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WWW.ANABAPTISTSCHOLARS.NET

Making Connections

Editorial

You may have already seen the new website at the new domain: www.anabaptistscholars.net. The key feature is the interactive portion in which members can log in, update their profiles and search the listings of other members by keyword. At the core of the original vision for the Scholars Network, articulated by Lydia Neufeld Harder, was the idea that Anabaptist-Mennonite scholars of many disciplines and located at Mennonite, other Christian or secular institutions would connect with other scholars for support and collaboration. I encourage you to explore this website and make use of it. Such a Network depends on a diverse active membership—please encourage colleagues to join and make use of this resource as well.

A report of a new initiative by the Mennonite Church (USA and Canada), the Faculty Calling Project, is found on p. 11. I attended a recent meeting of the Faculty Calling Project team at which the possibilities for collaboration with the Scholars Network was discussed. The two initiatives have different objectives but overlapping constituencies. Broadly speaking, the Faculty Calling Project primarily serves the needs of Mennonite institutions by developing a list of qualified candidates for faculty positions and by connecting with graduate students to encourage them to consider teaching at such schools. The Scholars Network primarily serves the needs of members by providing networking opportunities and fora, such as this publication and conferences, for reflecting on the intersection of

Christian faith, Anabaptist-Mennonite particularities and scholarly work. Each will find ways to promote the other project while respecting the privacy of those on each list.

The Faculty Calling Project allocated \$1000 (US) to support the Scholars Network and to cover the membership dues of all graduate students in the Network. I am grateful for this support. *Grad students—please join and encourage others to join the Scholars Network; there is no cost to you.* Send me an email and I will activate your membership and full access to the website.

Currently, the Network consists largely of those working in theology, religion, church history and Bible. This was largely a function of the way the original list was generated but it ought not to remain this way. One positive consequence of the relationship with the Faculty Calling Project may be reaching potential members studying and teaching in the wide range of disciplines offered at Mennonite institutions. I feel strongly that interdisciplinary participation is crucial. It may be a challenge to reflect on faith and scholarship issues across disciplinary discourses but such an effort is essential to the integration of all of faith and life.

The two feature articles in this issue address some of the theoretical issues involved in interdisciplinary scholarly practice. A. James Reimer argues for the methodological integrity of theology which recognizes and uses other disciplines with different though related meth-

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odologies and subject matters (p. 2). Dan Wessner proposes “critically embodied studies” as the integration of disciplines, a Christian peace ethic and intercultural communication (p. 6). Significantly, both make reference to the challenges presented to the authors by the experience of teaching students who are (hopefully) struggling to make sense in their own lives of diverse methods, bodies of knowledge and ways to apply or embody them.

The Scholars Network is planning or working closely with two future conferences. The first is a meeting of graduate students in religion and Bible organized by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre. It will be held on November 21-22, 2002 in Toronto, just prior to the AAR/SBL annual meetings. The topic is “Issues in the Future of Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholarship” (more information: http://individual.utoronto.ca/menno_theology/)

The second is a collaboration with the Anabaptist Sociology and Anthropology Association entitled “Ritual in Anabaptist Communities” (see call for papers, p. 14).

As you can see, connections are being made in many ways. This increased activity, especially the development of the website, costs money. Thank-you to those who have already paid 2002 dues. **If you have not done so, please send your annual membership dues—\$25 Cdn, \$20 US—payable to “Conrad Grebel University College,” to the address on p.1. To all: consider making a tax receiptable donation to the Scholars Network** (for U.S. *donations only*—make cheques payable to “Mennonite Education Agency” with a note on the memo line). I thank you in advance for your support.

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Theology: An Interdisciplinary Approach

By A. James Reimer

The turf battles between various disciplines (although distinct, I’ll be using the terms “disciplines” and “fields of study” interchangeably), also within theology, is not news. Within theological studies broadly defined, biblical scholars think they have an edge on truth because, after all, they are dealing with the revealed text. If they don’t like to talk about the Bible as revealed truth, they at least claim that it is the foundational set of documents upon which all other theological statements are necessarily based. And, of course, they are right.

The historian, however, claims that hers is the ultimate discipline because her field of scholarly interest is not one set of documents (the biblical library of books) but all past books, events and movements up to the present, including the biblical text. The events recorded in the Bible are but themselves historical events, and the writing and collection of the canonical books takes place within history. In other words the historian deals with everything. The historian is also right.

The dogmatician and systematician argue that in theology what really counts are the cen-

tral confessional truth claims being made, the beliefs without which the Bible would not have been written in the first place. Furthermore, the people who hold these beliefs, live by them and occasionally die for them, constitute the subject matter of the historian; without them no work for the historian. The systematic theologian and the philosopher, dealing with more or less the same subject matter, are also keen on identifying hidden truth claims, overt or covert presuppositions that subtly influence the methods and findings of each of the other disciplines.

The practical (or pastoral) theologians think that all this theorizing is useless unless it can actually be understood by people, and applied in their daily lives. Theology if it does not reflect and speak to concrete human experience is not only valueless but irresponsible and possibly dangerous. At the heart of all Christian theology is doxology, worship and spirituality—a personal and corporate encounter with the living God. Theology is authentic only if it is done in the context of a living and believing community. They are right as well.

Then there are all the other disciplines that surely also have relevance for theological studies: the pure, physical and natural sci-

ences; the technical and computer sciences; the practical and professional disciplines (law, medicine etc.); social, political and economic sciences; the long array of humanities, including literature and fine arts. Where do they fit?

Karl Barth claimed that theology must be kept methodologically pure, and under no circumstances build upon insights from other natural fields of knowledge. Barth, however, can easily be misunderstood in this regard. Here's what he really says:

We do not need to reject them [other fields of knowledge] for this reason, or even to underestimate them. Even the understanding of man from the Word of God will always be effected in practice in the language, categories and framework of the possibilities of human self-understanding. In it we shall always and inevitably have before us the phenomena of the human, and to that extent make use of naturalistic, idealistic, existential, historical, psychological and similar thoughts and expressions. Yet we shall not derive the reality to which we refer from one of these working hypotheses, but from the point where it is really present, where it is event and revelation" (*Church Dogmatics* III/4, p. 44).

For Barth, what defines a discipline (a "science" he called it) is whether it has its own subject matter and a methodology proper to it. Christian theology has its own subject matter—the Revelation of God in Christ—which determines its methodology. It can of course use other disciplines but only in a subordinate role. In a strange sort of way, this frees up each discipline to be itself.

Although the problem with much modern academic training is that there is too little awareness of other disciplines, too little interdisciplinary work, there is something to be said for keeping disciplines "clear and distinct," methodologically speaking. It is important to know what you are doing and when you are doing it. A preacher, for instance, may very well do exegesis, hermeneutics, history, psychology, systematic theology and practical theology all in the preparation and delivery of a sermon, but is it not important methodologically to know when she's doing what?

For many years I taught a course called "Methods and Issues in Theological Studies," as a requirement for all students in our Master

of Theological Studies program at Conrad Grebel College. The intent was to introduce students to the various disciplines, and their different methodologies, that contributed to our graduate program in theology: biblical, historical, cultural (literature and the fine arts), social scientific (e.g., psychology, sociology), philosophical, systematic and practical.

Since we began as an interdisciplinary program in lay theological education (not explicitly professional ministerial training), the intent was to provide a kind of equality between all the disciplines, not favoring one over the other—not to make systematic/dogmatic theology or philosophy into the "queen of the sciences" in the Medieval sense, but to signal the important contribution made by each to theological thinking. The question then became: what is "theological studies" generically, understood in such a way as to be the goal of each of the disciplines individually and together? I found it almost impossible to find decent texts for this course

For a number of years, I used Bernard Lonergan's *Method in Theology*, lectures he gave at Harvard in 1971-72. Lonergan, a neo-Thomist, proposed a transcendental method for both distinguishing and bridging the various disciplines. Each of eight disciplines (research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics, communications) has its own independent integrity and task (he calls them "functional specialties"). Yet, all are dynamically interdependent in their joint effort to attain a common goal: theological knowledge. "To put method in theology," he said, "is to conceive theology as a set of related and recurrent operations [or "a series of independent sets"] cumulatively advancing towards an ideal goal."

The strengths of Lonergan's proposal were: he considered it critical that disciplines respect each other's distinct methods of seeking knowledge 1) to deal with massive amount of data out there through a division of labour; 2) to prevent imperialism by one discipline over another, c) to acknowledge a "soft distinction" (my words) between the descriptive and the normative disciplines: for example, according to Lonergan, "conversion" (Lonergan has a nuanced understanding of conversion as putting on a specific set of "faith" glasses) can be presupposed by the dis-

ciplines of foundations, doctrines, systematics and communications, but not necessarily by research (exegesis), interpretation (hermeneutics), history and dialectic (philosophy).

The most unique, and to me the most problematic, aspect of Lonergan's method, is his underlying epistemology. He rejects classical pre-Kantian, static and correspondence theories of knowledge, in favor of a dynamic process theory of knowledge, presupposed, he thinks, by every discipline or field of study. Constitutive of this process are four transcendentals: experiencing data (attentativeness), understanding data (inquiry), judging data (reflection), deciding in light of the data (deliberation). What I liked about this schema, is that the process toward knowledge is not complete without action and taking moral responsibility.

However, these particular cognitive transcendental are universal—they apply to all disciplines. In the end, I gave up using Lonergan's book as a primary text, partly because it was very difficult and I had a virtual class mutiny on my hands every year. More important, I did not find his particular proposal of a unified cognitive structure for all disciplines convincing.

I have concluded that the differences between the disciplines, and their methodologies, are much more profound than Lonergan and others have acknowledged. I do believe there is, ultimately, an underlying unity to all truth, and knowledge of that truth, but that unity is always beyond our immediate grasp. This does not mean we ought not to work together in our common search for the truth (theoretical and practical) and make alliances whenever possible. But methodological differences do matter, and an awareness of *what* method we are using *when* is part of intellectual honesty and humility—it reminds us of the limited nature of our particular endeavor.

There have been numerous other attempts at creating bridge theories. I have just returned from one such exercise, an international and interdisciplinary colloquium at the Internationales Wissenschaftsforum, University of Heidelberg (May 30-June 1, 2002). The colloquium, entitled "Towards a General Theory of Symbolic Forms," was organized by Heidelberg theologian Michael Welker and Cam-

bridge physicist, canon theologian and Anglican priest John Polkinghorne. They had invited some 20 individuals from a variety of fields and disciplines to consider alternative ways of conceptualizing bridge theories between disciplines.

Welker and Polkinghorne have done considerable joint writing and teaching on science and religion, and this was their effort at expanding the range of fields in dialogue with each other. The notion of "symbolic forms" is a way hopefully of talking about disciplines that transcends the traditional discursive/non-discursive distinction, and allows for disciplines like music, for example, to join the conversation. The sciences, in this approach, are also considered to be symbolic forms of expression and not a literal ways of representing reality.

Welker proposed that we talk about "family resemblances" between the disciplines, "neighborhoods," where the old dualisms (meaning and reality, invisible and invisible, value and fact) are superseded with more adequate ways of conducting inter-disciplinary conversation. Dialogue on a meta-level, in which grand meta-bridge theories are developed, have not been successful. More topic-centered discussions between science and religion, for instance (e.g., eschatology) have proved more fruitful. General theories are not to be discarded altogether, however. One might envision a hermeneutical circle in which a general theory is proposed and tested with specific instances.

In the end, the colloquium illustrated precisely the difficulty of finding a general theory 1) which makes it possible for the various disciplines to talk to each other and find commonalities, 2) without prejudicing the discussion in favor of one discipline over another. The first day was devoted to input by four philosophers presenting four different philosophical theories of symbolic forms: 1) Ernst Cassirer's historicist and non-teleological view of symbols as products of autonomous, human imagination and self-creation; 2) Alfred N. Whitehead's view of symbolization as rooted in the pre-cognitive, experiential interaction of primal entities and events; 3) Suzanne Langer's notion of biologically driven artistic symbolization, expressing the "morphology of feelings," with different arts creating different

forms of illusion; 4) Nelson Goodman's rejection of general theories of symbolic meaning systems, and view of symbols as internally multi-layered and multi-referential.

After this heavily philosophically-weighted discourse, the other disciplines (science, law, media, literature, music, and theology) were left to express their own understandings of symbolic forms in light of philosophy's theorizing. I do not believe we can develop a general theory of symbolic forms that is not itself already prejudiced in the direction of some specific discipline. The four philosophers who presented the four very different philosophical theories of symbolic forms, shared a common philosophical discourse, which was quite different from (possibly exclusionary of) other forms of symbolic expression (e.g., music)

In my graduate course on "Methods and Issues in Theological Studies," I proposed my own way of conceptualizing the different disciplines on a more equal footing, as spokes in a wheel pointing to the center, or common goal, identified as "theology" or "theological studies." In this schema, theology (not to be equated with the discipline of systematic theology) would be defined as "the study of God and all things in relation to God," and "Christian theology" as "the study of God (and all things in relation to God) as revealed in Jesus Christ and made present in the Holy Spirit."

Each of the separate disciplines were seen to contribute in their own specific way, true to their own methodologies, to this common goal: *Biblical* as the study of foundational text (s) in their historical and cultural context with an expertise in original languages of Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic; *Historical* as the study of the past in all its diversity and in its movement toward the present; *Literary* as the study of the mytho-poetic narratives of concrete, lived human experience, dealing with the human condition as such; *Social Scientific* (psychology, sociology, anthropology etc.) as the study of the social-constructive nature of human experience and ideas both of individuals and groups; *Philosophical* as the cognitive study of the structures of the whole of reality, human knowledge, ethics and action; *Systematic* as the study of the "doctrines" of the Christian religion/faith and their meanings and implica-

tions for life and ethics in the light of fall contemporary experience and knowledge; *Practical/Pastoral* as the study of the experience and worship of the divine, and the transmission and communication of the Christian religion/faith in the life of the Christian community and within society.

The above is not a comprehensive list but serves to illustrate my own attempt at creating a kind of "federation" (Polkinghorne's term) or "neighborhood" (Welker's term) of disciplines working cooperatively toward a common goal: theological knowledge.

No matter how hard one tries, however, to develop a kind of "level playing field," there exists an asymmetry between the disciplines when harnessed in relation to some common goal, such as theology above. In the end one is left with a number of unsatisfactory options: 1) to make a strict distinction between normative (e.g., philosophy and systematic theology) and non-normative disciplines (e.g., history, sociology), with the non-normative ones providing objective data for the normative ones, realizing of course that there is no such thing as a value-fact distinction; 2) to go the Medieval route and just declare unapologetically that one discipline (like theology or philosophy) is the queen and all the other are maid servants, but then one with good reason becomes the laughing stock of the modern academy; 3) take the Barthian path (which has much in common with post-modern theories of language and knowledge) and say every discipline is its own separate form of discourse ("language game"), with its own agenda and method, that can use the other disciplines on an ad hoc basis but never in a foundational way.

I lean toward the latter option, but uneasily, believing that conversation between the disciplines is more significant for foundational issues in theology than a pure Barthian, post-modern notion allows. I think the language of "federation," "family resemblances," and "neighborhoods" holds possibilities for a kind of minimalist way of conceptualizing such a common search for truth(s) about reality.

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An Interdisciplinary Peace Pedagogy: Critically Embodied Studies

By Dan Wessner

I am submitting this essay at the conclusion of a semester-long cross-cultural course and overseas immersion with fourteen Bluffton College students and their counterparts at An Giang University in Vietnam's Mekong Delta. Their combined coursework and effort illustrate the shape and goals of my interdisciplinary peace pedagogy—critically embodied studies. This approach integrates several disciplines, is rooted in a Christian peace ethic of embodiment, and furthers intercultural communicative competence. Critically embodied studies is a constructive and compassionate response to the escalation of U.S. hegemonic policies in the wake of terrorism and expanding fronts for war.

Granted, our world is disfigured by the threats of rogue actors. Even more so, it is a world transfigured by the phenomenal demands of powerful states and societies. The latter's collective influence distorts the choices and hopes of less privileged people and places. The United States government projects unparalleled might in terms of daunting militarism, support for under-regulated corporate and financial globalization, and an ideological discourse that mutes subaltern voices. The U.S. citizenry is merely four and one-half percent of the world's population yet consumes more than thirty percent of the world's production. Combined, this dominant state-societal structure is far too often impervious to human suffering beyond "the national interest" of itself and certain allies. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright put it bluntly; in the ongoing U.S. offensive against Iraq, she explained that U.S. foreign policy was "practical, not aesthetic" and that it rightly used "coercion, the threat of coercion, sanctions, [and] the threat of sanctions." In that these policies countenanced the loss of as many as one-half million Iraqi children's lives, she concluded this was a "hard choice" but a worthy one.¹ The Bush Administration has only magnified the dualism, penetration, and scope of such "hard choices."

By contrast, these Bluffton and An Giang

students have just enjoyed inter-personal dialogue and bi-lingual, cross-cultural classes that examined the costs of another U.S. war (more than 3.8 million dead), the inter-generational effect of four decades of U.S.-led embargoes (signing a trade agreement only last December), the genetic monstrosity of Agent Orange and everyday threats of unexploded ordnance (stealing lives long after war's "end"), and the very chance of post-war reconstruction. The most prominent images for my Bluffton students, though, were descriptive of the vibrant street life, intramural sports, diverse houses of worship, reverence for elders and revolutionary leaders, luscious and pungent fruits, family-village roots, the burden of bi-lingual communication, and the alacrity of making friends.

Ring in their ears is also the question that An Giang colleagues pose; it echoes that of subaltern states and people in today's march of globalization. "What are small players to do in the wake of hegemonic power and policies?" This in turn raises other questions for us. How are researchers and students of global affairs and Christian ethics to grasp the perspectives of peripheral political systems and their citizens? How do these concerns translate into methodological and pedagogical goals for peace-oriented professors, classrooms, and campuses? Even as I work at Bluffton—a Christian pacifist, liberal arts institution rooted in an Anabaptist mission—how might it respond to the laws and cultural norms of the U.S.? Can I reasonably expect my mostly Mid-western students to perceive the world in ways so very counter-cultural to what is reiterated in various media? How persuasive is a peace theology for discerning pathways for insightful social and political science? How may I best serve and minister unto students who seek to meld faith-based ethics, academic rigor, and socially engaged global citizenship?

My response is critically embodied studies. It speaks to my passion for teaching and insightful social science. It forms praxis-oriented and peaceable paths for analyzing and responding to domination, struggle, and hope. It calls for immersion into the cross-cultural currents *both* of countries struggling to sustain

themselves *and* the corridors of global power. It invites students into a local-global milieu that melds faith-based ethics, academic rigor, and citizenship. Richard Falk calls this sort of quest “politically engaged spirituality.” Here discipleship asserts the will and capacity to confront modern warfare, hegemonic policies, and oppression with non-violence, persistent faith, and behavioral change. Falk asserts the need to reclaim for public policymaking the corrective lens of faith, ethical reflection, and inspired service.² As explained below, critically embodied studies also calls upon several disciplines—political anthropology, critical theory, and development studies. Yet the core value that holds these disciplines together is a theological understanding of embodiment. This includes service, compassion, non-violence, liberation, and accompaniment among people who know too well the costs of war. I explain below the interwoven steps of critically embodied studies in the context of our Bluffton-An Giang exchange. These elements may redirect the dominant American focus on “terrorist threats” to a more integrative attention upon justice and peace for all.

Embodiment: Many scholars readily cross lines between the above disciplines. Yet only a few, such as Nancy Scheper-Hughes, concentrate on the dimension of one’s immersion into development service and/or relationship building in the place that is being examined.³ This is the core of critically embodied studies. For example, in her years of research in a Brazilian barrio, Scheper-Hughes and her family were engaged in community praxis even as she pursued work as an anthropologist, feminist, and political theorist. I concur with her that our knowledge is intersubjective and interrelated. It derives from the interdependencies of every point of our lives. If I take seriously my embodiment in any community—be that faith, research, classroom, family, or play—then my presence contributes to another’s change. So, too, others affect my sense of joy, love, humor, unity, power, pain, and fatigue. Theologian Leonardo Boff asserts, “Beings have their relative autonomy, but always within a context of imbrication and interconnectedness. This is why the ideal of strict objectivity is a fiction.”⁴ According to Paulo Freire, the dialogue that is essential to this embodiment has two constitutive elements: reflection and action. If co-

hered, they form praxis, and this feeds our collective quest for truth. But if either element is underused, the other suffers too, and the supposed dialogic knowledge is inauthentic.⁵

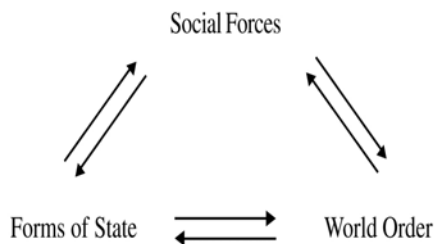
Embodiment means, therefore, the knowledgeable delivery of service in war-torn, downtrodden, or globalizing contexts where we encounter suffering as the first truth. My vocation follows from this truth, and that is a commitment to help ameliorate suffering. A second evident truth is that there are paths of transformation beyond domination and needless suffering. Based on these truths, the names and faces of real people intersect with and correct my methods, pedagogy, knowledge, and service. This whole process is complex and sometimes exhausting. Thus a final pastoral aspect of embodiment is sensitivity to the needs and questions of each participant. My Bluffton students will attest to the fatigue of rashes, intense heat, intestinal disorder, jet lag, mosquitoes, and general disorientation!

Political anthropology: With these challenges in mind, this discipline draws one even further into the “rich repertoire of state-societal interactions,” here in the context of Vietnam’s post-war reconstruction.⁶ One may observe a culture of politics that is legitimated and validated by local knowledge (not global norms) and by elites and common citizens, alike. Joel Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue conclude that state-societal relations are mutually transforming, recursive, and blurred.⁷ Thus in the context of Vietnam, one must study the family-hamlet-village structures as thoroughly as centralized organs of the capital and single-party state. One must be attuned to bedrock values of southeast Asian agrarian life, let alone later influences from Chinese Confucianism, French colonialism, western concepts of Marxism, and other modernist constructs of economics and trade.

Political anthropology is also increasingly attentive to moral agency. Nicole Polier and William Roseberry add that if a scholar lives in the midst of crisis, then one must seriously think about it and be engaged in it.⁸ John Paul Lederach comments that whereas scholars and practitioners of international studies and conflict resolution have often examined and managed existing enmity and injustice, they have too infrequently sought to mend it.⁹ He posits that participatory, critically thinking, and

transforming moral agencies among scholars and development personnel are necessary correctives. I embrace such a moral agency. In solidarity, we delve into the particulars of others' struggles or crises. And in so doing, we may discern the meaning of one's own identity, struggle, life philosophy, and responsiveness. In Vietnam's post-war reconstruction, there is ample "crisis" to warrant scholarly immersion and response. During past war years as today, this subaltern state poses questions in a world of U.S. hegemony.

Critical theory: This discipline clarifies that any country's culture, history, and political processes are porous beside the dynamic effects of inter-state and global forces. All of these factors inform the shape of state-societal relations, as well as the identities crafted by individuals, villages, cities, ethnicities, and political parties. Robert Cox diagrams this historical process of inter-subjective learning in



the tugs and pulls of state-societal-global understanding.¹⁰

Cox posits that state-societal complexes are correctly viewed as the basic unit of analysis in international relations.¹¹ Inter-subjective learning occurs between the successive forms of the state, social forces affecting these forms, and world orders. Bluffton and An Giang students, alike, form ideas of their own actions and material forces, structures, and discourses, but they are simultaneously subject to outside ideas, forces, and norms. Clearly, this evolution of state and citizenship identities does not operate in a vacuum. Social forces and world developments exert powerful associative possibilities in terms of material capabilities, economic class, the formation and dissemination of ideas, and the growth of institutions. This evolutionary process was most evident as An Giang and Bluffton students learned to reassess their socially informed preconceptions of the other. Quite candidly, some Bluffton students explained in essays before their trip that

they were plain scared of entering a communist state. Their fears subsided as intercultural communication allowed them to question and reconstruct underlying assumptions.

Finally, critical theory examines world orders that may be characterized as successive historical epochs. These eras overlap the above state-societal developments. By studying the evolution of state-societal *cum* global forces in other countries, they may also begin to enter genuine debate concerning globalization. For example, Bluffton students could observe how in Vietnam the norms of globalization call for a shift from states mediating harsh market forces to a "race to the bottom" in the developing world. Competing poorer countries scan the globe for investment capital. To secure it, they are often coercively driven toward providing "comparative advantages." In Vietnam, this includes the provision of skilled labor for as little as \$40/month in apparel factories and assembly plants. In the global commodities market, Vietnam accepts prices for its main exports of rice and coffee that are well beneath the cost of production.

Development studies: There are at least four prevalent views of development. Three conventional interpretations regard development as synonymous with economic growth,¹² or economic growth *cum* social change,¹³ or elite-organized modernism promising enlightened, market-oriented, technological paths of change. Liberation may in fact be served by these three views. This set of presumptions stresses the benefits of change, such as material prosperity, efficient market processes, increased productive capacity, the fruits of higher consumption, improved housing and health services, greater educational options, choice of employment, and mobility.

Numerous scholars discern, however, that such a course errs uncritically in valuing efficiency, transparency, and the technical aspects of economics above all else, particularly ethical and local considerations. Denis Goulet summarizes that such "developmentalism" subordinates "value judgments about human goals to the achievement of economic growth, to the creation of new social divisions of labor, to the quest for modern institutions, or to the spread of attitudes deemed compatible with efficient production."¹⁴ One egregious spin on these benefits during the American-Vietnam

War was Samuel Huntington's conclusion that extensive aerial bombing was developmentally beneficial since the consequent refugee resettlement and political change were thought to introduce modernization in place of old agrarian cultural orders.¹⁵

If conventional development presumptions value efficiency and social control, a contrasting fourth interpretation of "development as liberation" values social justice, human rights, and participatory, creating people. Such liberating development does not discard empirical indicators. Instead it examines quantitative facts in light of pathways for qualitative improvement in state-societal relations—from the culturally constitutive construction of state-societal institutions to the needs, opportunities, and voice of societal groups and individuals. Humanizing developments foster a certain degree of autonomy, state-societal creativity over imitation of global norms, some control over the forces of change, and a sense of moral agency in state-societal transformation. In the case of Vietnam's development, the Bluffton and An Giang students examined the United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report* and its indices of human progress (HDI). This annual report is a composite of more than fifty tables measuring various quantitative-qualitative aspects of development. Over the past decade, Vietnam's HDI ranking has risen from 115th out of 162 countries, to 101st out of 173. Its overall HDI mark for delivering health care, education, and life expectancy has climbed substantially from .472 to .682 out of a possible 1.0. Our students discussed the hope that abounds despite the obstacles of post-war, post-embargo reconstruction in a globalizing age of inequity.

Conclusion: Elmer Neufeld, former Peace Section Secretary for the General Conference of Mennonites, stated that "when we actually take our neighbor's interests as seriously as our own," there is a praxis of liberation theology with profound personal and political relevance.¹⁶ Earl Martin, former MCC volunteer during the American-Vietnam War, roots this conviction in the very history of war and peace that these two countries share. He posits this is "not a call primarily to purity, whether political, moral or religious. It is a call to enter, to touch, to weep, and to work."¹⁷ If faith and academics are understood to move history,

then one's embodiment of suffering is also participation in hope. Critically embodied studies seeks to understand paths for overcoming systems of domination. It requires that we engage concepts of power politics, local-global affairs, and case studies of struggle. If this approach serves our commitment to a "politically engaged spirituality," then we may discern hope out of struggle. Out of this may be realized transformative freedom, compassion, solidarity, responsible accounting of self, forgiveness, giving, and receiving.

This sort of embodiment is the essence of Archbishop Oscar Romero's last sermon. He preached concretely and passionately. He named names of victims, offenders, and devastated villages. He described torture and death. He admonished soldiers and all Salvadorans, "thou shall not kill." He understood the pastor's response to suffering to be a political and hopeful ministry to all people. Out of solidarity with suffering one is prepared to contemplate, insist upon, and reach for hope. Critically embodied studies shares Romero's conviction that "Christ desires to unite himself with humanity, so that the light he brings from God might become life for nations and individuals."¹⁸

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Notes:

¹Madeleine K. Albright, "The Testing of American Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 77:6 (November/December 1998), 59; Albright, quoted in Noam Chomsky, *9-11* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001), 73.

²Richard Falk, *Religion and Human Global Governance* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 55-56, 107.

³Nancy Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

⁴Leonardo Boff, *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 26.

⁵Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, revised 20th anniversary edition, trans. Myra Bergman

Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1993), 68-69.

⁶Joel S. Migdal, Atul Kohli, and Vivienne Shue, eds., *State Power and Social Forces: Domination and Transformation in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 323.

⁷*Ibid.*, 23, 294.

⁸Nicole Polier and William Roseberry, "Tristes tropes: post-modern anthropologists encounter the other and discover themselves," *Economy and Society* 18:2, 250-255, 260.

⁹John Paul Lederach, "Keynote Address" for the founding of the doctoral program in Conflict Resolution, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver (4 May 1999).

¹⁰Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders," in Robert O. Keohane, *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 221.

¹¹*Ibid.*; see also Cox, "Gramsci, hegemony, and international relations: an essay in method," in Robert W. Cox and Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 124-46.

¹²Denis Goulet, "'Development' ... or Liberation?" in C. K. Wilbur and K. P. Jameson, eds. *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 547.

¹³This formula derives from United Nations General Secretary U Thant's phrase, "development = economic growth + social change," but suffers for lack of specificity. As Denis Goulet summarizes, "not any kind of growth will do, nor any kind of change." *Ibid.*, 548.

¹⁴Denis Goulet, *op. cit.*, "Development," 547-548.

¹⁵Samuel P. Huntington, "The Bases of Accommodation," *Foreign Affairs* 46 (1968), 652.

¹⁶Elmer Neufeld, quoted in Perry Bush, *Two Kingdoms, Two Loyalties* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1999), 200.

¹⁷Earl Martin, "Responses to Previous Issue," *The Conrad Grebel Review* 17:4 (Fall, 1999), 73.

¹⁸Archbishop Oscar Romero, "The Last Sermon," in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, eds., *The Human Rights Reader*, revised edition (New York: New American Library, 1989), 353.

Mennonite Scholars and Friends at the AAR/SBL

2002 host: Conrad Grebel University College

Reception — **Friday, November 22, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

Toronto Metro Convention Centre, Room TBA

Forum — **Saturday, November 23, 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.**

Toronto Metro Convention Centre, Room TBA

"Radical Orthodoxy and the Radical Reformation: What is Radical about Radical Orthodoxy?"

Conversations with John Milbank, University of Virginia
A. James Reimer, Conrad Grebel University College, presiding

Panelists:

Malinda Berry, Union Theological Seminary
Chris K. Huebner, Canadian Mennonite University
P. Travis Kroeker, McMaster University
Laura Schmidt Roberts, Graduate Theological Union
Gerald W. Schlabach, University of St. Thomas

Mennonite Churches begin Faculty Calling Project

A team of talent scouts is headed into the field, looking for potential college professors. This initiative, supported by Mennonite higher education institutions in Canada and the United States, is intended to help Mennonite colleges and seminaries develop a pool of highly talented teacher candidates.

This effort, called the Faculty Calling Project, is directed by Leanne Schertz, a retired English professor (Illinois Central College) and former chair of the Goshen College Board of Overseers.

"We are looking for candidates who possess both strong scholarship skills and strong commitments to the Mennonite Church," says Schertz.

The team consists of Jeremy M. Bergen (Toronto, Ontario), Marion G. Deckert (North Newton, Kansas), John A. Lapp (Akron, Pennsylvania), Marion D. Schrock (Salem, Oregon), and Victor E. Stoltzfus (Goshen, Indiana).

"Our task," says John Lapp, "is to encourage and promote teaching in Mennonite colleges and seminaries as a Christian calling for well-trained and deeply committed scholars/teachers."

Early shapers of this initiative were Dale Schrag, secretary of the Higher Education Council, and Orville Yoder, president of Mennonite Board of Education. Both of these educators were attuned to requests from academic deans for assistance in building strong staffs.

Currently the Mennonite colleges and seminaries have more than 400 full-time faculty members. Each year these institutions need to find 30 to 40 new faculty to fill openings. It is not unusual for Mennonite college deans to encounter a dearth of applicants who understand the mission and atmosphere of a Mennonite college. In addition, applicants who do fit this mission and atmosphere are scattered around the globe and thus difficult to locate.

The team knows that there are many Mennonite young adults who have completed or are completing graduate study in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences who

also are strongly committed to the Mennonite-Anabaptist faith tradition and the Mennonite Church. In addition, there are scholars from other denominations who share this faith and who can contribute to the Mennonite church and its mission.

The staff of the Faculty Calling Project is creating a database of names of potential candidates received from nominations and applications. This database, accessible by password only, will be shared with college deans.

The team members plan to write letters, make personal visits, and be available to counsel potential candidates. "We engage in the holy work of the architecture of souls," wrote Vic Stoltzfus in a letter to prospective faculty members.

The Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada are both collaborating with the nine colleges and seminaries in this project. Schertz invites pastors, professors and church leaders "to join us as talent scouts."

For more information, contact the Faculty Calling Project, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, Indiana 46515. The phone number is 574-293-7531. The e-mail address is calling@mea.mennonite.net

The Ethics Of Biotechnology: Viewing New Creations With Anabaptist Eyes — A major conference of this theme will be held **November 13 - 15, 2003** at Eastern Mennonite University. The conference will emphasize the role of Anabaptist perspectives in informing and shaping our bioethical discernment. A preliminary program will be available by fall of this year. For more information, contact Cheryl Doss at 540-432-4400; e-mail: doss@emu.edu

New Books

Braun, Willi and Russell T. McCutcheon, eds. *Guide to the Study of Religion*. Cassell, 2000.

Falcón, Rafael. *101 Spanish Riddles*. McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Finger, Reta Halteman and Kari Sandhaas, eds., *The Wisdom of Daughters: Two Decades of The Voice of Christian Feminism*. Innisfree Press, 2001.

Hellenbrand, Alexandra Sterling. *Topographies of Gender in Middle High German Arthurian Romance*. Garland, 2001.

Hoekema, Alle. *Dutch Mennonite Mission in Indonesia: Historical Essays*. Institute of Mennonite Studies, Occasional Papers, No. 22, 2001.

King, Michael. *Fractured Dance: Gadamer and a Mennonite Conflict Over Homosexuality*. C. Henry Smith Series. Pandora Press U.S.; Herald Press, 2001.

Kraybill, Donald B. *The Riddle of Amish Culture*, 2d ed. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Kraybill, Donald B. and Carl F. Bowman. *On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Kraybill, Donald B. and C. Nelson Hostetter. *Anabaptist World USA*. Herald Press, 2001.

Kraybill, Donald B. and Linda Gehman Peachey, eds., *Where Was God on September 11? Seeds of Faith and Hope*. Herald Press, 2001.

Marshall, Christopher D. *Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime and Punishment*. Vol. 5 in the Institute of Mennonite Studies series Studies in Peace and Scripture. Eerdmans, 2001.

Marshall, Christopher D. *Crowned with Glory and Honor: Human Rights in the Biblical Tradition*. Vol. 6 in the Institute of Mennonite Studies series Studies in Peace and Scripture. Pandora Press U.S.; Herald Press; Lime Grove House, 2002.

Roth, John D., ed. *Engaging Anabaptism: Conversations with a Radical Tradition*. Herald Press, 2001.

Ruth, John Landis. *The Earth is the Lord's: A Narrative History of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference*. Herald Press, 2001.

Schertz, Mary H. and Perry B. Yoder. *Seeing the Text: Exegesis for Students of Greek and Hebrew*. Abingdon Press, 2001.

Schipani, Daniel and Anton Wessels, eds., *The Promise of Hope: A Tribute to Dom Hélder*. Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2002.

Weaver-Zercher, David., ed., *Minding the Church: Scholarship in the Anabaptist Tradition*. Pandora Press U.S.; Herald Press, 2002.

Weaver-Zercher, David. *The Amish in the American Imagination*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Yoder Neufeld, Thomas R. *Ephesians*. Believers Church Bible Commentary. Herald Press, 2002.

Zehr, Howard. *Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims*. Good Books, 2002.

Journal

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology, published biannually by the Institute of Mennonite Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Canadian Mennonite Bible College:

"Transformation" 2/2 (Fall 2001)

"Hospitality" 3/1 (Spring 2002)

"Confession" 3/2 (Fall 2002)

To subscribe, Canadian readers may contact Gordon Zerbe, 500 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 2N2; gzerbe@cmu.ca Readers in the U.S. and overseas may contact the Institute of Mennonite Studies/AMBS, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana 46517, visionsubscribe@ambs.edu

Mennonite/s Writing: An International Conference —

co-sponsored by Goshen College and Conrad Grebel University College, will take place at Goshen College **October 24 - 27, 2002**. The conference will feature readings by Canadian writers Rudy Wiebe, Di Brandt, David Bergen, Armin Wiebe, Patrick Friesen, Sandra Birdsell, Sarah Klassen, Rosemary Nixon, Barbara Nickel, Maurice Mierau, and David Waltner-Toews; American writers Jeff Gundy, Jean Janzen, Julia Kasdorf, Keith Ratzlaff, Dallas Wiebe, Raylene Hinz-Penner, Ann Hostetler, and Todd Davis; and Yorifumi Yagachi of Japan. Some thirty academic papers will discuss the work of Rudy Wiebe and other writers of Mennonite heritage. Academic papers will also address various features of what we have come to call Mennonite Literature. For more information, please consult the conference website at:

http://www.goshen.edu/english/Special_Events/Conference.htm

Or contact one of the conference co-chairs: Hildi Froese Tiessen, hstiessen@uwaterloo.ca or Ervin Beck, ervinb@goshen.edu

TMTC Graduate Student Conference

Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre announces a conference for graduate students and recently graduated students in the area of religion, **November 21 - 22, 2002** (immediately prior to the AAR/SBL meetings) in Toronto. The conference will feature presentations on the broad theme: **Issues in the Future of Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholarship**. Session titles: Mennonites and Pacifism, Mennonites and Scripture, Mennonites and Tradition, Mennonites and Theological Identity, Mennonites and the World. The conference will include a meeting with deans of Mennonite institutions to discuss faculty needs. Travel/lodging bursaries are available to participants thanks to a grant from Mennonite Foundation of Canada. Program and registration information: http://individual.utoronto.ca/menno_theology/

The Conrad Grebel Review

An interdisciplinary journal published by
Conrad Grebel University College

Winter 2002: 2001 Bechtel Lectures by Terry Martin, "The Russian Mennonite Encounter with the Soviet State, 1917-1955";
Gordon D. Kaufman, "My Life and My Theological Reflection: Two Central Themes";
C. Norman Kraus, "The Faith to Doubt: A Theological Autobiography".

Spring 2002: Special issue - "Responding to Terrorism: Does Nonviolence Work?"

Special Network member's rate: Canada: \$24/year; \$18 (student);
US: \$18/year; \$15 (student)

Contact: <http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca/cgreview/> 519-885-0220 ext.242

CALL FOR PAPERS/PRESENTATIONS/PERFORMANCES

“RITUAL IN ANABAPTIST COMMUNITIES”

Proposals are solicited for papers, presentations, or other sessions for a conference on ritual in Anabaptist contexts, to be held **June 26-28, 2003** at the Dow Conference Center at Hillsdale College in Michigan. The conference is a joint venture by the **Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network (AMSN)** and the **Anabaptist Sociology and Anthropology Association (ASAA)**, and is intended to be broadly interdisciplinary in scope. In particular, it is hoped that the conference will encourage contact and conversation between individuals concerned in various ways about Anabaptist ritual/worship from biblical and theological studies, from the social sciences, from the humanities, and from church leadership.

Possible topics that could be addressed include:

1. Consideration and application of recent theory and research in the growing field of ritual studies, in relation to Anabaptist communities, practices, and thought. Presentations on empirical studies of worship/ritual in particular Anabaptist communities.
2. Theological reflection on worship that engages with the study of ritual in other disciplines.
3. Comparisons and contrasts between ritual (including worship) in Anabaptist communities and in other communities.
4. Examinations of biblical portrayals of / bases for / critiques of... ritual.
5. Reflection on "mainstream" theological categories such as 'sacrament,' 'Eucharist,' 'story/narrative,' etc., in relation to Anabaptist life and thought.
6. Consideration of differences and continuities in ritual between "Old Order" Anabaptist groups and those that are ostensibly more culturally assimilated.
7. Consideration of particular elements of Anabaptist ritual (e.g., hymnody), or of particular ritual practices (e.g., Love Feast, footwashing, holy kiss, etc.).
8. Discussions of the experience and portrayal of ritual in literature and/or visual and performing arts, both among and about Anabaptist groups.
9. Performances, multimedia presentations, or other presentations that depart from the standard "academic paper" format.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. All proposals related to the general theme will be considered. Proposals should be typed, computer printed, or emailed, and should be about 250-300 words in length. Proposals are welcome for individual papers or presentations, or for entire sessions. **Submission Deadline: November 1, 2002.** Proposals should include complete information on all participants, but indicate one single person as the primary contact. Though there are no definite publication plans yet, the AMSN and ASAA wish to reserve the right of first refusal.

Send proposals to:

Kerry Strayer
 Department of Communication
 172 W. Main
 Otterbein College
 Westerville, OH 43081

Phone: (614) 823-3387
 Fax: (614) 823-3367
 Email: kstrayer@otterbein.edu

The planning committee for the conference consists of Jeremy Bergen (Toronto Mennonite Theological Center), Peter Blum (Hillsdale College), John Rempel (Mennonite Central Committee, United Nations Office), Rebecca Slough (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary), and Kerry Strayer (Otterbein College).