practices who aren't quite so "good" opens the reflection. It is a strategy that both offers a core understanding of some terms for the course (e.g., faith, religious practices, spirituality, morality) and allows for all the cultural and religious

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[2] Glennon, Fred, Douglas Jacobsen, Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen, John J. Thatamanil, Amanda Porterfield, and Mary Elizabeth Moore, "Formation in the classroom", *Teaching Theology and Religion* 14, no.4:378. *Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (*accessed August 17, 2014).

[3] Maria Harris and Gabriel Moran, *Reshaping Religious Education: Conversations on Contemporary Practice* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 108.

[4] From *Method in Theology* as quoted in Raymond Moloney, "Conversion and Spirituality: Bernard Lonergan 1904-1984", *The Way* 4 3/4:129, October 2004. http://www.theway.org.uk/Back/434Moloney.pdf (accessed September 1, 2014).

diversity of our student community. The strategy always works; the academic distinctions between the words comes alive within each student's own context, and they are able to imagine new ways of talking about faith and religion. But I have encountered a new dynamic in the past three or four years. Their use of social media and engagement in popular culture has given them very few filters about what is to be shared publicly, as well as where they are safe and where they are not yet safe. Last semester, a young woman tells the class about her grandmother who does all kinds of "religious" things, but who hurts people in her family, hurts her father, and makes fun of other religions. The class grows quiet, uncomfortable with her disclosure about her grandmother, and looks to me to "fix" it.

Surely this can be viewed as a pedagogical and classroom management issue. However, the rise of intimate sharing of one's life through social media outlets appears to be blurring and blending boundaries in the classroom, with little sense of appropriate or inappropriate self-disclosure, ultimately changing the nature of what is safe space for all in the classroom. After more than twenty years of teaching/learning experience, I have learned that even the most careful attention to the dynamics in the classroom is challenged by this "blurting" behavior. How is a nonviolent safe space created in light of these changes in boundaries?

Case Study: Changes in Diversity and Technology

In a graduate class last fall, at the majority-minority university where I am on the faculty, students self–identified as male Hispanic Roman Catholic, white female Catholic, African-American Southern Pentecostal womanist, gay white married Anglican Catholic priest, Liberian ordained Methodist male, white male Catholic, Nigerian Catholic priest, and two Ghanaian Catholic priests who participated in real time through Google hangout. Acquiring a diverse learning environment is not our challenge, but creating a safe space for the exploration of ideas and identities in diversity is. One of the experiences in this class was the night the Pentecostal student told the class about her experience growing up in the South, her seminary experience, and her growing realization and identity as a woman of color. Her identity as a woman AND African-American AND Southern AND Pentecostal was a new understanding for her, fraught with all the angst and uncertainty of new awakenings, especially as it now impacted finding her theological voice. Likewise, when the Anglican priest married his partner, his conversation about his husband and journey deeply challenged many in the entire class - about marriage, sexuality, language, religion, God, and grace. The learning and probing of the entire class across wide differences in perspectives came as a result of the risks each took in sharing their stories and struggles.

In addition, the challenges of a classroom with tremendous diversity are increased by educational technologies that allow for participation in a course from a distance, without the benefit of a shared physical space. How do we create space that is safe for the critical exploration required in the classroom with students learning at a distance? Even with a modified residency requirement, the trust that takes time and encounters to build is limited. In addition, it seems to be even more of a struggle at the graduate level, where there can be so much at stake if the trust is not upheld, when ordination, review boards, CPE and job recommendations, and advancement in rank can be at stake over positions held and statements made. Cellphone technology alone changes the level of trust in a classroom, when conversations can be transcribed, recorded, preserved, and shared without permission, no matter what policies are put in place. The

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combination of diversity on every level and the increased use of technology makes creation of safe space within which to teach and learn a tremendous challenge.

Case Study: Changes in Expectations for Teachers

Faculty in a theological classroom are not free from the concerns for personal safe space either. Sometimes what I have created in the classroom is politically correct space, but not safe space. As a feminist educator, I am deeply aware of the issues of inclusion and exclusion in theology, and work diligently to create space where everyone's voices are heard. What often has happened, however, is that voices are spoken but not heard, or not heard as they were spoken, often resulting in exactly the kind of oppression I was aiming to address. Reflection on long held stereotypes and beliefs about the other is more challenging when diversity is layered upon diversity, and when there is some presumption that we have "been there, done that." A graduate student who has read Ivone Gebara, Kwok Pui Lan, Elizabeth Johnson, and Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza may believe they "get" feminist theology, but one can master the information (a requirement) and not understand the material (a requirement as well). My default image is that of the old hard copy encyclopedias, where a frog is shown with its skeletal structure, and then each cellophane page is layered on top of it, to show an ever more complex creature, with muscles and organs and veins and skin. We are not only skin, but intricate layers of identity that do not exist in isolation but are alive only in relationship to each other. Safe space in the theological classroom will attempt to honor those layers, even as they are coming into realization, each with a certain integrity of its own.

This means, in practice, that when the young white man in his 20s says, after seeing a film in class (*Remember the Titans,* 2000), that he's sincerely glad we don't have any of those problems with race anymore, I need to create a way for the class to respond that is both critical and life-giving. His response set off a tremendous response in class. How do I create a space where he can feel safe enough to explore and still be challenged? The risk of attempting safe nonviolent space in the classroom is that there is are expectations that learners will be able to explore layers they may not have explored before, even in ways that may disturb others, and that the teacher will honor the diversity in the room, holding the tension and ambiguity, walking as carefully with the man who believes he already completely understands the "plight of women" as the woman who believes the Christian church cannot be redeemed from patriarchy. These expectations are hard to name and assess in course level learning outcomes, and require skills that are most often not taught in doctoral programs in theology or ministry. The expectations have changed.

What does safe nonviolent space look like that would hold this tension as sacred? Reflection on these case studies in light of the work of Parker Palmer, particularly in his work <u>A Hidden Wholeness</u>, provides two possible creative responses. One is his concept of circles of trust, and the other is the need to "stand in the tragic gap."[5]

Circles of Trust and Standing in the Tragic Gap

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[5] Parker Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward An Undivided Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 174.

Parker Palmer, in <u>A Hidden Wholeness</u>, describes circles of trust as singular in their intent: "to make it safe for the soul to show up and offer us its guidance."[6] These are not support groups or therapeutic groups but a movement towards sacred space. Parker suggests that creating "circles of trust" is a way of creating community and generating positive, life-giving alternatives to violence. They are intentional communities that operate with clear guidelines ("touchstones")[7], skilled leadership, open invitation without manipulation, common ground for exploration of the inner life, and graceful space within which to meet.[8] A limitation of the application of the circles of trust to the classroom is the necessarily voluntary nature of those who join the circles, a condition which cannot be replicated in most classroom settings. Nonetheless, the schema of the circles of trust - the intentionality of guidelines, skilled leadership, an invitation to participate without manipulation, common ground, and space that is conducive to learning – is a format that addresses many issues raised in this paper. The touchstones themselves are similar to other ground rules for intercultural or interreligious dialogue.[9] These ground rules assume voluntary participation, but all provide a base from which to encounter the other in life-giving mutuality. As educators, we will need to model safe space in how we respond with and to students and our colleagues. How will a student learn to "speak your truth in ways that respect other's truth"[10] if they have never seen it? How will a student imagine "when the going gets rough, turn to wonder" if they have not heard, "I wonder, what might have brought that person (you) to this belief"?[11]

Palmer's insight from his work with the circles of trust lead him to suggest that where we most often need to stand, in light of differences and limitations of every kind, is in what he calls "the tragic gap." Addressing the question of nonviolence, Palmer writes:

> ….We must learn to hold the tension between the reality of the moment and the possibility that something better might emerge….The insight at the heart of nonviolence is that we live in a tragic gap – a gap between the way things are and the way we know they might be. It is a gap that has never been and never will be closed. If we want to live nonviolent lives, we must learn to stand in the tragic gap, faith fully holding the tension between reality and possibility of being opened to a third way.[12]

I suggest that one way to create a nonviolent classroom in order that people might explore, learn, and grow is to stand in the tragic gap as educators, and to help our students to stand there as well. I cannot give them a perfectly safe world, nor is it my intent to leave them in despair. In a Google dominated world, where every question has an answer a few clicks away, and media pundits on the left and right have the solutions for everything, we need to learn to stand in the already but not yet space between what is and what could be. In Ferguson, with ISIL, in the church, in the academy, in our personal and in our professional lives, it is all we can do and it is

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[6] Ibid., 22.
[7] Ibid., 217-218.
[8] Ibid., 73-85.
[9] See for example, Leonard Swidler, "The dialogue decalogue: ground rules for interreligious dialogue", *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 20, no. 1 (December 1, 1983): 1-4.
[10] Ibid., 218.
[11] Ibid., 218.
[12] Ibid., 174-175.

the most we can do. When I stand in the tragic gap, and help my students to stand there, possibilities are generated that liberate those who are oppressed, that offer the healing power of God to lenses damaged and worn. It is the space where nonviolence is born. Walter Kasper frames it this way:

> In light of injustice, which can never be completely abolished, and in light of mercy and love in this world, which can never be completely fulfilled, all that remains in the end, in many cases, is only an appeal to God's mercy.[13]

Standing in the tragic gap is standing in the space of mercy. The work of religious education has never been more important, and the responsibility and privilege of creating space where students can encounter both their sight and blindness cannot be delegated or relinquished to other disciplines. Living in the already but not yet of the present moment, witnessing that it is possible to stand in the tragic gap with hope is our business and our call.

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[13] Walter Kasper, *Mercy: The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life*. (New York: Paulist Press, 2014), 205.

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Parker J. Palmer on Healing the Heart of Democracy

Abstract

This paper centers on the theories of Parker J. Palmer, who is a public intellectual, an independent contemporary writer, master teacher and activist. In 2010, the REA honored Palmer for his significant contributions to the field of Religious Education. His interests lie in issues concerning education, community, leadership, spirituality and non-violent social change.

His latest book, *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*, delves into the importance of living an integrated life as citizens and public leaders. He argues that effective citizens and leaders approach their work and world from a place of the heart. This concept is the focal point of the paper. Of significance is the fact that, true to his calling as an activist, Palmer moves beyond the theory stage and develops practical applications that can be applied in the context of a school classroom and houses of worship. The paper examines Palmer's theories of nonviolence and places them in the context of real life testimonies, both from history and from the outcomes of his theoretical applications.

1

This paper explores the theories of Parker J. Palmer as they relate to nonviolent social change. His theories address the dynamics of both the individual and of communities. Palmer is a leading contemporary public intellectual. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. He is a writer, teacher and activist who is nationally recognized as one of the ten key "most influential senior leaders" in higher education and one of ten key "agenda setters" of the decade. His interests lie in issues concerning education, community, leadership, spirituality, and social change. His most widely read book is *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (Intrator 2005, 16). Palmer is also distinguished as the recipient of the William Rainey Harper Award, an honor bestowed by the Religious Education Association in 2010.

Early in his work, Palmer's interest was on the individual and the dynamics of the self. He explored the human psyche and discovered the importance of living an authentic, integrated life. This concept and the phrase "to live divided no more," became the hallmark of his career. His theories aim to unravel the complicated nature of human interaction in a world that all too often impedes the true self from emerging. He reasons that each of us brings something special to the world; a birthright gift that needs to be honored. However, he notes, many of us spend most of our lives squandering this gift of self (Palmer 2000, 12).

According to Palmer, we deny our truth out of fear. We are fearful of judgement, of rejection, and of being unloved. When actually confronted with these situations, rather than remaining true to ourselves, we tend to doubt ourselves, and our own self worth. We begin to favor adopting a different public persona, subconsciously suppressing our true nature. In recollecting his own personal journey, Palmer states: "it is indeed possible to live a life other than one's own" (2000, 2). This, he asserts, is what it means to live a divided life.

Palmer shares a Hasidic tale that reveals this aspect of human nature - "the tendency to want to be someone else, and the ultimate importance of honoring one's self." He writes: "Rabbi Zusya, when he was an old man said, "In the coming world, they will not ask me: "Why were you not Moses?" They will ask me: "Why were you not Zusya?""(11). As simplistic as this concept may seem, Palmer argues that it takes courage to follow our hearts, to live undividedly, and be who we are meant to be. Social dictates and peer pressure often get the better of us.

The concept of living undivided lives extends to Palmer's theory of communal life. He affirms the innate human need for community and interconnectedness, and the human desire to live in harmony. We are innately interdependent but, he argues, it also takes courage to live in community. For instance, it takes courage to be the one to welcome the stranger or strange ideas in our midst, especially when others in the community are not willing to do so. It takes courage to stand firm in our convictions when others are ready to pass judgement against us, or worse yet, exclude us from the circle, lest we go along with the majority. According to Palmer and other social theorists, divided communities form the precursor to social violence. Given this, the question Palmer addresses is: How can we form communities of congruence? And, of greater urgency is the question: How can we keep democracy alive?

Amidst all of the social conflicts, Palmer sees possibilities for the future of this country and for an end to violence. He sees a beauty in human creation. Having a deep affinity with poetry, he draws from the metaphors of artistic imagery to tell his story. For example, he likens community to a richly woven tapestry, held together by the creative tension in each thread.

2

Creative tension and courage are the central themes in his discourse about nonviolent social change. He explores these concepts at length in his latest book, *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*. Palmer writes, "Holding tension creatively does not mean indecision or inaction. At every level of human life - from living our own lives well to governing a nation justly - decisions must be made. But they must not be made in the haste that comes from being impatient with tension or in the ignorance that results from fearing the clash of diverse opinions" (2011, 22).

Palmer believes that as a nation, creative tension is formed by governing from the heart. Although the idea may seem far removed from the ways we witness government, the concept is not new. Alexis de Tocqueville who wrote the classic *Democracy in America* after a visit to the United States from 1831 to1832, saw that American democracy could not survive across generations unless the government, and citizens alike, developed "habits of the heart." Habits of the heart refers to "deeply ingrained patterns of receiving, interpreting, and responding to experiences that involve our intellects, emotions, self-images, and concepts of meaning and purpose - habits that form the inward and invisible infrastructure of democracy" (24). According to Tocqueville, "ideas are at least as important as feelings, for without [feelings] there is no action in common . . ." (41). There is clear evidence of how crucial a role the heart plays in politics. As Palmer notes, "The most casual student of electoral politics knows that the surest way to win votes is to divide and conquer the heart, pitting emotion against intellect" (51).

The story of Abraham Lincoln provides an example of a leader who governed from the heart. In the book *Lincoln's Melancholy*, Joshua Shenk probes into our "sixteenth president's journey with depression" while leading the nation (3). According to Palmer, who has suffered with this affliction at various points in his adult life, Lincoln's ability to integrate his own shadow and light was what made him "uniquely qualified to help America preserve the Union. Because he knew dark and light intimately - knew them as inseparable elements of everything human - he refused to split North and South into "good guys" and "bad guys," a split that might have taken us closer to the national version of suicide" (4). As Palmer notes, using carefully chosen words in his second inaugural address, Lincoln "appealed for "malice toward none" and charity for all," animated by what one writer calls an "awe-inspiring sense of love for *all*"" (4). The antithesis of this is the transformative power of the heart filled with hate, which can lead to destruction, as witnessed in the horror of the holocaust and ongoing genocides in underdeveloped countries.

Palmer asserts, the human heart is the core of the human self. Therefore, forming part of the infrastructure of democracy, is the invisible dynamic of a heart filled with goodness and love. However, he notes: as with any human activity, change has to begin with an individual before it can manifest into a communal effort. And, key to positive social transformation is a common conviction, and a community of individuals who are grounded in who they are. A prime example of this theory is the story of Rosa Parks who in 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to yield her seat to a white man on a bus. Her action sparked a national movement that would culminate in the Civil Rights Act. As Palmer writes, "Of course, she acted in the context of a community, of a shared social concern, and of a theory of nonviolent social change. Among other things, Parks served as secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the National Association of Colored People (NAACP) and had participated in sessions at the Highlander Folk School on the tactics and

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strategies of nonviolence" (185).

Although the Rosa Parks historical event was of national proportions, nonviolent social change can also come about in more subtle ways. Palmer suggests practical ways to gather people to form communities of congruence. He asserts, "deep democracy" can be established in the classroom and in houses of worship, among other public venues. For example, in school settings, the classroom can provide the space for social transformation when students are allowed a hospitable space for the inner search for truth, and for their individual voices to be heard. He explains that the classroom environment can "help students find meaning and purpose by connecting with realities that bring life, not death" (125). According to Palmer, the inner search is embedded in all subjects. For example, history connects us with our past to teach us about ourselves in connection to the present time. Biology teaches that nature does in fact have a voice. Nature speaks to us by responding to the "impact of our actions." Fictional literature shows us that reality is not only about facts, but about "engaging them with our imaginations" (125).

The justification for engaging in nonviolent social change in houses of worship can be summarized in a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr., who was noted for saying, "Eleven o'clock Sunday morning is the most segregated hour in America, and Sunday school the most segregated school of the week" (138). As a public intellectual and community organizer, Palmer has been asked for his guidance in diversifying congregations. In his exploration of the dynamics amongst parishioners in the mainline Protestant tradition he grew up in, he found that many parishioners "regard personal relationships in their congregations as *unsafe* when it comes to exploring sensitive personal issues" (137). If they were to discuss sensitive issues, they fear rejection and damaging gossip. Responding to the *un-diversified* and divided nature of these houses of worship, Palmer asks: "Why would anyone with a *visible* difference want to join a group who look like each other but cannot embrace their own *invisible* differences?" (138). He notes, "Many religious communities have a long way to go when it comes to embodying their verbal commitment to compassion among their own members, let alone in the larger world" (138).

While being well aware of the obstacles and challenges that both the clergy and/or the congregation can present, Palmer offers several ways to bridge this divide within houses of worship. First, Palmer finds that in most worship settings, the congregation is a passive recipient during the service and homily. Palmer asserts, "The theological message may be one of community, but the lived experience is one of dependence on an authority. Under those conditions, not much can be done to build the communal trust that allows compassion to flower, no matter how benign the leader is" (139). He suggests participatory forms of congregational life as a form of building trust amongst parishioners. This can mean giving parishioners a voice by engaging them in theological reflection about their own lived experiences on matters of faith.

Palmer observes: shared authority also builds trust and confidence among parishioners and provides the seeds of community. Most congregations have to make decisions on a range of issues concerning the parish. He recommends decision making by consensus as a form of sharing authority. He explains, unlike decision making by a majority vote, where we create a win-lose contest, consensual decisions require open, honest dialogue. It invites the participants to listen deeply to one another, and to be open to "listen for where I might join with you and what I might learn from our differences, because I know we cannot move forward unless we move together" (144). This shared authority also deepens the sense of hospitality that parishioners can

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carry into the public world.

Another thought which Palmer offers is for the clergy to host simple events. He has learned that potluck suppers work especially well because "breaking bread together is one of the best ways to create community, a celebrated sacrament in the Christian church" (142). This grassroots event provides the parishioners with the opportunity to tell personal and "public stories that range from painful to hopeful to joyful, stories that create solidarity and energize action, helping people reweave relationships within the church for the sake of their ministry in the world" (142). In conclusion, he writes, "The leader and teacher who wants to work this way needs at least two deep-rooted habits of the heart: patience and self-confidence" (140).

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6

Title: Community and Violence: Empowering Others into Self-Possession

Denise Janssen, Roberta Young-Jackson, Cheryl Easter, Alexandria Hawkins Taylor, Belinda Dailey

1. Introduction – *Imagine…* (John Lennon)
2. Violence through Womanist Eyes – images, definitions, etymology
3. Religious Imagination as a Model toward participating in the pedagogy of one's own liberation (contemplation, engagement, form-giving, emergence, release) based in Maria Harris' *Teaching and Religious Imagination*
   a. In youth ministry
   b. With domestic violence survivors
   c. An experiment in language in worship
4. Conclusion and next steps in this research

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'Brathood,' Violence, and Discipleship: Seeking Insights for U.S. Religious Education by Exploring Stories of Unwrapping the Flag from the Cross
By Joshua Lunde-Whitler and Lakisha Lockhart-Rusch (Boston College)
OUTLINE and VIGNETTES

OUTLINE

I. **Introduction** (Joshua)
   a. Story: Robert Schuller and the Flag
   b. Introductory Ideas
      i. Focusing image for project: the phenomenon of "wrapping the cross in the flag" (S. Claiborne)
      ii. The U.S. Church's Relationship to the Military
   c. Our Stories: Military "Brathood" and the Disentangling of Narratives (i.e. "unwrapping")
   d. Purpose and Outline (according to perceived "entangled" themes)
      i. Method:
         1) Generative dialogue for "deep" life-history analysis
         2) Listening for common themes/symbols, inspired by discourse and narrative analysis
         3) Composing vignettes ("portraits") based on these themes
      ii. Goals:
         • Determining resources and strategies for disentangling
         • Defining role of religious education in negotiating identity
      iii. Grounding Sources:
         • P. Freire, b. hooks
         • liberation psychology: M.Watkins and H.Shulman
II. **Entangled Symbols** (Lakisha)
   a. Brief discussion of how our stories and emotion have be perpetuated by appropriated language and symbols
   b. Language and symbols will serve as meta-themes throughout presentation
   c. Examples of language and symbol usage: "service" and "sacrifice" over killing and maiming and Military parking before religious parking
III. **Theme One: Fear and Salvation** (Lakisha)
   a. Re: Vignette #1
   b. Brief Explanation of Theme
      i. Hero complex: Military as Savior
      ii. Fear: In communities of power fear is used for submission. (Ferguson)
      iii. Systems of Domination
   c. Theme relevance to US church context
      i. Churches encouraging no reporting for fear of consequences of military (i.e. rape and abuse)
      ii. Military targeting recruiting to underprivileged and urban youth
      iii. Seeing military as just as important if not more than God; Physical saving over unseen "faith" and "miracles."
      iv. Religious education: Military children raised with view of military rules that are more important than Ten Commandments.

IV. **Theme Two: Shame and Duty** (Joshua)
   a. Re: Vignette #2
   b. Brief Explanation of Theme
      i. Seeking to earn love/respect: conflating God and Father
      ii. Jesus as Ultimate Soldier who sacrifices (and soldiers as Christ-figures), a resulting ambiguous sense of duty as Christians
      iii. *Sola gratia* and duty: living indebted to God, to country, to family
      iv. Low anthropologies benefit domination systems: breaking down to build up
   c. Theme relevance to US church context
      i. High depression/suicide rates not just of military personnel but all people: Need to examine our *practical* theological anthropology.
      ii. Utilizing shame/duty in churches, now to combat under-attendance, overscheduling, lack of participation, etc.
      iii. What "allegiance to Christ" looks like

V. **Theme Three: Anger and Atonement** (Joshua)
   a. Re: Vignette #3
   b. Brief Explanation of Theme
      i. Anger as modified fear (and sometimes shame)
      ii. Anger must *go* somewhere: typically to "others":
         • Sacrificing scapegoats
            - God's anger is "worked out" through the sacrifice of Jesus; Violence "works out" our self-hatred (but also promotes it)
         • Destroying enemies
            - to "fetishize" (J. Kristeva) = a thorough destruction
      iii. Effects:
         • Dissociation or "splitting"; violent fantasy
         • Trauma
   c. Theme relevance to US church context
      i. Key Premise: We are all affected by military violence
      ii. Numbness: Many of us are "distant" from military violence; yet we are all over-exposed.
      iii. A Nationwide Nuremberg defense?
      iv. Examples:
         • School and police violence: a "militarized" society, living out fantasies
         • "Culture wars" and churches becoming battlegrounds
         • Segregation of the church body

VI. **Summary and Questions** (Lakisha)
   a. Resources for Disentanglement
   b. Questions
         • How do we bring this conversation into the wider world of religious education? How do we learn from these stories and the common stories of others? Where do we go from here? How do religious educators take this into account in the classroom and in deciding curriculum? Can religion and the military ever co-exist in a healthy way?

Vignettes

Below are some "portraits" based on our (Lakisha and Joshua's) reflections upon the many personal stories that we shared together during a June 2014 dialogue about our respective experiences as "military brats." Out of the myriad of topics discussed at that meeting, we isolated three overarching themes describing how our personal, national, and religious narratives intermixed together in ways that have shaped us. We then composed these three corresponding vignettes, each attempting to capture the spirit and tone of that initial dialogue, in order to illustrate these broad and complex themes in brief.

Please take a moment to look these over prior to the presentation.

#1: Fear and Salvation (Lakisha Lockhart-Rusch)

Growing up my mother was a single parent with three children working two jobs. When she married my stepfather, who was in the army, she told us that we "had been saved." She told us that the military would take good care of us and that we would never have to worry about money or anything again. Not only was my military stepdad the savior of our family, but the military was like God, saving all of us. As we reached high school we always knew that if we did not do well in school, or we didn't know what we wanted to do once we graduated, we could always rely on the military to be our saving grace. Both of my sisters went into the military, and my mother continues to work as a civilian in the military, mostly out of fear of not living the comfortable life they live. They have benefits, and feel taken care of and saved by the military, and fear any life that doesn't include that "security."

As a military child there was a great deal of fear. Again there was the fear of a lack of security and of losing everything we had been saved from. There was also the fear of my father, of not doing his duty or not being a good solider. There was also a fear that we, as children, would not be reflective of everything that a military child should be: silent and dutiful. This fear was cyclical. The fear my father felt was sure to be passed down to me as his child. The power he lost or did not hold at work…well, he was sure to come home and instill this sense of power, authority and fear into his family. I was terrified of making any mistakes, making bad grades or doing anything that would "dishonor" my family or the military. I became the "perfect child," often to my own detriment, holding my own anger, fear and resentment inside of myself.

I worked as a youth minister, for the first time, at the military chapel that I grew up in. One day in our Sunday school class we were talking about the Ten Commandments, what they mean for us today and how to live as "good Christians." One of the young people raised their hand and asked, "If we are not suppose to kill people, does that mean that my father is going to hell because he kills people for a living?" I was literally in shock after this question that I did not see coming. I had no idea how to approach it, and so I asked the young person what he thought. He continued, "Well, I think he should go to heaven 'cause he is serving our country and doing his duty for God so God should be ok with this… but then why does God say it's not ok in the Bible? And also does that mean its ok for me to hurt people at school?" Needless to say, there was much conversation after this encounter with the youth. I also spoke with our other church leaders and ministers about the various messages we are sending, and our very nature of being a church on a base, and all the baggage that comes along with that.

#2: Shame and Duty (Joshua Lunde-Whitler)

The worst thing growing up, I think, not just military brats but for any children growing up in authoritarian environments, is to face the disappointment of your parents, even more than their anger or punishment. For military brats, though, the disappointment is never only that of your parents, but of my dad's peer and superiors. If you get into trouble, or mess up, you make the family look bad, and you disappoint the squadron, and thus the base, and ultimately the United States of America, and even God! We may not have been soldiers or airmen ourselves, but we were no less driven by a sense of duty—even if ours was more ambiguous.

You learn very early on as a brat that flags are holy things. We pledged allegiance to them every morning as it was raised at school, and put our hands over our hearts every evening as it was lowered at HQ, the national anthem playing over the loudspeakers throughout the base to let you know it was happening. As a third-grader living in Germany, I was on school color guard with two other boys, as we were all Cub Scouts together. One day they were picking on me even harder than usual, culminating in my utter exasperation and my hurling the half-folded U.S. flag into the air, an early subconscious act of defiance against all the standards and measurements to which I was psychologically bound. Yet that great deterrent, that great and terrible shaper of human nature, shame, quickly engulfed me in response. Such a small event when viewed with some perspective…but to willingly let the flag touch the ground? That was the greatest sin my little mind could conceive. Who knows what untold pain and suffering I had caused my family, let alone my country? The shame was compounded by those two kids, who proceeded to blackmail me. Two Filipino coins that I treasured, given to me by one of the many friends I had who had since moved away, turned out to be the price of their silence. Yet the shame of this seemingly-insignificant event emotionally imprisoned me, and was seared into my memory, and helped contribute to my then-building depression that would come to engulf my school-aged years. Such is the power of shame.

#3: Anger and Atonement (Joshua Lunde-Whitler)

Lakisha and I discussed many of the differences between being in the Army versus being in the Air Force. Army soldiers are frequently stereotyped as hapless brutes, while the Air Force is seen as full of egghead sissies who conveniently avoid the fray. Yet both are no less responsible for enacting incredibly destructive violence. It was all too recently when I first realized, to my chagrin, that my dad had not only bombed SAMM sites in Iraq during the first Gulf War; he had conducted multiple missions throughout the Middle East during the three years we lived in Europe, doing God knows what. And even though pilots continue to wage war from thousands of feet above the earth—or increasingly today, from 12,000 miles away via remote controlled drone—violence affects one's mind and soul no less. Perhaps even more so, or at least more insidiously.

And we as brats are a step removed from this violence. Only one step closer, though, than everyone else who lives in the United States, with military neighbors and access to CNN. We all "benefit" from their exploits; we all live marked by this state-sanctioned violence. It can fuel self-righteousness; it can create xenophobia out of the fear of retaliation, leading to narratives of justification of violence against sworn enemies, who deserve to feel the tip of our sword. We all remember 9/11 and the swirl of reactions that followed, the indignation, the anger—and the consequent willingness of many residents to champion and cheer on the ensuing war campaign.

While on the surface I appeared to be a relatively peace-loving kid, I remember as a child being in my room alone, drawing graphic, bloody pictures of Saddam Hussein, the man who took my dad away from me for six months while he dropped bombs. I made a caricature of his face into something Hitler-like, stuck it on my dartboard, and flung darts for six months. I look back now and see the anger coming from another source: the volatile temper of my dad himself against me, against my mom, my brother. Lakisha's sisters would unleash themselves against each other frequently, leaving her to the role of peacemaker. From whence did their anger come? Violence is not only a response to anger; it also produces it, imprinting itself onto our thinking patterns, instigating the ire of victims and creating vicious circles. We are all swimming in a sea of anger; it seeps into us through our skin. The question becomes, what do we do with it?

Summoning the Saints:
Cross-Cultural Analysis of Aesthetic Teaching and Histories of Violence
Courtney T. Goto
Boston University School of Theology
Religious Education Association
September 15, 2014

Abstract:

This presentation takes a cross-cultural approach to the question of how a liturgical art installation helps Christians in a Japanese American church in Sacramento, California grapple with current and past experiences of violence and marginalization by evoking memory, creativity, and imagination. In order to illumine this question, a second case that shares some resemblances will provide a basis for making comparisons, while recognizing the limitations of cross-cultural analysis. The church's observance of All Saints' Day through liturgical art will be compared to Lithuanian cemetery practices of All Saints' Day. Because both communities have experienced the trauma of "social death" during World War II, inferences can be made about similarities and differences between the cases so as to reveal more clearly how aesthetic teaching is working for liberation and healing in the Japanese American church case.

I.   Framing the question
   a.   How is aesthetic teaching helping the members of my community (the Sacramento Japanese American United Methodist Church [SJUMC]) to grapple with current and past experiences of violence and marginalization?
   b.   What I mean by aesthetic teaching
      i.   Teaching defined in the context of religious education
      ii.   Understanding "natural aesthetics" and "artificial aesthetics" (Baumgarten)[1]
      iii.   Aesthetic teaching addresses the nature of human being as fundamentally aesthetic (Farley)[2]
   c.   Significance of inheriting a legacy of violence and marginalization
      i.   Transgenerational trauma (Schwab)[3]
      ii.   Effect of Japanese American internment camps on descendants (Ina and Nagata)[4]
      iii.   The need for dealing with trauma and healing aesthetically
II. Approach
   a.   Exploring one community's experience of violence and marginalization
      i.   Through memory and memorialization
      ii.   Through comparison with another community that shares resemblances, including memorializing its own history of victimization
   b.   Two communities share resemblances, having experienced a form of "social death"
      i.   Orlando Patterson's notion of "social death"[5]
      ii.   Lisa Marie Cacho's analysis of "social death"[6]
      iii.   Comparisons
         1.   Thorpe's discussion of social death as it applies to Lithuanian context
         2.   Analyzing Japanese American internment in terms of social death,
            a.   "Quarantine" as a form of social death in JA experience (Lee)[7]
            b.   "Exile" as a form of social death in Asian American

experience (Ruiz)[8]

        3. Similarities and key differences
- c. Two communities practices of All Saints' Day, which are forms of aesthetic teaching
  - i. "Floating Saints" – an art installation at SJUMC commemorating the 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki, Japan
  - ii. Velines (cemetery practices) in Lithuania (Thorpe)[9]
  - iii. All Saints' Day – historical context
    1. The veneration of saints in a Roman Catholic community
    2. Significance of ancestor veneration in Asian and Asian American spirituality[10]
- d. Comparative analysis
  - i. Using aesthetics as an axis for comparison
  - ii. Liabilities, challenges, and potential of making comparisons

III. New aesthetic renditions of Easter
- a. My own notion of renditions
- b. Thorpe's discussion of Velines cemeteries as "Saturday spaces" (Rambo)[11]
  - i. through the use of space and material culture
- c. SJUMC's "Floating Saints" and "haunting" (Gordon)[12]
  - i. Resurrection as homecoming
  - ii. Variation on a theme: Ghosts as seeking justice and reunion, not only justice
- d. Comparisons between the two cases

IV. Insights about my own community –its experience of violence and its struggle toward transformation, particularly through using aesthetic means
- a. How violence has been internalized in my own community, in comparison to the Lithuanian case
- b. The role of the liturgical art in fostering creativity, imagination, and critique among church members
  - i. Nurturing "postcolonial imagination" (Kwok)[13]
  - ii. Challenging colonial theologies of domination
    1. African American artists rendering "recrucified Christ" (Cone)
  - iii. Expressing narratives of the community (C.S. Song)
  - iv. Comparisons with Velines practices
- c. Education that draws from the "theological aesthetics of liberation" (Goizuetta)

[1] Baumgarten is discussed in Terry Eagleton, *Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991). Cited in S. Brent Plate, "The Skin of Religion: Aesthetic Mediations of the Sacred," *Cross Currents* 62, no. 2 (June, 2012).

[2] Farley, Edward. *Practicing Gospel: Unconventional Thoughts on the Church's Ministry*. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003).

[3] Schwab, Gabriele. Haunting Legacies: Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.

[4] Donna K. Nagata, *Legacy of Injustice: Exploring the Cross-generational Impact of the Japanese American Internment*. (New York: Plenum, 1993); Ina, Satsuki. "Counseling Japanese Americans: From Internment to Reparations," in *Multicultural issues in Counseling: New Approaches to Diversity*. Courtland C. Lee, ed. (Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association, 1997), 2nd ed., 189-206.

[5] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1982).

[6] Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. (New York: New York University Press, 2012).

[7] James Kyung-Jin Lee. "Elegies of Social Life: The Wounded Asian American." *Journal of Race Ethnicity and Religion.* Vol. 3, No. 2.7, 1-21.
http://www.raceandreligion.com/JRER/Volume_3_%282012%29_files/2%2013%207%20J%20Lee.pdf

[8] Lester Edwin J. Ruiz, "The Stranger in Our Midst: Diaspora, Ethics, Transformation." In *Realizing the America of Our Hearts: Theological Voices of Asian Americans.* (Danvers, MA: Chalice, 2003), 217-241.

[9] Denise Thorpe, "Memory on Fire: The Re-Membering of the Lithuanian Body (Politic)," PhD Dissertation, Duke University, 2013.

[10] Jane Naomi Iwamura, "Ancestral Returns: Re-examining the Horizons of Asian American Religious Practice" in *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women's Theology and Religion.* Rita Nakashima Brock, et. al, eds. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007).

[11] Thorpe; Rambo, Shelly. *Spirit and Trauma: A Theology of Remaining.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010.

[12] Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997.

[13] Kowk, Pui-lan. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005.

"I'm Going to do Things Differently": The Impact of Religious Sexuality Education on Future Church Leaders

Emily S. Kahm, Iliff School of Theology and University of Denver

Summary: This qualitative study asked professional women in the religious sphere about their experiences of sexuality education in the Christian contexts of their youth, and how they believe those teachings about sexuality affect their lives today. Narratives referenced the spiritual and emotional violence participants felt had been inflicted upon them by religious communities, and they connected their sexuality education to later issues in romantic relationships. However, participants noted the idea of "sex being sacred" as a value they wish to carry forward as professionals in the religious world.

I.   **Research Questions**

-How do female professionals in the area of Religious Studies recall their experiences of sexuality education, especially in their religious/church context?
-How do they believe their sexuality education impacts their adult lives, if at all?

II.   **Sample**

-Josephine: 50+, white, raised Roman Catholic, identifies as Roman Catholic, divorced
-Andi: 31-35, white, raised Southern Baptist with Episcopalian influence, identifies as non-theist, in a heterosexual relationship at time of interview
-Phoebe: 26-30, white, raised Presbyterian and Baptist, identifies as Christian with Buddist/Judaist leanings, divorced, in a heterosexual relationship at time of interview

III.   **Methodology**

-Interviews from 45-90 minutes guiding participants through questions about church background, what they were taught about sexuality and how, what they appreciated or would have changed about those experiences, and how that experience impacted the way they would live as a religious professional

-Interviews coded and analyzed using phenomenological qualitative standard practices (descriptive, initial coding followed by pattern/theme coding)

IV.   **Findings**

Participants recalled their educational experiences largely negatively (themes listed with corresponding quotes)

A. Guilt and Pressure from Religious Community

"I think the guilt piece was something that was difficult to sort through because I think one of the things that goes along with that kind of message is a lot of guilt if you do make a mistake… And I think it's problematic in the sense that then people just hide. And hiding isn't good for anybody either." –Phoebe

"I was never given that permission, you know? To be human. In that regard. "You have to fulfill this, these expectations." And these are big and important questions, having to do with sexuality. So if you made the wrong choice...it's a bad choice. It has huge ramifications." -Josephine

B. Negative impact on Romantic Relationships

"I ended up marrying a guy that I dated in that [conservative Evangelical] church setting. And we got married really young. And there was a lot of pressure to not be physical. And to, if you were going to date, have it be someone who you were definitely going to marry." –Phoebe

"I finally told [my boyfriend], "I want to do this [have sex] with you." And he said to me, "How can you put me before God?" And that ****ed me up!" -Andi

"It was a very good thing that my first partner, sexual partner, was an atheist. Because he allowed me to not feel bad about myself." -Andi

C. One Positive Point: Sexuality as Sacred

"I appreciate seeing sexuality and human relationships as sacred. I really do appreciate that…Maybe in balance, it would have been more helpful." –Josephine

You know...I wish [my Sunday school teacher] had just left it as "Know that it's a sacred thing." That was important to learn, I loved that! It is sacred, don't just give up this sacred thing, not just virginity, but all of yourself." –Andi

"I like the message of not just sleeping around, and you know, I wouldn't say, well they should have just said "Hand out condoms! Go experiment!" –Phoebe

V. **Implications For Discussion**

-Churches/religious communities should be aware that addressing sexuality as sacred does not counteract negativity in other aspects of sexuality education

-Churches/religious communities may need to find ways to evaluate their sexuality education that include the perceptions of the students

-Emergent theme from recent interview in a related study: Participant indicated that she was glad she was taught "nothing" about sexuality because what would have been taught (by the Roman Catholic Church) would have been harmful and negative

VI. **Related Sources**

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Padgett, Deborah. *Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Public Health*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE, 2012.

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C 1.8 Education Through Encounter: Insights for Ministry from Encounter With Survivors of Clergy Sexual Abuse of Children;

Dr. Aldona Lingertat, St. John's Seminary, Master of Arts in Ministry Program, Brighton, MA

The clergy child sexual abuse scandal of 2002 had its epicenter in the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston. During the past 12 years the Catholic Church became a target of anger, an object of ridicule, and a lightning rod of controversy. What was learned in Boston is an important lesson for all.

At the Catholic Archdiocesan seminary, St. John's Seminary, the Master of Arts in Ministry Program is a separate program prepares lay women and men for non-ordained professional positions in ministry or "lay ecclesial ministry." This unique term officially used in 2004 in the USCCB document Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord reflects the fairly unique position of professional full time laity working in the Catholic Church in ministerial positions. CARA statistics reflect nationally: 22,791Catholic laity enrolled in programs for ministry.

During the past 10 years the lay students in their second year of spiritual, pastoral, and human formation at St. John's Seminary have met with staff social workers from the Archdiocesan Office of Pastoral Outreach to discuss this issue. Over the years the staff has brought persons who have been abused to speak to the students. Interviews with staff members reflect that they chose carefully who to bring. The sexual abuse survivors who did come appreciated the opportunity to be heard. They gave permission to have an ordained priest, a member of the faculty, to be present. The survivors report that these encounters gave them a chance to communicate the reality of the situation and feel that they were contributing to the training of the future ministers. Students had the opportunity to learn how to address complex issues. A debriefing session of students with the ordained member of the faculty allowed painful issues to be discussed. The encounter of the survivors and social workers with students and faculty is analyzed including a look at the effect on students who themselves had been sexually abused.

Presentation Outline:

Why continue to address this issue? Isn't it "over"?

How effective is learning in the presence of the victims, Archdiocesan staff social workers, and faculty including clergy?

What should students in ministry programs know about this issue? What should be the goals?

How does one best present on this issue when there are students who have been sexually abused?

Does this encounter with victims in the presence of clergy help develop ministerial skills, empathy, and a nuanced response? How does one integrate these responses with the deep sense of fidelity and defensive stance of students toward their faith tradition?

What other factors do the interviews and survey indicate were helpful to this encounter?

Methodology: Qualitative study with focus groups, interviews, survey

Primary Sources:

Survey of students and graduates;

Interviews with social workers, victims and faculty;

Bibliography:

Data Reports:

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Kavita Desai, Dawn Lew, Esq. Senior Staff Attorney, 2012 Safe Environment Effectiveness
Study, National Review Board The Effectiveness of the Catholic Church's Child Sexual Abuse
Prevention Programs http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-
protection/upload/Safe-Environment-White-Paper-FINAL.pdf

John Jay Report, 2011, http://www.usccb.org/news/2011/11-105.cfm

Thomas Reilly, Massachusetts Attorney General, Report 2003,
http://www.bostoncatholic.org/uploadedFiles/BostonCatholicorg/Offices_And_Services/Offices/
Sub_Pages/Professional_Standards_and_Oversight/reillyreport.pdf

Books/Articles:

Boston Globe Investigative Staff. Betrayal: The Crisis in the Catholic Church, Little, Brown and
Company, Boston NewYork London,2002

Donald Cozzens, Sacred Silence: Denial and the Crisis in the Church, The Liturgical Press,
Collegeville, 2002

David France, Our Fathers: The Secret Life of the Catholic Church in an Age of Scandal,
Broadway Books, New York, 2004

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Development; vol 25, No.1 (Spring 2004), p. 40-44

Colloquium Presentation C2.7, Saturday, November 2, 2014 at 1:45 PM
Title: Can religious literacy deter religious bullying?
Colloquium presenter: Wing Yu Alice Chan, PhD Student, McGill University

Main concepts/issues:

This emerging research explores the connections between religious literacy and religious bullying within public school settings in Modesto, California and Montreal, Canada. As the only two mandatory religious literacy programs within North America, I hope to find teaching practices and student, teacher, principal, and parental perspectives on the role of religious literacy within public schools in both contexts. In doing so, I aim to better understand religious bullying in relation to religious literacy and share existing practices with teachers struggling to teach religious literacy. This presentation will introduce my literature review thus far and issues of religious bullying and the state of religious literacy in Modesto and Montreal, as well as discuss the role of dialogue in religious literacy programs (Jackson, 1997; Moore, 2007; Haynes, 2011; Wessler, 2011).

Today, reports on religious bullying trickle into our mass media and research (Hamblim, 2013; Joshi, 2007; Kabf, 1998; Lipsett, 2008; *Sikh Coalition*, 2014). Although religious bullying is often misunderstood, bullying organizations, such as Canada's PrevNet and America's stopbullying.gov, and my doctoral research are uncovering more details about this type of bullying. Like other forms of bullying, religious bullying causes emotional, mental, or physical harm to another individual(s). Specifically, it occurs when individual(s) are physically, psychologically, or verbally degraded intentionally by other individual(s) in-person and/or online based on the bully's own (non-)religious convictions or the (non-)religious convictions of those being degraded (Kirman, 2004; PrevNet; stopbullying.gov). Elaborating on existing conceptions, I argue that religious bullying is not only a one-time occurrence but can be a repeated offence as well.

Moore (2007) conceptualizes religious literacy as the ability to understand basic religious beliefs and practices, their complexities and diversities within and across religions, and the ability to discern and analyze religions' influence across the intersections of political, social, and cultural life historically and today. Her work cautions pluralistic societies against instilling religious illiteracy through the failure to include religion in the curriculum and as a violation to constitutional laws. In accord with her precautionary comments, my experience as a corporate employee in a Forbes 500 company, as a classroom teacher, and as a teacher researcher raises questions about the possibility of a cycle of (il)literacy among adults and students today. Having witnessed a degree of religious (il)literacy among adults, and a recent report by the Pew Research Group's Religion and Public Life Project on increasing rates of global religious hostility, my presentation will also consider the role of religious literacy programs in deterring this potential cycle. Concluding thoughts in the presentation will focus on the role of dialogue and current approaches and strategies for discourse from Jackson, Moore, Haynes, and Wessler.

Methodology for addressing the topic:

Using narrative analysis methodology, my research will span four years with five overlapping phases. Surveys and interviews will be my main methods of data collection. For

quantitative data, I will use a demographic survey to identify trends or patterns and comparative demographic data such as age, ethnicity, religion, etc. For qualitative data, I will use multiple-case study methodology to conduct three one-on-one interviews with 16 key participants – 3 students, 1 teacher, 1 principal and 3 parents from each context. Interviews will be: at the beginning and end of the school term, and a year later to see if their outlook on others and society may differ as a result of the religious literacy programs. In the third interview, responses and observed best practices from Montreal participants will be shared with Modesto participants and vice versa to encourage reflexivity of participants. Each phase will begin with observation in Montreal for the first half of the school year, followed by Modesto in the second half of the school year. I will focus only on the urban public school setting of Modesto, California and Montreal, Quebec due to their increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations. In Phase 1, I plan to find best practices and statistics on documented bullying cases from literary review. I am currently completing Phase 1. In Phase 2, 3, and 4, I will survey and interview students, teachers, principals, and parents, respectively. In Phase 5, my primary focus is research dissemination.

Data Collection and Analysis: Demographic surveys will include multiple choice and open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews will follow with my 16 key participants. Verbatim interview transcription and thematic analysis will follow each survey and interview, where data will be analyzed based on the theoretical frameworks of the study and additional themes from participant response. In-class descriptive and reflective field notes will be used to identify additional teaching practices.

Sources grounding the presentation:

My Masters research on Greater Toronto Area (GTA) public school systems revealed that public school boards, provincial, federal, and international policies and legislation support the importance of informal religious discussion. All parties agree that the inability to understand and respect differences can foster student bullying (such as name calling and alienation), possible self-destruction, and potential destruction of others in violent or radical ways. However, Lester (2013) posits that when teachers create an inclusive space for students to discuss religious diversity in the classroom, they offer varying perspectives that guide students toward conflict resolution for their future. Perhaps religious literacy can contribute to this inclusive space. My research will build on Lester's (2013) research in Modesto's World Religions Course and bring a new approach to the study of Montreal's Ethics and Religious Culture program. Current reports by the Pew Research Group, studies and teaching strategies from Diane Moore, Robert Jackson, Charles Haynes, and Stephen Wessler will be leveraged. The Tony Blair Faith Foundation's Face to Faith program and California's 3 Rs Project on religious liberty will also be referenced.

The status of the research at the time of the proposal:

This presentation will present emerging research. Hence, all alternative approaches to the research will be welcomed during the post-presentation discussion.

An exploration of the relationship between Religious Education teachers' understandings of religiously inspired violence and their practice in the classroom- outline of a preliminary paper

Andrea Haith (Canterbury Christ Church University)

Introduction

This paper represents an outline of my initial ideas about the teaching of religiously inspired violence in UK schools and the development of a pedagogy which will empower students to strive for equality. I have used the term 'religiously inspired violence' rather than 'terrorism' or 'extremism' as these terms usually resonate with the media portrayal of Islam. Equally, I am uncomfortable with the concept of 'religiously' inspired violence as this equates with ideas of absolutism, divisiveness and irrationality and to this extent it is a Western invention (Cavanaugh, 2009). Secular ideologies can be just as prone to acts of violence but these are justified as a rational means to peacekeeping.

The RE Curriculum in England

The Education Reform Act 1988 provides the legal context for the practice of Religious Education in England. The Act stipulates some of the content of Locally Agreed Syllabi. It also grants specific discretionary rights for Standing Advisory Councils for RE (SACRE's). Further recommendations re the content of the RE syllabus is provided by QCA (2004). To this extent RE provision in England is complex (Conroy et al 2013, p59) and inconsistent.

There is no specific legislation which states that the topic of religiously inspired violence has to be taught to students in UK secondary schools. However, a number of recent reviews of the RE curriculum have emphasised that RE is a significant medium in which to do this (REC, 2013: p.14).

The Issues

Religious Education at GCSE level incorporates a myriad of topics. Critics have suggested that reliance on examination-focused learning outcomes, examination-board approved materials and the content and the aims of the examined curriculum in setting the agenda for RE has distorted learning (see Strhan, 2010; Conroy et al, 2013). There appears to be little emphasis on the complex, rich and troubling histories and myths at the heart of religious traditions and thus we are presented with a distorted image of what being 'religious' means (Strhan, 2010).

Moulin, in a study of the experiences of secondary school students from religious backgrounds in RE lessons, found that they felt that their tradition (the study involved students from four religious communities, one Jewish and three Christian) was stereotyped and simplified without acknowledging the diversity within it or noting the complex relationship between individual adherents and their own tradition. (Moulin, 2010).

The topic of religiously inspired violence raises a number of difficulties for RE teachers in publically funded schools. The primary focus in my research will be on Islam because it is at the centre of public and political discourse in relation to religious extremism and terrorism (Miller, 2013). The issues raised, however, can be applied to all forms of religiously inspired violence.

Since September 11 2001 there has been a drive to promote positive relationships between religious groups. Recent international events and the reporting of them has done little to cultivate empathy towards Islam. This further compounds the difficulties for RE teachers.

Hitherto, specific guidance on how to teach contentious issues has been guided by a number of initiatives imposed by successive Governments. The *Contest* and its subsequent *Prevent* strategy established in 2008, was conceived in an attempt to seek to establish relationships with community partners as a way of 'stopping people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremism' (Home Office, 2008) (Revell, 2012).

In 2011, *Prevent* was rewritten as the Government wanted to be seen to show a more robust approach to preventing terrorism and promoting integration. The Government literature is replete with reference to threats to security lying in the context of Islam and indeed has served to stigmatize Islam and Islamism. Miller uses the term the 'satanization' of Islam to refer to the way the British Press portray the Islamic religion (Miller, 2013). *Contest, Prevent* and the community cohesion agenda have been criticized for the way they seem to criminalise Muslims (Bartlett and Birdwell, 2010; Revell 2012, p.86) or for being founded on political and philosophical assumptions that Islam is associated with extremism and the failure of Muslim communities to integrate (Revell, 2012).

In 2012, still as part of the Government's Prevent strategy, the REsilience Project was conceived. This was grounded in the RE context and according to Revell this is what set it apart from previous material. The project provides teachers with a series of Gateway materials aimed at promoting equality, diversity and tolerance. The material is located in the interpretive pedagogical framework (Jackson, 1997) which has become familiar with RE teachers over the past 15 yrs. Each gateway approaches a specific issue from common RE practices as outlined in the Non-Statutory Framework for RE (QCA, 2004:13) i.e there is emphasis on enabling teachers to create a classroom environment where all views are listened to and a safe space is provided for pupils to discuss their opinions; there is an opportunity to explore debates that may challenge assumptions about Islam and radicalization; suggestions to help students to respect all cultures and religious practices as well as advice on how teachers can adopt a neutral stance (Revell, 2012;p.88). The Gateway materials also do not place emphasis on Islam nor use this as an exemplar when discussing [*justified* religious] violence towards women, 'honour crimes' FGM and forced marriage. Where Islam is mentioned the document stresses that 'it is important to emphasise that forced marriage is not a teaching of any religion (Revell, 2012: p.90). The materials also provide substantial theological or historical background for the topics (Revell, 2012). They also do not generalize about Muslim traditions or religious beliefs (Revell, 2012: 91).

Revell suggests that unlike any of the preceding material arising from *Contest* and *Prevent* Resilience actually considers the impact of discrimination and hatred against Muslims as part of the remit of contentious issues and more importantly highlights the harmful effect of stereotyping (Revell, 2012

The Theoretical Framework

In my research I want to explore RE teachers' own understanding of religiously inspired violence and to assess how these impact on their practice in the classroom. This will require analyzing if/how RE teachers have used the Gateway materials and critically evaluating the interpretive approach.

It is my premise that the teaching of religions in the classroom has become sanitized and that there is a tendency to treat them as unsullied truths (Miller, 2013). I will argue that a more rigorous and critical approach to the teaching of religiously inspired violence (and RE in general) is required if we are to empower students to live responsibly and respectfully in today's diverse society.

The theoretical framework I shall be using is that of critical theory and I shall be drawing on the work of Habermas and Freire

Pilot study
-Focus on the GCSE curriculum
-observe and record the lessons
-?3 schools and a series of 5 lessons in each
-look at the way the teacher teaches it- body language-interaction with the class-intonation
-interview at the beginning and interview at the end: the interview will focus on what is in their heads: 1. What is RIV? 2. Do you translate this into your teaching practice? 3. Is there a correlation between your concepts and how you teach it? 4. Do you feel your approach to teaching provides a fruitful theoretical perspective which enables students to view the issue of RIV objectively/in a balanced way?
Is there a correlation with this and their teaching? Is there a correlation with what's in their head/the concepts and how they deliver the topic?

(Un)Making Violence Against Racialized Women through Critical Religious Pedagogies: Christian Womanist, Muslim and Jewish Feminist Perspectives

Boyung Lee
Laurie Garrett-Cobbina
Elizabeth Ingenthron
Reem Javed

Graduate Theological Union
Berkeley, CA

1. Introduction - Boyung Lee

1) A Brief Introduction to Critical Pedagogy, and Why It is a Must, Not an Option for religious educators in unmaking violence against women of color.

2) Uncritical (religious) education as a major tool for social sanctioned violence against minoritized people, particularly women of color.

2. Possibilities of Critical Religious Pedagogy to Unmake Violence Against Women of Color - Three Perspectives

I. A Christian Womanist Perspective - Laurie Garrett-Cobbina

1. The roots of US higher education
   a. Connection to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and grief/trauma of Africans forced into chattel slavery by Europeans
   b. Connection between education, trans-Atlantic slave trade, genocide of indigenous nations the Americas, and Christianity
   c. Academy refines and popularized language of race and develops intellectual discourse of white supremacy
2. Critical pedagogy and black psychology
   a. Race as a pedagogical path
   b. Race as a significant source of grief in the education experiences of black women
   c. Emotional organization of education relationships: communal knowing vs. communal feeling
   d. Connecting the capacity to learn with the capacity to copy with accumulated experiences of grief and trauma
3. How can critical pedagogy take up the humanizing task of creating a mode of associated living that is healing and emancipating?
   a. Christian grief perspective
   b. A black women's grief perspective
   c.

II. A Jewish Feminist Perspective - Elizabeth Ingenthron

1. Violent oppressive logics in Jewish thought and religious education.
2. Heteropatriarchy and White Supremacy in Jewish thought and education.

     a.   Disinvestment in Jewish tradition and cultural practice
     b.   Investment in whiteness - i.e. education about Israel and Zionism in Jewish Religious Education
3. Implications of violent oppressive logics for Jewish women
     a.   How Jews became white (Karen Brodkin, Charles Mills, Noel Ignatiev, David Roediger, James Baldwin)
     b.   Muted Judaism with Ashkenazi dominance
     c.   Jewish women of color, white Jewish women and the radical diaspora (Melanie Kaye/ Kantrowitz, Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb, Judith Butler)

III. A Muslim Feminist Perspective - Reem Javed

1. Perceived and actual oppression of Muslim women
2. What is Islamic education? Brief overview
     a.   Tawhid
     b.   Vicegerent and servant of God
     c.   Female believer
3. Two main scriptural texts: Quran and Hadith
     a.   Quran authored by God
     b.   Hadith authored by men, authoritatively weaving misogynistic context of the time into the text as the truth
4. Islamic Education and *Tawhid*
     a.   Spiritual and emotional violence against the female believer and its impacts on her ability to learn.
     b.   *dhulm*, or injustice, in *Tawhid*, when such content supersedes the essential message of Islam.
5. Critical pedagogical solution from a Muslim perspective

3. Conversations and Conglusions

REA Annual Meeting 2014/November 7-9/Chicago
Colloquy C 2.9/Saturday 1:45pm
Presenter: Muriel Schmid, PhD
Affiliation: Christian Peacemaker Teams, Program Director
Email: program@cpt.org
Phone: 801-809-5495

Who Wears the Stole in the Family? Women Ordination and Cultural Violence

Précis:
      The 2006 U.N. report on violence against women sees religion as one of the main factors that contribute to it. Following Galtung's distinction between three levels of violence (direct, structural, and cultural) while placing patriarchy under the category of cultural violence, illuminates the relationship between religion and all forms of violence perpetrated against women. Based on the example of the struggle for women's ordination in the Catholic and LDS Churches, this paper discusses the correlation between patriarchy, violence, religious representations, and ethical responsibility.

a.   Main concepts/issues:
      Violence against women is one of the most wide-spread forms of violence. In the past few years, the U.N. and the World Health Organization have been conducting several studies in order to assess the situation and encourage better practices worldwide, illuminating the fact that forms of violence against women are endemic and omnipresent, from domestic violence to sex trafficking, from femicide to mutilations. Based on the latest findings from the WHO (2013), 35% of women experience physical or sexual violence in their intimate relationship; this number does not take into account all the other forms of violence experienced by women. The 2006 U.N. report on violence against women repeats over and over that religion is one of the main factors that contribute to all forms of violence against women, justifying structures of oppression such as patriarchy and other discriminatory practices. The U.N. report reminds its readers that in order to eradicate all forms of violence against women, programs need to address all levels of violence and thus it is imperative to enroll religious communities in this effort.
      Johan Galtung has established categories of violence that are now widely recognized and used. Galtung distinguishes between direct (often physical) violence, structural violence, and cultural violence; he adds that all three levels are interconnected. One level of violence, be it physical, structural or cultural, cannot be fully eradicated without addressing the other two levels. Moreover, if physical and structural forms of violence are often easy to identify, cultural violence is harder to name and dismantle as it penetrates and sustains most of our social and religious representations—Galtung himself came to identify it 20 years after he had started publishing on physical and structural forms of violence. And yet, cultural violence represents the ultimate legitimization for other types of violence.
      Patriarchy is a form of cultural violence and it has implications at the two other levels of violence, structural and physical. What feminist theologians have been tirelessly denouncing for the past 30 years cannot be confined to a mere intellectual, exegetical struggle, but their critique of patriarchy is linked to a broader struggle against violence perpetrated against women. In this sense, Churches, believers, and religious leaders have a central role to play in dismantling cultural violence against women; in many ways, this is not a choice, but a serious ethical responsibility.
      When we talk about violence against women, Islam has become the scapegoat for many Westerners, especially in the post-9/11 era. Whether or not we think Islam promotes

discriminatory practices against women, Christianity needs to address its own discriminatory practices—gender equality in Christian denominations is not yet a given. From October 30 to November 8, 2013, the World Council of Churches held its 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea, marking the 60th anniversary of the WCC. The WCC has worked on gender equality all along; it sees it as a central element of the fight for justice in which Churches have an essential role to play. In Busan, women held a pre-conference event to remind the WCC's members of the importance of continuing this fight. Since neither the Catholic Church nor the LDS Church (Mormon Church) are official members of the WCC, women belonging to those traditions who fight for equality represent a powerful case-study.

The Ordain Women movement in the LDS Church and the Roman Catholic Womenpriests movement are excellent examples of efforts made at the grassroots level to fight inequality in specific Christian denominations. Examining their actions and their work provides an opportunity to evaluate the role of women and their allies in dismantling cultural violence in the Christian tradition. Furthermore, their work unmasks the correlation between language, rituals, and exclusion. Fighting within their own tradition, the women seeking ordination in the Roman Catholic Church and the LDS Church are not only challenging a well-established tradition nor do they simply demand to be able to do what men do, they revisit biblical texts, they interrogate doctrinal statements, they rewrite liturgies, and they break down the organization of sacred spaces. In so doing, their example inspire men and women in their respective tradition to rethink structures of power and their ramifications. The struggle for women's ordination in Christian traditions that do not accept it does not happen in a vacuum. It points towards the importance of looking at violence in a holistic way and thus opens avenues to undo oppression where we are and engage religious groups to participate in this effort.

Linda Woodhead's sociological research on gender, religion, and power offers an invaluable model to think about grassroots initiatives that empower women in Churches and congregations. She categorizes women's activities navigating patriarchal structures into four spheres (consolidating, tactical, questing, and countercultural) that allow for creative resistance. Her model helps situate various forms of resistance, including the ordination movements, in the larger context of the struggle to eradicate violence against women.

b.   Methodology for addressing the topic:

The presentation will be divided into four sections: a general overview of the data regarding violence against women and its religious roots; a brief discussion on how religion actively contributes to what Galtung identifies as cultural violence; an illustration of the specific correlation between the struggle for equality and the broader fight against cultural violence with the examples of the LDS Ordain Women movement and the Roman Catholic Womenpriests movement; finally, inspired by Woodhead's work, a list of practical recommendations to empower Christian women and their allies to fight cultural violence.

c.   Sources grounding the presentation:

2006 U.N. Report on women:
>   http://www.unwomen.org/

WCC pre-conference on women equality:
>   http://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc2019s-60-year-journey-for-gender-justice-continues

LDS Ordain Women movement:
>   http://ordainwomen.org/

RCWP movement:
>   http://www.romancatholicwomenpriests.org/

Johan Galtung, "Cultural Violence," *Journal of Peace Research*, 27/3 (August 1990): 291-305.

Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research" in: *Journal of Peace Research* 6/3 (1969): 167-191.

Linda Woodhead, "Gender Differences in Religious Practice and Significance" in: James Beckford and N J. Demerath III (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, SAGE Publications, 2007: 566-586.

Linda Woodhead, "Women and Religion" in: Linda Woodhead et alii (eds), *Religions in Modern World: Traditions and Transformations*, Routledge 2002: 332-356.

d.   The status of the research at the time of the proposal:

This paper is a work in-progress; a version of it was presented at the Mormon Women Forum in fall 2013.

Educational Ministry with the Immigrant Wives in Korea:
Practice of Love and Acceptance

Sinai Chung

Abstract. *This research gives special attention to the existence of immigrant wives in the Korean society, many of whom have been victimized under various forms of domestic violence. This aims to give a thick description of the lives of immigrant wives in Korean society, including their experiences under domestic violence. In this study, their experiences will be analyzed explaining causes and effects of domestic violence against them. On the basis of their experiences and the analysis of those, this research will explore a ministerial practice for helping them to overcome their agonizing experiences of victimization under various types of violence in their marriage lives and then to actualize their full potential as global, multicultural resources. For this, the study will suggest the "practice of love and acceptance."*

There is a unique body of population in the landscape of the Korean society, called "immigrant wives." They migrated to Korea generally for financial reasons from several underrepresented countries in Asia such as China, Vietnam, and Philippines, as wives of Korean men through the process of "arranged international marriage". This has been an alternative pattern of marriage since the early 1990's in the Korean society, aiming to match the countryside men or the relatively lower class men in the city who could not have Korean spouses and thus passed their optimal ages for marriage with the young women from Asian countries of relatively lower economic status. Such international marriage cases are on the rapid rise and the number of immigrant wives is also rapidly increasing. According to the survey of the Ministry of Gender equality and Family of the Republic of Korea, the number of immigrant wives reached up to 161,999 in 2010, 188,580 in 2011, 196,789 in 2012, and 235,947 in 2013.[1] Such an increase of immigrant wives has brought a social interest in multiculturalism and multicultural family into wide discourses on those in the entire society of Korea, which has once been known as one of the most ethnically homogeneous countries.

But unfortunately, it has been reported that a large portion of immigrant wives in Korea have been victims of domestic violence. According to a survey, 69.1% of immigrant wives have experienced domestic violence including seriously severe physical violence cases (17.3%).[2] They have been suffered under various forms of domestic violence such as psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, economic cruelty, and cultural insults. Reasons of conflicts between Korean husbands and immigrant wives, which ended up to violent actions, might vary: patriarchal-dominating ideology, socio-cultural differences, economic vulnerability, individual weaknesses, language barrier and difficulties in communication, and personality differences. The victimized immigrant wives have suffered

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[1] Refer to the official webpage of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea.
http://www.mogef.go.kr/korea/view/policyGuide/policyGuide04_03_01.jsp?viewfnc1=0&viewfnc2=0&viewfnc3=1&viewfnc4=0&viewfnc5=0&viewfnc6=0

[2] Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of Republic of Korea. (2011). *2010 Research on the Actual Condition of Multicultural Family Domestic Violence*. Seoul, Korea: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of Republic of Korea, p547.

from fear, anxiety, guilt, depression, helplessness, indignity, and sense of low-self worth on top of their physical scars.

Church is to faithfully respond to and responsibly take care of all kinds of unrighteousness and dehumanization. The experience of victimized immigrant wives is the case as well. Since immigrant wives are new to Korean churches as well as other churches who share the responsibility to unmake violence for a righteous and humane world, they, especially the victimized by domestic violence, need to be given a special attention in our ministerial realm. Church should empower them to overcome the previous agonizing experiences, to be recovered and renewed from the past, and to actively re-search for their wellbeing both in the personal and social scopes. In order to do this, church needs to address how to empower them and be able to carry out specific ministerial practices for them. And this study will suggest church's "ministerial practice of love and acceptance," as one of such empowering practices for the battered and discriminated immigrant wives.

In this sense, this research will mainly explore the life stories of immigrant wives including their experiences of domestic violence, aiming to provide a thick description. If there are faith stories to be shared, it would be examined how their faith has served their dealing with the battered and discriminated experiences. The detailed causes and effects of their victimized experiences will be explained as well. Then, from the analysis of their stories and experiences, this study will search for what church and its education ministry can do for the immigrant wives, who are the victims of domestic violence in the Korean society. Although "ministerial practice of love and acceptance" is now considered to be suggested as one of the ways for church and its education to serve them, if different results come out from the analysis, this study will go with that results.

The methodology that will be mainly applied for this research is a qualitative research, while supplemented by literature-based research and insights from our faith community. Intensive interviews will be a main tool of data collection, and literatures and insights will be employed when analyzing the gathered data. This research has more steps to go. The main research question has been set (the lives of the immigrant wives including their battered and discriminated experiences) and the central issue (domestic violence against immigrant wives and educational ministry with them) was clarified. Literature review about the immigrant wives was done. From this review, basic information and concepts for immigrant wives related issues were gathered. Literature review for the initial haunch of ministerial ideas for such wives was done, which might be supplemented after analyzing research data. For collecting data, the intensive interviews will be conducted from September through October of 2014 with 12 immigrant wives from Philippines, selected due to the communication convenience. A sample interview guide and an informed consent from were created. Through these documents, all respondents will be informed about the purpose of the study and given confidentiality promise.

Through interviews, the informants are expected to share their life and faith stories, yielding a thick description of who and how they are as immigrant wives. This will tell us their experiences of domestic violence as well. I expect that these altogether will teach us how Christian education would serve them to overcome their agonizing experiences of victimization under various types of violence in their marriage lives and then to actualize their full potential as global, multicultural resources.

Sources grounding the presentation

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Critical Pedagogy and The Politics of Disposability

Summary

As one who has never pulled a trigger on a gun I am strongly opposed to gun violence and I am a proponent for strict gun controls. However, I have also long known that gun control is not the solution for (un) making violence in the United States of America. In this paper I will use primarily literature research and my own context of experience to argue that what Henry A. Giroux calls the politics of disposability is a major contributor to the violence we experience in the United States. Furthermore, I will argue that critical pedagogy is an educational and religious asset that can make a difference in the (un) making of violence in the United States.

Major Concepts and issues

The major issue this paper addresses is the violence on the most vulnerable of society. I am particularly concerned in this arena about the violence toward youth; however, poor minorities, immigrants, the disabled, and others also fall within the realm of the concept of being disposable.

1. I will also explore how the American culture in general is violent against the most vulnerable of society. In this area I will call up on the research of Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund to discuss the cradle to prison pipeline and how the economy of America continues to feed this pipeline.
2. I will examine educational policy and show how it contributes to the politics of disposability.

Methodology

In this paper I will address the topic mainly through literature research, however, most of my research will come from the class on Critical Pedagogy I taught at my seminary in the fall of 2013. The major approach will be the use of critical social consciousness and how we as educators help others to use this concept for personal and corporate liberation.

Sources

I will use the work of Henry A. Giroux. Additionally, I will use Paulo Freire and drawing from the wealth of knowledge found in the book Critical Pedagogy (Where Are We Now?) edited by Peter McLaren and Joe L. Kincheloe.

Telling Stories – Creating Attitudes

A consideration of the contribution of story and the use of story in an educational setting

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Abstract

This paper takes the form of a reflection on experience and is designed to stimulate or renew discussion amongst those working with children between the ages of 5 and 11 years about the role of story, storytelling and reflections on story as ways of contributing positively to the creation of attitudes towards other people, the environment and violent behaviour in all its forms. In considering the choice of story, the selection of presentational methods and the way in which reflection is stimulated, the paper will seek to contribute to the way in which practitioners understand their task. The paper will use story and reflection on story as a key part of its consideration of the topic.

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Presentation

I was wrestling with the topic of this conference and wondering what I could contribute while making a visit to my son's family. During the course of that visit I heard my eight year old grandson make reference to Germans as the 'enemy'. I was really quite disturbed by this, particularly as my grandson lives not in Europe, but in New Zealand and has done so since he was about a year old.

How could he have picked up such a prejudiced and outdated concept?

I can only offer a possible explanation. This makes the assumption that he has heard stories about the Second World War or its aftermath and has absorbed this attitude from them.

I begin this presentation with a story because it is to do with story, storytelling and reflections on stories that have been heard and absorbed. To my mind it would be bizarre to discuss 'story' without telling some, so this presentation will be punctuated by stories. I bring to this presentation my experience as a teacher of young children, a parent and grandparent and also my alter ego as poet and writer of stories for both children and adults.

Do you accept my hypothesis about my grandson's expressed prejudice? If you do then you have acknowledged the power of 'story' to affect our attitudes to ourselves and to each other, and in this lies my link to the theme of this conference. We gain much of the stereotypes that we all live with through the stories that we tell each other. To illustrate this another story -

I was facilitating a meeting of students from different parts of Europe a few years ago. The group included students from Germany and Poland. Towards the end of the week one of the German students shared with the group her pleasure at meeting Polish people for the first time and finding them to be 'just like us' she explained that she had discovered her former anti-Polish prejudice by sharing a joke which she said was widely quoted in Germany, it goes 'Come and visit Poland, your car, that was stolen, will be there before you!'

Children encounter story in all aspects of their lives. Consciously or unconsciously the stories they hear from their parents, their contemporaries and from the mass media will begin to shape their attitudes to each other, to the stranger and to the wider world around them. Much of this 'informal learning' will be positive, but some may contribute to the development of stereotypes or attitudes to violence which if adopted and acted on may have negative consequences. At its ultimate a consistent story which labels other people, racial groups, nationalities as contemptible or sub-human can then be used to justify terrible acts of violence.

The impact of this 'informal learning' from story may be mitigated for good by two distinct factors. Firstly the intervention of parents, or other adults that enables children to reflect on what they have heard or seen and therefore to understand better how it has impacted on them. Secondly the balancing of these stories by others which present a different perspective. The main location for such a balancing of story will be in those contexts labelled education. It may be only in an educational context that stories are deliberately selected and used for the purpose of developing attitudes and enabling children to reflect. Therefore it is important that all those engaged in work with children should consider the criteria that they are using, how story is presented and the way in which reflection on story is enabled and stimulated.

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There are three distinct aspects of 'telling stories:

1. Selection
2. Presentation
3. Reflection

1. Selection

As religious educators we have a major responsibility to select the stories we tell with care and sensitivity to the needs of the children as well as to the dictates of any syllabus that we might be required to follow. I want to suggest that a good syllabus places on us a responsibility to select stories that have significance at the core of the faith. For Christians this will imply that the stories are chosen for their relevance when viewed through the key event of the death and resurrection of Christ. Thus the Christmas story is important because without it there can be no death and resurrection, the story of the Exodus is important because of the importance it has within Christ's Jewish upbringing and because it is an earlier model of redemption. The finding of the infant Moses in the bulrushes is rather less important. The area that many Christian syllabi omit or undervalue is what happened as a result of the death and resurrection of Christ and how it changed and changes the lives of ordinary people. Thus in some contexts children may grow up well versed in 'Bible stories' but almost completely ignorant of the great saga that is the spread of the Christian Faith around the world through all generations.

For teachers working in a multi-faith context this same approach will need to be taken to the selection of stories from all the major world faiths. But there is more. We also need to be telling our children stories which help them to understand and relate to some of the 'building blocks' of religious experience, so stories of love, of wonder, of joy and of sorrow and so on.

There is a great deal to do and a huge range of stories from which to make a selection.

I was once ask to help the staff of a primary school to review their Religious Education syllabus. As a starting point I asked each of the teachers to write down the stories that they ensured were covered during the year for which had responsibility. There were seven year groups in the school covering the ages 4 to 11. When the lists were completed the story of Joseph and his brothers appeared on five of the seven lists. When I challenged this the teachers said that they had noticed this as well and could not understand why the story was omitted from the other two classes. Personally, while the story is important I believe that it did not justify its place in so many years, given everything else that should or could be included.

2. Presentation

Having decided on the most appropriate story, it is then important to consider how the story is to be conveyed to the children. There are many ways of 'telling a story'. There is the specific art of storytelling; there are books, drama, art, film, television and many more. Each method has its merits and its demerits and no-one can be an expert in the use of all of them, but children will need variety of presentation and as far as is possible the method of presentation should be tailored to match the demands of the story. Equally teachers and

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leaders will have their own preferred ways of presenting stories. Within this short paper I would not presume to enter into a discussion on what each of you should or could be doing. As teachers you will be developing your skills and confidence in this area all the time, but one thing perhaps is worth restating s a truism. If you are not enjoying what you are doing when you tell a story then neither will the children be enjoying it as they listen.

3. Reflection

If the story is to make a positive contribution to the development of the attitudes of the children, the consideration needs to be given to how the children will be enabled to reflect on the story. Sometimes it will be appropriate to explore the story and its possible meanings in an open discussion or through its reinterpretation through art or drama. Occasionally it may be appropriate to draw out a particular one of the many possible meanings and draw the children's attention to this. At other times it may be most appropriate to let the child interact with the story as he/she will, for this is what happens with most of the stories that she/he will encounter. The story will enter her/his mind 'as the seed enters the ground' and there it will grow or not. What fruit it bears will depend on the interaction between the child's individual experience, the child's own personality and the quality of the story.

I was once inspecting an RE lesson in which a teacher explained on of the Parables told by Jesus to a class of eight year olds. According to the exposition the meaning of the story that Christ told in Galilee was 'behave yourself in the school playground'. Those with a theological turn of mind might wish to speculate on which of the parables was intended by Christ to carry this meaning.

I tell this story because it illustrates, for me, the perils of 'explaining' the meaning, rather than allowing reflection.

By way of contrast, during the course of an act of worship the story of creation in Genesis 1 had been told. Later, during the school lunch break, a group of eleven year olds was discussing it with their teacher. "You don't believe all that rubbish about God making the world in seven days, do you sir?" one boy said to the teacher. "What do you think about it?" was the wise response. There followed an animated discussion about the topic which covered aspects of creationism and the use of allegory (although neither of those words was used). Sometimes the most difficult thing a teacher has to do is to be quiet and let the children think.

Perhaps the most overt way of telling stories to enable reflection is contained in Berryman's work on Godly Play (Berryman, 1991), but not all stories will be told like that.

I began by seeking to justify this reflection by speaking about the role of story in creating stereotypes. I want to finish with two stories, which might challenge some stereotypes.

1. A few years ago I was part of a committee that organised an international conference on RE in Ankara, the capital of Turkey. On the penultimate night the conference was hosted to dinner by the minister for Religious Affairs of the Turkish Government, who, of course, is a Muslim. As a member of the committee I was on the table with the minister. As the waiters were serving the meal it was the minister himself who intervened very gently to prevent the

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waiter serving to our colleague who is an orthodox Jew from an Israeli University with non-kosher food. A Kosher meal had been prepared and flown in especially from Istanbul.

2. I was lucky to attend one of the athletics sessions of the 2012 Olympics in London. One of the events I saw was the heats of the 800 metres for women. There was a competitor from Saudi Arabia, the first woman from that country to compete at that level. In absolute terms she came last in her heat by some 200 meters. The cheer as she crossed the line was nearly as great as that earlier in the day when Mo Farrar on his heat of the 10,000 meters on his way to a double gold medal. Why?, well partly because the crowd cheered everyone who had the courage to come and do their best, but mostly because, I believe, the 80,000 people in the stadium knew that this young woman's presence was important and they wanted to welcome her.

    Story is not the only way in which attitudes are formed, experience and the attitudes of those who are most important to the child will also play their part, but it is one of the areas which is open to educators to use in helping to combat attitudes that justify the use of violence towards other people or the living of selfish lives built on the exploitation and violent consumption of the world's resources or of other people's labour. As such, it is important that it is used wisely within the educational context.

Indicative Reading

The indicative reading is drawn from both the statutory education sector and the education done within the Christian church. It deliberately spans a wide period for this is not a new topic, but rather one that needs revisiting in each generation.

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Dr. Leslie Long, Oklahoma City University, Associate Professor of Religious Education

C 3.6 SATURDAY 3:30PM COLLOQUIUM - **When Curriculum is Oppressive: Working with the Methodist Church in Bolivia to Write Culturally Appropriate Curriculum for Children Ages 4-15.**
Examining a cooperative project between the Bolivian Methodist Church and the Oklahoma Conference of the UMC the presenter will share personal experiences gained from two curriculum workshops. Each workshop culminated in the preparation of three sets of curriculum for children between the ages of 4 and 15. The unique aspect of this project is how it brings together indigenous individuals from across the country of Bolivia for a week of curriculum writing and preparation. Because of this unique writing event the curriculum meets the needs of those it will serve.

Outline

1. Introduction
2. Understanding the backdrop
   a. Demographic information of Bolivia
   b. Demographic information of Methodist church
3. Curriculum Workshop
   a. Introduction of the setting
   b. Information about the participants
   c. Goals and objectives for the workshop
   d. Stories of the people and their work
4. Outcomes
   a. Curriculum samples
   b. Curriculum use in the church
5. Summary
   a. Why does this event matter?
   b. Who will benefit?
   c. Can such events be replicated?

I will be using PowerPoint with pictures of the event and will bring curriculum samples to share with individuals attending the colloquium.

The 'Unmaking' of Violence: Ecology, Christian Discipleship and the Role of Religious Education

MIRIAM K MARTIN, SAINT PAUL UNIVERSITY

1.   The Question of Violence and the Natural World

Before it is possible to 'unmake' a situation of violence we must recognize that the relationship of violence exists, that there is in fact a victim or group of victims. (Blume, 1996). The lack of acknowledgment regarding human violence against the rest of the natural world and the taking of responsible action to change it, is perhaps a central stumbling block to the unmaking of this violence.

2.   The Human Problematic Relationship with Nature.

Part of this conflict has to do with our operative understandings of who we are – our anthropologies and our worldviews - our cosmologies. Some of the dominant Christian religious and theological perspectives of the place of human beings in creation and the evolving story of the whole community of life has contributed to the development and continuation of violent practices against nature. Many scholars in light of the Emerging Universe Story have described the effects of our radical disconnect from the rest of natural world (McFague,2008; Deilo, 2013; Johnston, 2014). The results of that disconnect are many, the most serious being ecocide and biocide (McFague, 2008).

3.   A Problem of Language – What is Nature?

Researchers in Cultural studies also recognize difficulties in the discussion of the human and Earth relationship, finding problems within the discourse itself. Slack suggests that there are challenges in the use of our language in the context of these issues (Slack, 2008). What words shall we use?

4.   Seeking Directions for Solutions

As religious educators these cross-disciplinary discussions offer a significant challenge in how we might approach the unmaking of violence in our research and teaching. There are a variety of currents moving toward an understanding of the deep interconnectedness of all of life and its flourish (Berry, 2000; McFague, 2008; Swimme & Tucker, 2011). Liberation theology, research and practice has also made the serious link between human poverty and the deadly pollution of the planet. (Boff, 1997) Violence and human conflicts arise more readily in situations of human deprivation and lack of sustainable resources (Blume, 1996). The growing relationship is being made regarding educating for peace and issues of ecology (Kyrou, 2007). Ecological devastation and the destruction of the natural world continue in spite of best efforts from many disciplines. War and violence continues to contribute to that destruction. What lenses can religious education bring to this challenge for the unmaking of violence? How do these questions impact the knowledge and experience of what it means to be mature Christian disciples in today's world? How can these critical concerns be brought together into the curriculum of religious education programs?

1

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2

Journeying into a Peaceful Islam
A Worldview Framework Approach

Work in progress presented by
Mualla Selçuk and John Valk

1. *Main concepts/issues*

In the minds of many in Europe and North America, the words Islam and violence often go hand in hand. Islam is readily associated with 9/11, Afghanistan, Osama Bin Laden, car bombings, the oppression of women, the persecution of Christians, and more. But what if Islam does not really fit this caricature, or that portrayed by people such as Salman Rushdie, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, or Pastor Terry Jones (Rushdie, 1997; Ali, 2008)? Like Christianity, it is all too often simplified, vilified and misunderstood.

The media plays a major role in conveying a particular view of Islam. A constant bombardment of negative images soon takes its toll and a stereotype emerges: Islam is perceived as violent. Counter-violence from non-Muslims sometimes surfaces and individuals or groups of individuals on both sides abuse religion to advance their own nefarious purposes. The reporting of their destructive activities does little to deepen our understanding of the religions themselves.

Educational systems remain the dominant source for educating about religion. But when and where it does so, does it also convey a truncated notion? Students learn facts about religion but do these become disconnected pieces of information lacking systematic connections? Does this kind of learning influence students outside the classroom? For learning to be effective, students require a framework that actively engages them and assists them in creating meaning for themselves (Palmer & Zajonc 2010; Parks 2011). Can such a process applied to religion in general, but to Islam in particular, contribute to peace and not violence?

Religious education is best served when it establishes meaningful connections between content and the lives of students. Rather than present students with prescribed answers or information for memorization, they should be challenged to think, to derive and articulate meanings from their own experiences. Meaningful learning arises when challenging questions are posed: what are your beliefs; where do they come from; do they change over time; do they enliven or limit you, how and why; how do you know when something is true or right; how do you know what you know; what does it mean to participate in community; how do you distinguish between cultural traditions and religious injunctions; what do universal concepts such as justice, fairness, equality and benevolence mean in your context or situation? Engaging students in these questions may lead to understanding religion not as a source of strife and violence but as one to understand our deepest questions and concerns. But how do we go about this – for religion in general and Islam in particular?

A journeying into Islam that avoids narrow and prescribed formulas requires a comprehensive approach that solicits insights from a variety of disciplines. It seeks a framework that goes beyond a focus on cultural expressions, traditional dress, obligatory rituals, and specified behaviours. It entails an approach that acknowledges Islam's rootedness in the Quran yet realizes Islam is expanded by insights gained from other sources. It requires an approach that seeks wisdom in understanding how to implement Quranic principles of fairness, equality,

justice, peace and benevolence in the context in which one finds oneself. It seeks an approach that invites Muslims to freely discover for themselves how to live by the Quran's two most central tenets: submission to God and being a good person.

2. *Methodology for addressing the topic*

This colloquium will present a pedagogical model that engages Muslims (and non-Muslims) in discovering a comprehensive Islam for themselves as a journey into its two most central tenets and how to live those out peacefully in the context in which they find themselves. This model is grounded in a worldview framework that is transdisciplinary and comprehensive and seeks to present an Islam that is open, dynamic and peace-loving – not prescriptive, static or violent.

The worldview framework consists of five sub-frameworks, with each comprised of six further components. The framework is grounded in theory from a number of disciplines (Valk, 2012, 2010; Sire, 2004; Naugle, 2002; McKenzie, 1991; Olthuis, 1985; Smart, 1983; Tillich, 1957). Each sub-framework raises questions such as those stated above and highlights responses from various worldviews – secular and religious. Students are then asked for their responses in the form of a non-confrontational Socratic ("and what do you think") query.

3. *The status of the research at the time of the proposal.*

Presented here is a worldview framework that has been used in a dozen years of teaching. It is also being used to write a book entitled "An Islamic Worldview: Religion in a Modern, Democratic and Secular State", part of a writing project currently underway at Ankara University. The project involves a group of younger and older faculty members and PhD students who wrestled in a series of five workshops with a variety of sociological, theological, philosophical, cultural, and existential questions and issues regarding Islam. From the perspective of a comprehensive worldview framework a wide-ranging view of Islam took shape for them as they thought anew how to be Muslim in a modern, democratic and secular society.

4. *Sources grounding the presentation*

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Confronting Privilege in Congregational Service and Outreach

REA Colloquy
Anne Clarke, Graduate Theological Union/Church Divinity School of the Pacific
November 2014

Main concepts/issues:

Outreach and service projects are important aspects of many religious communities, and people of faith often see some kind of service as crucial to their spiritual life. This seems to be particularly true for younger people, and service projects or religiously-associated nonprofits are often the first or only contact that people have with a religious organization.

In the particular religious context that I examine, the Episcopal Church, activities like food pantries, mission trips, or community organizing are often the primary site of a faith community's reflection on and response to social justice issues in their local areas or in the world; however, they also each teach participants different understandings of race, class, and social dynamics. The sense of obligation and desire to work for justice often intersects in complicated ways with the congregation's demographic realities; Episcopal congregations and the church as a whole are often largely comprised of white people from middle- or upper-class backgrounds. An examination of congregational service in conversation with critical race theory reveals ways in which these projects succeed and fail in creating spaces for liberative education about systemic violence in our society.

Without reflection and intention, even attempts to work toward greater justice and equality can fall into learned but unconscious patterns that reinforce the embedded logics and theologies that inform structures of oppression.. Reflective and critical pedagogy and practice in religious institutions can help to avoid these pitfalls and equip people with the words, tools of understanding, and practices needed for a more liberated world.

Outline of Colloquy Presentation:

Brief Outline of Methodology and Research Areas:
- Summary of interview findings with service project participants:
  - Descriptions of intentional reflections on social, political, or theological issues as part of the service project
  - Categories or understandings of self and others that emerged from service experience
  - Comparison with larger body of research on congregational or other service settings
- Analysis of current practices, in particular untangling an understanding of the other kinds of important work they are accomplishing (community building among participants; exposure to travel, discomfort, and practical skills; filling a real community need; etc.)

- Critical race theory's contributions to an analysis of current practice:
    o Critical whiteness, class, gender, and intersectionality
    o Identity formation and service/being served

- Proposals:
    o Potential pedagogical proposals to encourage agency, awareness, reflection, and transformation

Topics for discussion:
- Contexts: How do the demographics of faith communities and larger geographic locations of service and engagement affect the experience and awareness of serving and being served and inform the best ways forward?
- Religious Traditions: What tools do different religious traditions already have to address these issues? How does this task of confronting privilege in service work vary among traditions, and how is it similar?
- Pedagogy: What are some good practices for beginning this transformation among congregations with few resources, or where this type of work is already the work of only a few people?
- Development: How might this type of education take place intergenerationally, and how might adults, children, and teenagers have different educational needs?
- Models and muddles: Some models of community engagement (for example, community organizing or food co-ops) have reflection on some of these issues built into them from the start. However, communities with models of service that tend to be more problematic are still often engaged in work that is filling a need and would be missed if it were to be abruptly ended. What are some ways to build practices of continuing discernment and creativity (and the discomfort which often accompanies such practices) into these pedagogical proposals?

Sources grounding the presentation:

This research will draw on the work of scholars of critical theory, such as Jack Mezirow and Stephen Brookfield, as well as scholars focusing on whiteness and white supremacy, such as Andrea Smith, Zeus Leonardo, and Henry Giroux. Authors like bell hooks and Paulo Friere, who provide suggestions for pedagogy relating to oppression, are also important sources for this work. The need for a wide view of curriculum that considers the entire life of a congregation is grounded in the work of Maria Harris. Donald Schon's work on reflective practice informs the ways in which guided experience can provide the site for learning, and emphasizes the advantages that service experiences can provide in learning about issues like critical race theory and privilege that are often left entirely to the realm of the academy.

Thomas Leuze
Oakland City University
Oakland City, Indiana
REA Annual Meeting November 7-9, 2014

UNLEARNING VIOLENCE WITH CONTEMPORIZED TEXTS

At times, biblical texts have been used to create distance between disparate groups. Differences of race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, economic status, etc. have been heightened and justified by the establishment's reading of the text which lessens the presence for the power-holders of the "other" in the text. Texts are fashioned to become comfortable and tend to reinforce existing power structures rather than offering a challenge to the establishment's perspective. These same texts then may be used or refashioned to justify exclusion and even violence against the "other."

Contemporized texts often present a reading of the biblical narrative or instruction that results in a confrontation between the reader and the text. Familiar, comfortable stories may become disquieting encounters with other understandings or perspectives which have been excluded from consideration.

After introducing a sampling of contemporized texts this paper will provide an analysis of those texts with a variety of approaches including Anglo-American postmodernity as well as selected Continental philosophies.

1.   Defining "Contemporized Texts"

For the purpose of this research, "contemporized texts" are identified as biblical versions, including both translations and paraphrases that set the narrative in an alternative setting than the setting presented in the original text. This usually involves moving the biblical text to a familiar setting for the reader. Examples include Clarence Jordan's *Cottonpatch Gospel* which moves portions of the New Testament to Georgia during the Civil Rights movement and Carl F. Burke's *God is for Real, Man* which situates biblical passages in the language and setting of street gangs in Buffalo, New York in the late 1960's.

2.   Exploring the nature of Contemporized Texts

Contemporized texts provide a contrast to traditional translations and paraphrases which do not attempt a significant re-situating of the biblical texts. Contemporized texts may be used to make a familiar, but comfortable, reading appear less familiar and less comfortable or to make an uncomfortable, unrelated text feel more comfortable and relevant. Contemporized texts may broaden the reading to include marginalized groups and individuals whose absence from the traditional text may provide opportunity to exclude them from consideration. At times, a contemporized text makes the familiar seem unfamiliar to the power-holder, while, at other times, it may make the unfamiliar seem familiar to the marginalized. Both events provide an opportunity for "unlearning" violence emerging from the text.

3.   How do Contemporized Texts function and what do they do

Contemporized texts broaden the reading to create space for those marginalized by readings and interpretations of traditional versions of the biblical text. Creating space counters violence that may be justified by the previous reading which was more limited.

4.   How do Contemporized Texts introduce the "other" to the reading.

The use of contemporized texts will be examined and assessed through a variety of philosophical approaches including Anglo-American postmodern thought and Continental philosophers such as Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. Literary understanding of contemporized texts will address the nature of the "other" encountered in those texts and the issue of violence as it relates to these texts.

Methodology for addressing the topic: Literature based

Sources grounding the presentation:

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-         **Colloquium Title:** Pedagogies of Nonviolent Communication in the Online Classroom

- **Introduction:**

     At a time when higher education is increasingly delivered through computer mediated instruction, it is crucial to raise awareness of online pedagogies that nurture non-violent interactions among students. Communication within an online classroom is very different from communication in a face-to-face classroom, primarily because dialogue is text-based rather than spoken. This colloquium demonstrates the need to address nonviolent communication as a pedagogical challenge rather than as a technological challenge. The goal of the research is to offer a rubric to guide pedagogies of nonviolent communication in online forums. Not only will pedagogies of nonviolent communication reduce the potential for hurtful language among peers, a rubric for online dialogue will also increase a depth of relationship among participants and enhance the richness of learning in the online community.

- **Communication Styles:**
     a. Online versus face-to-face
     I will briefly present the unique features of online communication that present pedagogical challenges that are different from a face-to-face context. There are times when students underestimate the violence conveyed in their written critiques or expressions of disagreement and this can cause a breakdown in the activity system of the class so that the online course ceases to function effectively. The instructor's role in facilitating nonviolent communication is not always as complex as negotiating students' prejudicial or inappropriate comments. Less complex, but equally as crucial to maintaining a sustainable learning community are those pedagogies that promote collaboration, social presence, and critical thinking.
     b. Sources grounding the presentation
     A professor I interviewed in the course of my qualitative research suggested that "the Internet is one of the most violent places on the planet." Her pedagogical response was to begin her online courses with a discussion of Marshal Rosenberg's "Living Nonviolent Communication: Practical Tools to Connect and Communicate Skillfully in Every Situation." Although some critics argue that authentic communication cannot be successfully delivered through virtual education, there is a growing body of research to indicate that the online learning community can provide a rich environment to practice nonviolent mediation and conflict resolution. I bring my own research into conversation with Rosenberg's to build a rubric for guiding online discussion.

- **Spiritual Questions:**
     The teacher's challenge in online learning is to discover a way to maximize the sense of community and formation of relationships when communication is taking place in a text-based learning environment. How can the online teacher minimize the students' sense of isolation? How can computer-mediated communication connect teachers with class participants while at the same time connecting participants to each other and to the material being studied?
     In my research I approach these questions of community-building as spiritual questions. I did a qualitative study, collecting data from interviews with faculty teaching online courses in theological education and asked how they align online pedagogies with learning goals for students' spiritual formation. I compare the results of my research with the spiritual learning

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goals of other educators such as Maria Harris, Arthur Chickering, and Parker Palmer. Then I present a comparison of these spiritual learning goals to the learning outcomes Marshal Rosenberg proposes in his model for non-violent communication. My key point in highlighting these parallels is that our common concern for student's well-being is best achieved through intentional course design and planning. If we want students to grow beyond mere knowledge of course content, there are a number of pedagogical strategies that can assist in designing a course that may also impact the students' sense of meaning, purpose, authenticity, and spiritual growth.

• **Providing a Non-Violent Communication Rubric for Online Discussion Boards:**
The colloquium concludes with a rubric I designed for use in guiding students' online discussions. The rubric provide a model of nonviolent communication. Non-violent communication is one among many pedagogical tools that hold potential for nurturing students' spiritual formation. The rubric is especially crucial in discussion of controversial topics, but more importantly, the rubric raises the students' awareness that a language of peace is an essential life skill that extends beyond the online classroom.

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Violent Words: Educating for Healing in Digital Discourses
Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT: This presentation explores verbal violence in digital communication, on public forums such as comment feeds, reviews, and social media platforms. Digital communication often times yields violent verbal exchanges less likely in a similar context face-to-face: the January 2014 case of the National Catholic Reporter having to turn off its online public commenting feature because of such verbal violence is one recent example of this. Faced with violent word online, Christian communities have a prophetic role. This presentation turns to theologies of communication as a source for religious education to serve as agent of transformation of the violent word toward the life-giving Word in our digital culture.

OUTLINE

-**Introduction**: Observing and assessing the reality of verbal violence online, especially through the case of excessively violent language in faith based forums.

-**The prophetic witness from Christian communities**: exploring the theology of communication vis-a-vis verbal violence, focusing on the themes of Christ as Perfect Communicator and the gift of self in communication.

-**The role of religious education toward fostering this prophetic witness**: considering Theme Centered Interaction in religious education as a process of communication transforming violence toward communal growth.

-**Dialogue with digital culture**: exploring how these theological and practical approaches to communication do or no dot 'translate' online and what wisdom these bear for the reality of online verbal violence.

MAIN RESOURCES:

The Roman Catholic social communication tradition, with focus on the document *Communio et Progressio* (1971)

Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath. *The Practice of Communicative Theology*. (Crossroad, 2008)

Title: Black Spirituals and Hip-Hop/Rap Musical Genres: A Pathway to Explore Daily Assaults on the Personhood of African-Americans

Luke Bobo (Lindenwood University)
Barbara A. Fears (Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary)

1) Introduction: Daily Assaults on African Americans
   a) Thesis: we contend that music provides "a pathway or corridor to explore daily assaults on the personhood of African-Americans" and we hope to provide evidence of these daily assaults by exploring two musical genres: black spirituals and hip hop music
   b) Define Personhood - define theologically based on Genesis 1:26-28: *imago dei; implication of this passage* – all people to be treated with dignity and respect

2) Cultural Hermeneutics –Black Spirituals & Rap Music Gives Voice to "daily assaults"
   a) Introduction to cultural hermeneutics
   b) Test cases: Black Spirituals and Rap Music
      i) Brief history of Black/Negro Spirituals, major predecessors and players, etc.
      ii) Brief history of rap music, major predecessors and players, etc.
   c) Listen to and discuss music

3) 'Damning Aftermath': The lingering consequences and unintended consequences of daily assaults on the personhood of African Americans.

4) Conclusion: going forward to (un)make violence or minimize assaults on the African Americans

5) Group Discussion: Questions and Answers

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W 1.10 Matthias Scharer, Innsbruck-Austria
"Disturbances and passionate involvement take precedence" (Ruth C. Cohn).

Experiences in conflictive interreligious groups based on Theme-Centered-Interaction

Issue

As a scholar in Religious Education as well as a graduate teacher of TCI (Theme-centered-interaction) at the Ruth Cohn Institute International I have increasingly come into contact with the interreligious scenery in Austria, India, South Africa and other countries across the world. In these contexts the „Disturbances and Involvement Postulation" of Ruth Cohn's concept became progressively more important to my work and provides a key focus for the workshop. Examples of my personal experience in this area include facilitating workshops on themes like this:

- „Female Empowerment and my Religion",
- „I am woman/man in my Religion: What does it mean, how do I feel?" etc.
- Religions: Exclusive forts of truth or joint seekers after truth in a common pilgrimage? Let's explore alternatives.

These workshops include people from a range of religious backgrounds: Hindus, Muslims, Christians. In addition, co-facilitators in this workshop are normally not Christians. Also I do seminars with an interreligious group at my faculty. Participants of the workshop are invited to share the own experiences of disturbances in interreligious communication.

Methology

Experiences like this can help us to understand and to work with Ruth C. Cohn's postulation on disturbances in interreligious groups.
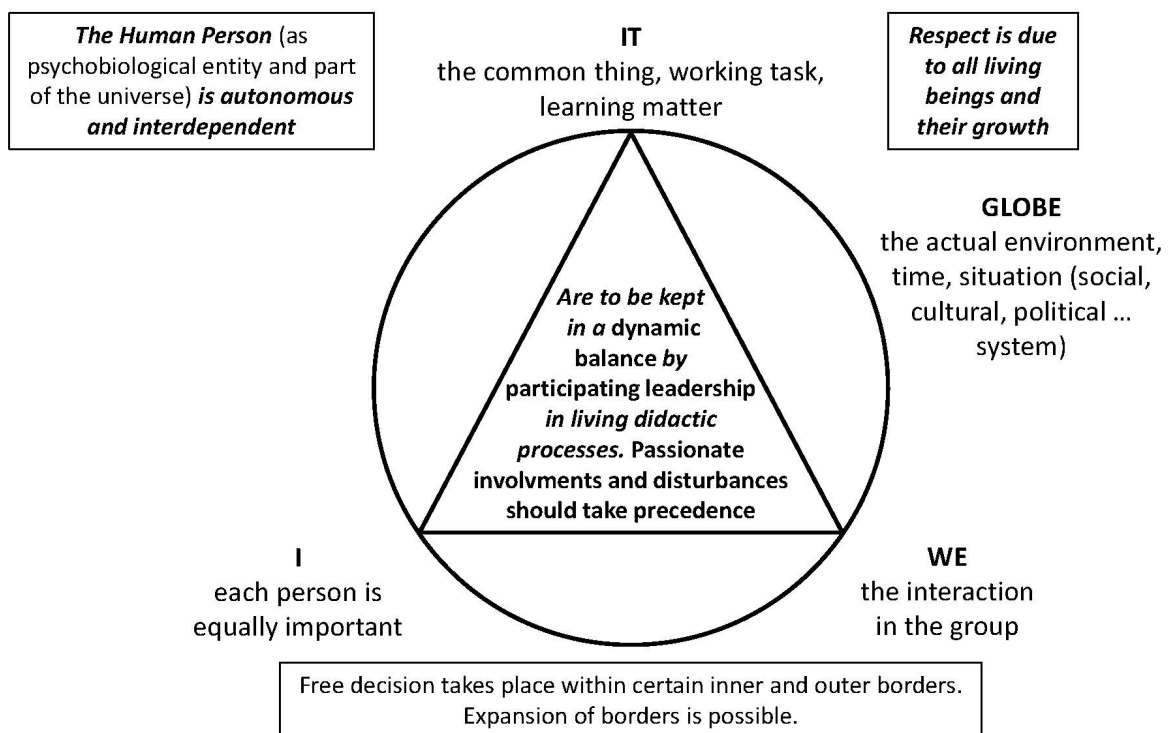
Who was Ruth C. Cohn? Short information about the founder of TCI

The Jewish R. Cohn born in 1912 in Berlin, emigrated from the Nazi terror initially to Switzerland, and then to the U.S. Her understanding of "living learning" is the self-responsible step of the seduction of inhumanity. "Dead learning" takes a very limited or often just a sham communication: 'something', a task, a learning object, a content, a piece of tradition is a quasi-neutral object, as matters without personal reference without considering the dynamics in (learning) groups and independent of contexts in which learning processes will communicate. "Dead Learning" R. Cohn suspects mainly occurs at universities and schools. Dry knowledge as an anonymous product, isolated from its background, without personal reference, far from any real social context and without anthropological and ethical basis, is characteristic of Dead Learning. Not only in learning but in any human communication, single-line transfer distinguishes the multi-dimensional information and increasingly intimate human communication. Therefore, it makes sense not only to speak of living and dead learning, but equally to distinguish "living communication" from "dead communication." (J. Hilberath/M. Scharer: *Kommunikative Theologie.* Ostfildern, 2012, 63-141).

TCI combines an anthropological reasoned, values-based approach of human communication with the know-how to design practical communication processes with the intention of living learning. It includes the formal elements or dimensions which characterize any linguistic communication:

- The I of each and every participant as an autonomous-interdependent subject.

- The WE expressing the dynamics of groups/communities; has not only instrumental significance.

- The IT as the thing or concern around which the interaction turns.

- The Globe representing the spatio-temporal and the social context, which encloses the first three dimensions and which is implicitly present in every process.

Cohn represents the interconnection of these dimensions by way of an equilateral triangle within a sphere. This figure expresses not only that the dimensions belong together but also that they are of equal value. The symmetry and dynamic balance of all dimensions is the hallmark of TCI-Communication. TCI is neither a typical therapeutic approach dealing with the inner psychological problems of people, nor is it a purely group-dynamic process focusing only on what happens inside the group. Theme centering means that the "matter" of interaction is assigned the highest value. Cohn never tires of maintaining the inseparable interdependence between human and spiritual values in her specific methodological approach. Thus, she has always resisted attempts to reduce TCI to a mere technique for directing group processes, as TCI is sometimes used in Europe. The value reference is most clearly expressed in the "axioms" of TCI, which formulate the "irreducible" of the TCI approach and contain "elements of faith"

The Human Person (as psychobiological entity and part of the universe) *is autonomous and interdependent*

IT
the common thing, working task, learning matter

Respect is due to all living beings and their growth

GLOBE
the actual environment, time, situation (social, cultural, political ... system)

Are to be kept in a dynamic balance by participating leadership in living didactic processes. Passionate involvments and disturbances should take precedence

I
each person is equally important

WE
the interaction in the group

Free decision takes place within certain inner and outer borders. Expansion of borders is possible.

Primary sources

It is crucial to human communication, especially to interreligious communication, that they do not take place without disturbances, that is, without inner and outer resistance, conflict, etc. and without varying degrees of involvement. As an academic psychoanalyst, Cohn recognizes the learning opportunities that people have in the face of overcoming resistance and conflicts. The formula „disturbances and passionate involvement take precedence" or, in other words, „disturbances and passionate involvement claim their precedence", recalls the

counter-transference workshop in which TCI was born. This postulation refers to an observation about the human reality, especially of interreligious, interaction: disturbances do not ask for permission; they are simply there as pain, fear, aggression, joy, distraction, etc. If they remain unexpressed or are rarely suppressed, they give rise to „the kind of impersonal, disturbance-free' classrooms, factory halls, auditoriums, conference rooms" that are „filled with apathetic and submissive "or desperate and rebellious people, whose frustration ultimately leads to their own destruction and that of their institution." (R. Cohn: *Von der Psychoanalyse zur Themenzentrierten Interaktion: Von der Behandlung einzelner zu einer Pädagogik für alle* Stuttgart, [5]1981, ibid 122.

Conscious Disciples

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Main Concepts/Issues, and/or Practice(s) being Addressed, and the Context

While parenting two young children, I was introduced to *Conscious Discipline* as it was being applied in a preschool setting for a county-wide demonstration school. During classroom observations, I watched teachers take the time to teach children how to navigate conflicts, collaborate in problem solving, and rejoice in each others' celebrations. Even though it was a secular setting, I was witnessing "kingdom of God living," where the children were practicing the hard work of honoring each person as equal, caring for each other as God would. I also had to admit that I had a lot to learn about self-control and empathy for my child's hurts and tantrums, for many times the "behavioral issues" in my home were due to my own inability to manage my emotions well. As I saw it, *Conscious Discipline* was not a bag of tricks for getting children to behave, but a tool for teaching people, children *and* adults, to relate to each other as children of God.

Since that initial encounter, I have sought to learn all I can about CD and it's applications, convinced that it has an important role to play in religious education. I have read all the books, attended conferences led by Dr. Becky Bailey, who created this model, and have worked extensively with a colleague in my community to provide opportunities for both children and adults to gain the skills they need to foster emotionally healthy families. In 2012 I completed a doctoral project (D.Ed.Min.) researching current applications of CD in Christian religious education programs. The stories of transformation are too numerous to count: tantrums diffused, dignity restored, safety and security established, marriages saved.

Does CD belong in the discussion of facilitating the "unlearning of violence?" Absolutely! When done in the context of religious education, CD seeks to re-imagine the world, teaching *kingdom of God living* in a way that causes people to notice there might be a different and better way to live, a better way to treat others. Not only is "neighbor" redefined, but so are "brother," "sister," and "family." The social and political systems based on competition become driven by cooperation and collaboration, and power over another is no longer valued. As a religious educator, Bailey's work allows my profession to pair brain research and studies in social sciences with the teachings of Jesus in order to continue this transformation. We can gift God's children with the skills and powers to live together in community where all are safe and valued.

Workshop Outline

1. A Brain Smart Start: Unite, Calm, Connect, Commit (workshop participants will experience first-hand what this is)
2. The Need for Social-emotional Education in Religious Education
   a. Introducing research, such as that which suggests technology is re-wiring our brains
   b. Cultivating compassion: The Church as an agent of change
3. Establishing *Conscious Discipline* as a Viable Tool for the Unmaking of Violence
   a. Define *Conscious Discipline*
      i. Video of Becky Bailey introducing her work
      ii. Brain model: seeking connection, not coercion
      iii. Video of DJ's Story: former gang leader changes because of connection with a *Conscious Discipline*-trained teacher
   b. Theological grounding of *Conscious Discipline*, using "Kingdom of God" parables of Jesus to Re-imagine the World
      i. The Parable of Two Sons (The Loving Father)
      ii. The Rich Man and Lazarus
      iii. The Helpful Samaritan
      iv. The Pesky Log
4. Practical Applications for the Local Church
   a. Children's ministry
      i. Faith-based weekday schools
      ii. When the religious community gathers
      iii. Case Study—revamping educational model and worship
   b. Parent education
   c. Community outreach
      i. Baby Doll Circle Time (teaching parents/caregivers skills in setting where they attend classes *with* their infants/toddlers)
      ii. Partnering with Social Agencies who serve families
      iii. Prison Ministry

Resources to be Presented and/or Used

1. Bailey, Becky A., Ph.D. *I Love You Rituals.* New York: Harper Collins, 2000.
2. --------, Dr. Becky. *Creating the School Family™.* Oviedo: Loving Guidance, Inc., 2011.
3. --------, Dr. Becky A. *Conscious Discipline: Seven Basic Skills for Brain Smart Classroom Management.* Oviedo: Loving Guidance, Inc., 2000.
4. --------, Dr. Becky A., Ph.D. *Easy to Love, Difficult to Discipline: The Seven Basic Skills for Turning Conflict into Cooperation.* New York: Harper, 2000.

Greeting Wheel: Creating Connections to Liturgical Rhythms of the Year
Helping Hands Job Board: Children Have Purpose in the Church Family
Breath Prayers: Connecting Consciously Calming to Act of Prayer
Family Routine Charts/Books
Outline for Family Worship at Home using Brain Smart Model

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Religious education in violent places: Telling stories to unlearn violence

Religious education takes places in a range of contexts both explicit and implicit. This workshop will explore the role of the religious educator and religious education in places with a long history of violence. One such place is Ukraine which within living memory has experienced major inter ethnic conflict, the horrors of the Holocaust, decades of oppressive totalitarian rule and now serious political instability. One way of doing religious education in this context is to use story and narrative to open up discussion, dialogue and mutual reflectivity.

Religious education needs to engage with both explicit and implicit cultural contexts. Both inform the assumptions that teachers bring to the classroom. One especially important cultural factor is the level of violence and conflict present in a society. In many places the level of this violence has been a strong formative influence for many people. We can think of countries such as Nicaragua, the Central African Republic and Cambodia. From a European perspective one such country is Ukraine. In the wake of the collapse of the Austro Hungarian Empire serious inter ethnic conflict broke out all over the country but especially in the west region.   During WW2 some of the most brutal *Einzengruppen* actions took place there. Over 80% of its Jewish population were killed in this period. In the Stalinist era the country was riled by a suffocating totalitarian regime. In recent times serious ethnic conflict has again emerged particularly between Russians and Ukrainians.

What does all of this mean for religious educators? Violence leaves a strong, indelible mark on a culture and a people. In the first instance the depth of this feeling needs to be acknowledge and addressed. This cannot be done in a way that ignores the depth of emotions that are involved here. At the same time it must be faithful to the historical record and address questions such as, "What happened?" "Why did it happen?" and "What can we learn from these experiences?" At its core religious education in this context must take place within a dialogical framework. One way of encouraging such a framework is to use stores and narratives.

There is a wide literature on use of narrative in the classroom. **Stories can be interpreted at different levels and this is a great advantage in accommodating different students. Narrative also establishes a strong cognitive basis for**

further exploration and questioning. The major challenge is to find or create good stories. It is also a wonderful way to encourage students to share their own perepective on a range of topics.   Story and narrative can open up discussion, dialogue and mutual reflectivity. Stories can also capture complex information and present it in a fashion that is both respectful but also stimulating and informative.   And this is very important in dealing with semnstive issues such as long mistiral memeies of violence. In this workshop a series of indicative stores will be used that will model how religious education can address the realities

Some indicative references
Crites, S. (1971). The narrative quality of experience. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* XXXIX [3]: 291-311.

Goldberg, M.(1991). *Theology & Narrative*. Philadelphia: Trinity Press International.

Metz, J. (1973). A short apology of narrative, *Concilium* 85: 84-96.

Rubenstein, S. (1999). Being people together, in Hamilton, C and Kratzke, P. (Eds). Short stories in the classroom. Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English.

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Peacebuilders Initiative

Using the model of the Peacebuilders Initiative program we will explore how to integrate various aspects of education to create a systematic approach that unifies a curriculum around academic engagement, service learning, liturgical prayer, theological reflection, and community of praxis. We will also discuss how mentors become bearers of knowledge for adolescents as they seek to integrate the various aspects of what it means to become a young person educated in the ways of peace. Finally, we will examine how the insights and awareness of youth derived from their own context can become the basis out which they realize their agency for change within their own community.

These concepts are applicable to all those who work with youth in a variety of settings, including but not limited to churches, schools, and camping programs. By offering a broad definition of violence the workshop allows participants examine each of their contexts for the presence of this dehumanizing reality and strategize a holistic response. Participants will gain from this workshop the ability to analyze their own program based on the varied pedagogical practices outlines here and equipped to allow the adolescents whom they lead to bring their own knowledge to the educational process.

Outline of Interactive Workshop:

Goal: Present a holistic approach to adolescent religious education.
Objectives:

1. Participants will gain an understanding of each component of the systematic pedagogy.
2. Participants will examine their own curriculum in light of the various components.
3. Participants will consider how the knowledge already held by adolescents can effect the educational process.

Materials:

1. Power point with images of the various components

2. Paper and writing utensils for self reflection

Schedule:

1. Welcome and Introduction of the Peacebuilders Initiative curriculum (10 min)

   Question to answer: How is the systematic curriculum constructed to educated students towards becoming Peacebuilders?

2. Examination of Components (40 min): Participants will identify the various components both present and absent in their current approach.

   Question to answer: Where are these current components included in my present curriculum and where are they missing?

   a. Academic engagement

   b. Service Learning

   c. Liturgical Prayer

   d. Theological Reflection

   e. Community of Praxis

3. Reflection on aposteriori knowledge of adolescents (20 min)

   Question to answer: What knowledge and insight do the adolescents already possess that enables their agency?

4. Questions and Conclusion (5 min)

Workshop: "Peace Experiments": one approach to congregational peacemaking

Presenter: Rev. Dan Harper, Associate Minister of Religious Education,
Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, Calif.

Overview:

The local faith community can embody peacemaking in ways that can be directly experienced, particularly in educational programs. In a culture permeated by violence, a local congregation can offer a counter-cultural educational experience of a community in which people live together peacefully rather than violently. The practical educational issue addressed in this workshop is how we might nurture peacefulness in school-aged children, within the setting of the local faith community.

This workshop is aimed squarely at religious education practitioners based in local congregations, who are interested in implementing peacemaking programs for children. Participants will be introduced to the flexible and creative "Peace Experiments" program, as implemented in a local congregation in northern California, for grades K-6. Participants will discuss program goals, educational philosophy, adaptation to local theologies, and implementation of this program—and whether it might be suitable for their own congregation.

Outline:

A. Presentation on "Peace Experiments"

I'll begin the workshop by giving an introduction to the "Peace Experiments" program, as implemented most recently in the congregation I serve in March-May, 2014.

When we implemented "Peace Experiments" in 2014, we were guided first of all by our congregation's mission statement, and by the Sunday school's primary educational goals. Next, we looked back at the last time we offered "Peace Experiments," back in 2012, and adjusted the curriculum based on feedback and evaluations. This affected several different areas:

1. Volunteer management and organizational strategy
2. Dividing age groups
   1. Theoretical considerations: challenging strict developmentalism
   2. Practical considerations: desire for flexibility
3. Assessment strategies

When we adjusted the curriculum, I was able to further clarify some theoretical matters that helped me while I trained and coached volunteer teachers:

4. Our theological grounding
   1. feminist theology: embodied learning
   2. "humanocentric" theology: humans bear responsibility for their actions
   3. existentialist theology: defining oneself in an absurd world
5. Our educational philosophy
   1. Move away from an essentialist educational philosophy
   2. Move towards an existentialist educational philosophy

B. Hands-on activity

Participants will try one of the "Peace Experiments" activities.

C. Case study

      Participants will read and discuss a brief case study, consisting of a narrative account of a "Peace Experiments" class session.

D. Reflection and discussion

      There will be ample time for reflection and discussion on, and questions about, the "Peace Experiments" program—its educational philosophy, its adaptability to other faith communities and theologies, its strengths, its weaknesses, and how participants might adapt it for implementation in their own congregations.

Resources and references:

      • Participants may wish to glance at the online "Peace Experiments" curriculum outline: http://kj6zwr.org/peace-experiments/

      • Participants unfamiliar with the workshop rotation method may wish to glance through *Workshop Rotation: A New Model for Sunday School,* by Melissa Armstrong-Hansche and Neil Macqueen (Louisville, Ky.: Geneva Press, 2000)—or visit the Workshop Rotation Website: http://www.rotation.org/

      • One framework for thinking about religious education theologies is presented in *Theologies of Religious Education,* ed. by Randolph C. Miller (Birmingham, Ala.: Religious Education Press, 1996).

      • One framework for thinking about educational philosophies is presented in "Philosophical Foundations," in *Foundational Issues in Christian Education* by Robert W. Pazmiño (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2008).

Presenter:

      Rev. Dan Harper began working as a religious educator in 1994. He has served as director of religious education, minister of religious education, interim minister, and parish minister in brick-and-mortar congregations ranging in size from 25 members to 500 members, and for a year as religious educator in a distance congregation with over 3,000 members. He is an ordained minister in fellowship with the Unitarian Universalist Association.

Cynthia P. Stewart   PhD Candidate   Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary

REA 2014 Workshop Outline

Title: On the Streets of Chicago: African American Youth in the Midst of Violence, "To live or die?"

That is the Question

Date: Saturday, November 8, 2014 – 3:30-4:45 pm

Module	Section	Description	Duration
3:30-4:25	**Welcome and Introductions**	• Facilitator introduces herself to audience • Facilitator gives brief overview of the workshop • Facilitator invites participants to introduce themselves and share their learning expectations • Facilitator discusses proposed learning objectives • Facilitator invites participants to ask questions throughout the workshop and at the end	15 mins
	Icebreaker	• TBD	10 mins
	Presentation	• Facilitator will engage participants with in-depth theories and practices regarding topic.	30 mins
4:25-4:35	**Video**	• Facilitator shows video: *Silent Screams* and ask participants give feedback.	10 mins
4:35-4:45	**Conclusion**	• Facilitator invites participants to ask questions • Facilitator encourages participants to reflect on workshop. • Facilitator distributes handout and evaluation	10 mins

Cynthia P. Stewart   PhD Candidate   Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary

In this workshop, I plan to discuss how violence is plaguing the urban streets of Chicago, but reveal that there is hope. However, before there is hope, I will look at how evil is displayed through violence. James Poling defines evil as the abuse of power in personal, social, and religious forms that destroys bodies and spirits. It is evil because the power of life comes from God, and all power should be used for good. Whenever power is used to destroy the bodies and spirits of God's creation, there is evil.

Theologically, John 10:10 states, "The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." So what is the root of violence? Where is the hope? The most difficult task in urban ministry is to remain optimistic, creative, hopeful, and full of humor. I will reference an urban church and two non-profit organizations, which are making an impact to combat violence in the streets of Chicago. The works of Religious Educators will be used as a practical practice of how Christian Educators can understand and work with African American urban youth.

Resources

Cone, James, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*, 2011

Poling, James, *Deliver us from Evil: Resisting Racial and Gender Oppression*, 1996

Pronthrow-Stith, D., Weissman, M., *Deadly Consequences*, 1991

Hill, Shirley, *African American Children, Socialization, and Development in Families*, 1999

Wimberly, Ann, *Keep it Real, Working with Today's Black Youth*, 2005

National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, *Final Report: To Establish*

    Justice, to Insure Domestic Tranquility, Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969 in Brownstein, Henry, H., Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2000

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2014 REA Annual Meeting, Nov 7-9

Poster Presentation Outline

What do these Stones Mean? Developing a Curriculum for Teaching Peace in East Belfast

I. The Issue: Creating a religious education curriculum for the East Belfast Mission

A. Context: The opening of new building and launching of new project, the Skainos Project, a
£21 million urban regeneration project, in one of the one of the poorest counties in the United
Kingdom, and in the center of ongoing community violence.

B. The design for the building was intentionally theological and shaped by a commitment to
peacebuilding and conflict transformation. However, it is not clear that the architectural vision is
understood by many users of the builder or members of the congregation.

C. This is a missed opportunity for community formation and religious education of the East
Belfast Mission congregation.

D. Therefore, I propose the creation of a religious education curriculum, for primary school aged
children, youth and adults, that makes explicit what is currently an implicit curriculum.

II. Main Concepts

A. Influence of architectural design and space on users

B. Community development and urban regeneration

C. Theology of peacebuilding and conflict transformation

D. Education as a form of peacebuilding

III. Methodology and Methods Used

A. To understand context of EBM and significance of Skainos Project:

1. Ethnographic Research (participant observation, personal interviews)

2. Archival and secondary source research (history of The Troubles, history of EBM, etc.)

B. To create religious education curriculum

1. Analysis of architectural design (photographs, sketches)

2. Theological reflection (by EBM leaders and congregants, by author)

3. Curriculum design (drawing on Understanding by Design and other resources)

4. Pedagogical theory (liberatory pedagogy, experiential education, peace education, embodied learning, etc.)

III. Sources

Brewer, John D., Gareth I. Higgins and Francis Teeney, *Religion, Civil Society, and Peace in Northern Ireland*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Garrigan, Siobhan. *Real Peace Process: Worship, Politics and the End of Sectarianism* Sheffield, England, Equinox Publishing, 2010.

Jordan, Glenn. "Building Space: Regeneration and Reconciliation." In *Forgiving and Remembering in Northern Ireland: Approaches to Conflict Resolution*. Graham Spencer, ed. London: Continuum, 2011.

Mitchell, Claire. *Religion, identity and politics in Northern Ireland: boundaries of belonging and belief*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.

Mitchell, Claire. *This is what we do: Celebrating 25 Years of the East Belfast Mission*. 2010.

Saloman, Gavriel and Baruch Nevo, eds. *Peace Education: The Concept, Principles, and Practices Around the World*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2002.

Orr, Philip. *New Loyalties: Christian Faith and the Protestant Working Class*. Belfast: Centre for Contemporary Christianity, 2008.

Smithey, Lee. *Unionists, Loyalists and Conflict Transformation in Northern Ireland*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001.

IV. Media Requests and Set-Up
1. Table

Hannah Adams Ingram
Religious Education Association
Annual Meeting 2014
Chicago, IL

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Does Higher Education Risk Class Violence?

This research examines the largely unquestioned narrative of the goodness of higher education and its redemptive power in combating poverty. It looks towards what might be sacrificed in families and communities when members pursue college degrees for the first time. While educational research documents the conflicts that first-generation students face when they attempt to integrate their new college discoveries with who they are in their communities of origin, educators and administrators may not take this dual mediation of cultures into account when determining what unique support first generation students may need.

I.   Introduction to the problem
    A. Case study with a special focus on Christian liberal arts university (with implications for teachers, chaplains, and student life professionals at other universities and seminaries as well)
II. Dimensions of the issue
    A. First-generation status and social class
    B. Family systems and a student's community-of-origin
    C. Ethos/purpose of the university
    D. Role of the teacher/pedagogical issues
III. Questions for REA participants
    A. Where do you find resonance in what I have presented?
    B. Is there a dimension of the problem that you think is missing from this presentation?
    C. Have you been aware of the times you've taught first-generation students? Do they self-identify? Have you ever asked? Have you noticed unique concerns from these first-generation students?
    D. What part do you have to play in your specific role to serve first-generation students? (As professor, chaplain, mentor, pastor, etc.) How could you address these concerns?
IV. Sources

Bourdieu, Pierre. Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Jean Claude Passeron. Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture. London; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1990.

González, Norma, Luis C Moll, and Cathy Amanti. Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practice in Households, Communities, and Classrooms. Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2005.

hooks, bell. Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom. New York: Routledge, 2010.

———. Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Horton, Myles, Brenda Bell, John Gaventa, and John Marshall Peters. We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

McDonough, Patricia M. Choosing Colleges: How Social Class and Schools Structure Opportunity. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.

Palmer, Parker J. To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey. [San Francisco]: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.

Woodson, Carter Godwin, Daryl Michael Scott, V. P Franklin, and Association for the Study of African-American Life and History. The Mis-Education of the Negro: With a Foreword by V.P. Franklin. United States: ASALH Press : A program of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, 2005.

Inoculating Children Against Violence through Forgiveness Education
A Poster Presentation at the 2014 Annual Meeting of Religious Education Association

Jichan J. Kim and Robert D. Enright
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Introduction

We do not want our children to lose hope in humanity due to the grip of violence so strong in our time. How can we prepare them for the world full of violence and injustice? How can we help them grow up as the people capable of loving others despite frequent injustices in life? Forgiveness education may be the key to the important mission of inoculating children against violence because forgiveness not only deals with the issue of unhealthy anger, but also helps individuals develop positive attitudes toward others. This poster will first show the potential of forgiveness in unlearning violence by exploring the topic both theoretically and scientifically. Then, scientific findings from the empirical studies that implemented forgiveness education in classrooms will be presented by highlighting materials taught and positive changes made. Lastly, this poster will end with relevant implications for the use of forgiveness education in the context of religious education.

Theoretical Foundations

Forgiveness is a moral virtue practiced in the context of one person unjustly hurt by another (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000). Forgiveness is a two-dimensional construct; those who are unjustly hurt by another forgive by willfully abandoning their resentment toward the offender and trying to develop compassion, generosity, and moral love toward the offender (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000). Forgiveness not only involves one's feelings but also thoughts and behaviors and is different from calming down, condoning, excusing, forgetting, justifying, pardoning, pseudo-forgiveness, and reconciliation (Enright and the Human Development Study Group, 1991). Forgiveness as a moral virtue is unconditional as are other virtues such as kindness, gentleness, and justice, and also the moral virtue of forgiveness works side by side with other virtues including justice (Enright and the Human Development Study Group, 1991; Kim & Enright, in press).

Scientific Foundations

Over two decades of scientific studies on forgiveness have proven over and over again that forgiveness reduces one's anger, anxiety, and depression and increases self-esteem and hopefulness for the future (Baskin & Enright, 2004). The clinical use of forgiveness has been tested with a variety of adult populations such as incest survivors (Freedman & Enright, 1996) and postabortion men, for instance (Coyle & Enright, 1997).

Empirical Studies On Forgiveness Education

Forgiveness education with children in classroom settings is a comparably recent area in the research on forgiveness. Milwaukee is the largest city in the State of Wisconsin, stricken by poverty and crimes, and Belfast, Northern Ireland is known as a contentious area with perennial conflicts between Catholics and Protestants (Enright, Gassin, & Knutson, 2003; Gassin, Enright, & Knutson, 2005). The levels of anger amongst children in both cities were higher than children in Madison, WI as the control city (Enright, Knutson-Enright, Holter, Baskin, & Knutson, 2007). In a randomized experimental-controlled group study design, the effects of forgiveness education as a classroom curriculum were tested with 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade children in Milwaukee, WI and 1st and 3rd grade children in Belfast, Northern Ireland (Enright, Knutson-Enright, Holter, Baskin, & Knutson, 2007; Holter, Magnuson, Knutson, Knutson Enright, & Enright, 2008).

Forgiveness curriculum guides created by Robert Enright and his forgiveness team were used as the teaching materials for children in forgiveness education groups. Different from the clinical use of forgiveness that helps individuals go through the process of forgiveness, children were taught different components of forgiveness (inherent worth, moral love, kindness, respect, and generosity) by their own teachers as a supplementary course that took about took about 30-60 minutes a week for 12 weeks. Children learned each lesson through listening to stories appropriate for their ages, followed by relevant discussions and/or activities.

Results showed that forgiveness education reduced anger in students and increased cooperation in classrooms (Enright, Knutson-Enright, Holter, Baskin, & Knutson, 2007; Holter, Magnuson, Knutson, Knutson Enright, & Enright, 2008).

Implications

Forgiveness is endorsed by all major religions (Enright, Gassin, & Wu, 1992). Violence is a serious issue even amongst the most religious, which indicates that the teaching of forgiveness have not been successful. Through forgiveness education, religious educators can teach children that forgiveness is the core of their development and is a practicable virtue, more than a mere ideal. Teachers, parents, and children will be given more opportunities to discuss about the importance of forgiveness on the community level. Children will learn to deal with injustice in life from the early ages on instead of resorting to violence. Religious communities can recover their identity as those at the forefront of leading loving and forgiving lives.

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Holter, A.C., Magnuson, C., Knutson, C., Knutson Enright, J.A., & Enright, R.D. (2008). The forgiving child: The impact of forgiveness education on excessive anger for elementary-aged children in Milwaukee's central city. *Journal of Research in Education, 18*, 82-93.

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The marginalisation of violence in Bible stories in RE

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Issues

The research described in this poster is informed by two issues in the teaching of RE in the UK. The first is the representation of religions in schools and the second is the expectation that RE will play a key role in the way tolerance, radicalization, extremism and violence are addressed with children and young people.

Recent debates in Religious Education in the UK concern the representation of religion and the ways religions are taught through text books. Two of the most comprehensive and recent research projects on RE have identified text books as key factors in the way religions are misrepresented. The *Does RE Work?* Project, led by Jim Conroy at Glasgow University identified a context where the teaching of religion is influenced by exam boards and the relationship between examines and the publishers of text books. The *Materials used to Teach about World Religions in Schools in England* study conducted by the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit found that many text books represented religions in ways that were superficial. There was a tendency towards generalization and lack of depth. Research into the representation of specific religions has found that textbooks tend to present religion sin idealized forms that minimize issues that are controversial or suggest that religions are ever involved in conflict in any way. The trend in textbooks is to present religions as vehicles for peace and tolerance.

Bible story books have a specific status in RE and there is a tendency to view them as merely shortened or abridged versions of *the* Bible. As such they are not subject to the same analysis as other textbooks because there is an assumption that they are shortened versions of a larger work, they are free from editorial and authorial bias and interpretation. The research for this poster suggests that Bible Story books are as representative of social, cultural, educational and theological trends as all other textbooks in RE and that the most contemporary trends suggest that Bible story books engage with conflict and violence in particular ways. The poster argues that a naïve reading of Bible Story books undermines the ability of teachers to use Bible stories in ways that critically engage pupils with issues of violence and conflict.

Methodology

95 contemporary (1995 -) Bible story books have been analyzed as resources used by RE teachers to explore dominant themes of representation in these texts. A further 70 textbooks published between 1838 and 1994 were examined in order to provide a historical overview of trends and development in Bible story books. Text as well as images and instructions to teachers were examined in order to gain a holistic understanding of the way Bible story books were used.

Findings

The analysis suggests that the majority of Bible story books decontextualize/marginalize or reposition incidents of violence in Bible stories. Contemporary Bible story books display a startling homogeneity in the way conflict and violence is represented and also in the choice of stories that are selected. A comparison with Bible story books from the past reveals that not only has the cannon of stories shrunk but that all forms of conflict are sanitized. Bible Story books for children used to include violence and conflict and in some cases to sensationalize and even elaborate certain narratives with violence.

This is in stark contrast with contemporary books. Even where violence or conflict is an essential part of the narrative, for example the Flood or the Good Samaritan modern Bible Story books tend to minimize conflict. The limited number of stories that are presented in Bible Story Books means that many incidents of violence or conflict are simply omitted. It is likely that pupils who do not come Christian families and whose only exposure to the Bible is in RE will never encounter many Bible stories where violence is a part because they have been edited from the texts.

Points for discussion

The omission, sanitation and decontextualisation of violence in Bible Story books has several consequences for the way teachers approach the teaching of the Bible or violence in RE. This trend diminishes the capacity for these texts to be used as resources for opening discussions of the relationship and meaning of violence in religion in two ways. Many violent incidents in the Bible are key to the meaning of certain parables/narratives or as explanations of the nature and actions of God. The representation of the Bible as free from violence and conflict means that young people are unable to engage with certain interpretations of the Bible. The omission of conflict from Bible stories diminishes and limits the ways that pupils can understand the meanings of the Bible and also the development of their own critical awareness of the Bible.

The second way in which the trend towards omission of violence from the Bible impacts of how teachers approach issues of conflict is that it suggests that conflict is an aberration or abnormal in relation to Christianity, that Christianity has 'nothing to say' about conflict. This suggestion not only misrepresents the Bible it also misrepresents many Christian traditions where engagement with violence and conflict has been a key part of their mission.

Worldview Education: Promising Perspective on the Moral Dimension of Professional Development

Keywords: worldview education, religious education, moral dimension of professional development, reflection

Précis (128 words)
This presentation informs about the preliminary findings of a qualitative research into the exploration of a personal worldview of students in Higher Professional Education in The Netherlands and its relation to the moral dimension of their professional development. The articulation of the moral dimension is complementary to the instrumental dimension which is an alternative to a slightly violent and dominant preoccupation with the instrumental dimension.

Main concepts
This study is designed to describe the role and the possible support worldview education might bring to reflection processes on the moral dimension of professional development. Worldview education aims to explore a personal worldview in relation to organized worldviews. This broader concept of worldview allows to discuss secular worldviews as well. The concept of worldview contains four elements: asking existential questions, influence of worldview on thinking and acting, moral values and its role in meaning-giving in life (Kooij, 2013). These elements are in close relation to the moral dimension of professional development.

The study of the moral dimension of professional development is a relatively new perspective in studying the process of reflection in Higher Professional Education. We assume that the moral dimension is not opposed to the instrumental, and measurable dimension of professional development, but that both dimensions should be discerned in order to integrate the moral aspects and professional aspects of professional training (Bakker, 2013). The moral dimension concerns the interpretation process of a professional on the basis of personal values.

Biesta (2012) states that we live in an age of measurement and tend to forget the ultimate objectives of education. In education he discerns three functions: qualification, socialization and *subjectification*. Crucial is the function that students learn to speak freely with their own voice and take their authentic role in society. This so called subjectification coincides with the four characteristics of worldview education and helps to explore the moral dimension of professional development.

Methodology for addressing the topic
Students from different departments like Education and Social work participated in this study on a voluntarily basis. They chose to attend our half-year course on Philosophy, World Religions and Spirituality. In this course students are asked to describe their own personal worldview by answering relevant open questions. Three times during this course students are asked to elaborate on their description. These triple reviewed descriptions are analyzed with the help of NVIVO software, according to the constant comparison method (Boeije, 2002).

Reflecting on the reviews of the drafts visualizes their development in terms of worldview and moral dimension of professional development. In our analysis we have three steps. First of all,

we focus on the personal wording students use in answering existential questions. Secondly, we precisely describe the development in vocabulary students explore in their personal worldview. Thirdly, we analyze the relation between this personal world view and its impact on the professional life.

Our goal is not to demonstrate that worldview education has a direct effect on the moral dimension of professional development. We choose in this stage of our research to describe what students have explored so far in their personal worldview descriptions.

Sources grounding the presentation

The interest for the moral dimension of profession is rooted in the theory of Habermas (1981), articulating the confrontation of the system and the life worlds of professionals. This idea of confrontation is elaborated upon by Kunneman (2006) resulting in a conceptualization of the moral dimension of profession. This moral dimension is situated in the interaction between the personal well-being, the professional context and the societal context. This interaction brings about moral and existential questions which are not part of dialogue within the system world like for example institutions of education, and welfare work. Kunneman (2006) states that in these institutions professionals should construct a new narrative, a common ground to discuss these questions. Asking and discussing these questions is the beginning of an existential learning process and of giving sense.

This existential learning as form of reflection is theoretically linked to what is called the personal aspect of professional development. Previous researches on reflection, articulating the personal aspect, reported that personal competencies, skills and attitudes are closely related to the beliefs, the identity and spiritual dimension of a person (Korthagen 2004). Central in this approach of reflection is the assumption that professional behavior is connected to deeper layers within a person (Meijer, Korthagen and Vasalos 2009). In another way Illeris (2004) showed that transformative learning is an extensive type of learning regarding cognitive and emotional dimensions. Both approaches try to conceptualize transformation in reflection processes.

Personal backgrounds (Bullough 2008) and biographical perspectives (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe 1994) play a pivotal role in daily practices of professionals. Parallel to this insight is that professional development should go along with student's reflections concerning their biography, their values and a worldview-in-progress constituting their overall identity, according to the Dialogical Self Theory of Hermans (2010). This identity can be conceived of as being continuously (de- and re-)constructed and composed of different I-positions. This dialogical approach of the concept of identity facilitates students facing and exploring moral dilemmas or tensions in their work (Akkerman & Meijer 2011). These studies show in different ways the complexity of processes of reflection in professional development.

It could be argued that, based on our pilot study, worldview education adds a promising perspective on the way reflection stimulates aspects of transformative learning in both dimensions of professional development in a slightly violent context focusing on the instrumentality of education.

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