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Disproportionality in Special Education: A Persistent Reality for African American Students



Denise Reid (Biola University, La Mirada, California, United States)

Dr. Reid (PhD, Chapman University; MS, California State University, Fullerton; BA, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona) holds a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential and has decades of experience in providing educational accommodations to students with disabilities. While equal access to quality education for students with disabilities is of concern, her recent research has focused on tensions experienced by college students as they negotiate their disabled and non-disabled identities. Past research includes strategies for the successful transition from high school to college and college success contributes to her concerns that students with disabilities acquire self-advocacy skills and academic success during their K-12 experience. Since 1998, Denise has served as an adjunct instructor at various universities. Whether educating teachers on academic accommodations, or attentively listening to a parent share concerns regarding a diagnosis, or meeting the needs of the less fortunate, her greatest desire is to help others mature in their walk with Christ.

Open the Door of Christian Education to All Students: A Call for Christian School Reform

Tammy Bachrach (CAPC, Inc.; Whittier, California, United States)

Tammy Bachrach (BA & MA, Biola University) is a doctoral student at Chapman University seeking a PhD in education with an emphasis in Disability Studies. She has grown up in the disability community as the daughter and sister of individuals with intellectual disabilities. She has been a general and special educator for 18 years, working with both primary and secondary students with disabilities. She served as the Director of Services for [CAPC, Inc.](#), a non profit agency, for 10 years aiding adults with disabilities. She has developed program designs and providing input for state level policies on disability issues as a Board Member of the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center. She has consulted

on both professional development training films as well as a made for television show featuring a mother with a disability. Her passion is bridging the gap between disability studies, the Church and Christian Education..

California Academy Early College High School: Creating Community through Rigor, Relevance & Relationships



Erin Craig (E=MC2 Consulting, LLC, Newport Beach, California, United States)

Erin Craig (EdD in Educational Leadership, University of Southern California; MS in Pure Mathematics, CSU East Bay; BS in Pure Mathematics, CSU Long Beach) is the founder and president of E=MC2 Consulting, LLC. She specializes in K-12 charter schools, instructional leadership, middle/early colleges, school reform, and dual enrollment. Craig is also planning to open a middle college charter high school in Orange County serving at-risk students in Fall 2016. Since 2013, Craig has served as the Treasurer for the California Coalition of Early and Middle Colleges (CCEMC). Before consulting, Erin was a Director of Curriculum and Instruction, High School Principal, College Professor, and Math Teacher. She holds her single subject teaching credential in mathematics, tier two administrative credential, and certificate specializing in charter leadership from Loyola Marymount University.



Dennis Eastman (Biola University, La Mirada, California, United States)

Dr. Eastman (BA & MA, Biola University; PhD, Claremont Graduate University) spent 15 years serving in multiple roles in the field of education (Social Studies teacher, coach, Athletic Director, and Director of

Faculty Induction) before becoming principal an early college high school, in Santa Ana, California. During his tenure as principal, U.S. News and World Report recognized his school with a Bronze Medal ranking as one of the most improved schools in California. Dr. Eastman is currently serving Biola University as the Director of Teacher Education where he is able to combine his faith, expertise, and enthusiasm for teaching and coaching into preparing the next generation of high quality educators. Dr. Eastman's research agenda has focused on equipping teachers in student motivation program design, creating an environment of attempt for all learners, and preparing teachers in international settings. Currently Dr. Eastman is researching the impact of Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) and Cooperative Learning (CL) on student achievement.



Natalie Battersbee (Consultant)

Dr. Battersbee began her career as an elementary school teacher in Los Angeles Unified School District where she also served as K-3 Curriculum and Instruction Grade Level Chair. Battersbee progressed through the LAUSD instructional leader pipeline, and assumed roles as Dean of Students at West Hollywood Opportunity, Senior Advisor for Special Education, Principal at JFK Continuation High School, and Principal at Washington Prep Continuation School, before serving as the founding principal of an early college high school in Santa Ana, California.

[The Impact of Gentrification on Faith-Based Organizations](#)

Orvic Pada (California State University, Fullerton; Fullerton, California, United States)

Orvic Pada's (BA, Simpson University; MA California State University, Fullerton) community and scholarly experience includes youth organizing, intercultural relations, and urban-rural participant observation of community development projects in Mexico, Brazil, and the Philippines. His teaching philosophy underscores the importance of critical thinking and skillful application of concepts in the marketplace and everyday life, challenging students to develop diverse ways of looking at the world. Current research projects are on urban renewal in the Philippines, gentrification and religion, Asia-Pacific community development, equitable and inclusive urban development, and a collaborative project on understanding self-rated health in ethnic enclaves in Orange County, CA.

*Faith and Learning in Action: Tangible Connections
Between Biblical Integration and Living the Christian
Life*



Calvin Roso (Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States)

Taking the Good News to the far reaches of the world is Dr. Calvin Roso's (EdD Oral Roberts University) passion. For the past summers, he has traveled with teenagers to Latin American countries where they have delivered rice, beans, and the gospel to the poverty stricken people in cities and mountain villages. Dr. Roso has been involved in Christian education since the early 1990s, active in the professional development of Christian educators through the International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA), an organization associated with ORU. In addition, he has published several teachers' guides and numerous articles regarding curriculum and instruction.

*The Book of Acts as a Case Study: Examining the
Ministry of Reconciliation*



Glen Kinoshita (Biola University, La Mirada, California, United States)

Glen Kinoshita (BA Biola University; MDiv, Talbot School of Theology) is Director of Multi-Ethnic Programs at Biola University. He is a certified trainer with Walk Through the Bible Ministries and has served as an advisory council member with the National Conference for Community and Justice in Los Angeles. Glen regularly presents on diversity and leadership development at various conferences across the country throughout the year. With many interests and passions in life, Glen devotes himself to a constant process of growing and learning. As an artist, Glen enjoys expressing himself in the art of Sumi-e, or Japanese brush painting. As a lover of culturally diverse music, Glen plays a variety of instruments such as Hawaiian Slack Guitar, Ukulele, Latin and African drumming, and Native American flute. As a writer he reflects on his life experiences through prose, poetry and articles.

Book Review: Multiculturalism: A Shalom Motif for the Christian Community (Domnwachukwu & Lee)



Nicholas Block (Biola University, La Mirada, California, United States)

After beginning his career in education as a science teacher in Bogotá, Colombia in 1984, Nick Block (BA, Stanford University; Teaching Credential, Simpson University; MDiv, Fuller Theological Seminary; PhD, Claremont Graduate University) has worked most of his years in the U.S. as a public school teacher in grades three to five, in a variety of language settings. While concerned with all subject areas, in his teaching in East Los Angeles he most recently concentrated on issues of vocabulary development as a basis for reading comprehension and writing growth. Now with the implementation of the Common Core Standards, he feels that there is even greater urgency for improved teaching supported by sound research in these areas, especially for English learners. Past research in dual language education as well

as decades of experience as a bilingual educator (including 26 years in Montebello USD) contribute to his concern that students grow as expert users of language. In addition to his work in K-12 schooling and teacher preparation as an adjunct at CSU Long Beach, Nick has been involved in theological education in Los Angeles, Colombia, and Rwanda. Whether supporting new teachers in teaching words or new pastors in teaching the Word, his greatest desire is to help others to be fruitful in their calling.



Chinaka Samuel DomNwachukwu (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, California, United States)

Chinaka Samuel DomNwachukwu is Professor of Multicultural Education and Associate Dean for Accreditation at the Azusa Pacific University School of Education. He is also Senior Pastor of The Potter's Wheel Assembly of Chino Hills, California. Among his many other works are *Incessant Warfare: A Critical History of Spiritual Warfare Through the Ages* (2011), *An Introduction to Multicultural Education: From Theory to Practice* (2010), and *The American Mosaic: Ministry in a Culturally Diverse Society* (2006).



HeeKap Lee (Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, California, United States)

HeeKap Lee is Professor of Teacher Education at the Azusa Pacific University School of Education. He has been invited to speak at national and international settings, lecturing on Christian education, multicultural education, curriculum development, training evaluation and assessment, and school change. Among his other works are *Faith-Based Education that Constructs* (2010) and *Why Does a Well-Planned Innovation Fail? The Importance of Concern Analysis* (2010).

Book Review: I am Malala: The Girl who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban (Yousafzai & Lam)



Kay Henry (Biola University, La Mirada, California, United States)

Kay Henry (BA, Doane College; MA, Biola University) enjoys research on the topics of challenges of some first generation college students that may prevent their continuing matriculation, how the church can use African theology to address the issue of violence against women, and a Native American perspective on Western Christianity that included an ethnographic study of individuals from a variety of American Indian nations. She is passionate about celebrating diversity and new beginnings since her walk with Jesus began at age 38. Kay's undergraduate coursework focused on the critical impact of effective workplace communication and how hiring a diverse population could benefit a company's future growth. Kay enjoys learning about the theology of Ubuntu as it relates to the importance of community. She served as a panel member at an Associated Students CSA-sponsored chapel, "Impact of Gender," April 2010, as a women's advocate, is a member of the speakers' bureau for Friendship Home, a safe place for abused women, and is a Certified Toastmaster.



June Hetzel (Biola University, La Mirada, California, United States)

June Hetzel, Ph.D., earned her Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate School. She currently serves as the Dean of Education at Biola University in La Mirada, California. Dr. Hetzel has served in public, private, homeschooling, and international educational settings. She is passionate about the role of the Christian

educator to live a Spirit-led life in right relationship with God and others, and the centrality of the gospel message as the central hope of all educational endeavors.

Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai was born on July 12, 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan. As a child, she became an advocate for girls' education, which resulted in the Taliban issuing a death threat against her. On October 9, 2012, a gunman shot Malala when she was traveling home from school. She survived, and has continued to speak out on the importance of education. She was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2013. In 2014, she was nominated again and won, becoming the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Christina Lamb (Fellow, Royal Geographical Society)

Christina Lamb, OBE, is a British journalist who is currently Foreign Correspondent for [The Sunday Times](#). She was educated at University College, Oxford (BA in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics) and was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University. She is a Fellow of the [Royal Geographical Society](#). She has won Foreign Correspondent of the Year four times.



*DISPROPORTIONALITY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION:
A PERSISTENT REALITY FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS*
BY DENISE REID

Abstract

The disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education continues to be a prevalent, disturbing, and heavily debated problem, and possibly the most long-standing issue in the special education field. African American students are overrepresented in three disability categories (emotionally behavioral disorder, intellectual disability, and specific learning disability), all of which are prone to subjective judgment. The current literature indicates the following reasons as possible explanations for this persistent problem: failed general education system, inequities in special education referral and identification process, test bias, as well as a lack of access to effective instruction. This paper provides definitions of disproportionate representation, an explanation of categories of disability, and explores the use of multi-tiered academic interventions.

Keywords: disproportionate representation, disproportionality, and overrepresentation in special education

The disproportionate representation of African American students in special education is not a new phenomenon and continues to persist (Artiles & Trent, 1994; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Dunn, 1968; Ferri & Connor, 2005; Harry & Anderson, 1994; Harry & Klingler, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002; O'Connor & Fernandez, 2006; Zhang, Katsiyannis, Ju, & Roberts, 2014). Shealey and Lue (2006) describe disproportionality as “a prevalent, disturbing, and heavily debated problem in this country” (p. 3). According to Blanchett (2009), the American educational system has a long-standing history in the inequitable treatment, miseducation, and undereducation of African American students in special and urban education.

Harry and Anderson (1994) indicated the primary recipients of special education services in its beginning were students of color and those of low socioeconomic status. In fact, Dunn (1968) drew attention to the large percentage of African Americans and students from impoverished economic backgrounds in classes for the mentally handicapped.¹ It is unfortunate this problem continues to exist and has extended to other disability categories (Artiles & Trent, 1994).

According to Blanchett (2009), the original intent of special education was to provide support and training for students who were considered *challenging* for the general education system. The challenging group included African Americans, students with disabilities, and African American students with disabilities. As time passed, students eligible to receive the specialized services were educated in segregated self-contained settings (Ferri & Connor, 2005). The ultimate goal was, for the challenging students, to return to general education once their needs were met and/or appropriate strategies or accommodations were implemented (Blanchett & Shealey, 2005). Due to the nonachievement of the intended goal, a resegregation of African American students emerged (Ferri & Connor, 2005).

Resegregation describes similarities to the racial segregation experienced by minority students in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Although the focus of school segregation was on African Americans in southern states and Mexican Americans in California (*Mendez v. Westminster*, 1946), resegregation involves the segregation of students of color within legally desegregated schools. In fact, Ferri and Connor (2006) extended the discussion of resegregation after the 1954 landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision from the use of ability tracking (Mickelson, 2001) to address how special education is used as a similar strategy to resegregate and assert a connection between desegregation and inclusion.

The public response to the *Brown v. Board of Education* court-ordered integration was gradual, characterized by delays and, in some cases, refusal to comply (Ferri & Connor, 2006). As a result of states' requirements to collect and monitor data on overidentification and

¹ This term was appropriately used in 1968.

restrictiveness by race, disproportionality was addressed in the nation's special education legislation until the 1997 reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) (Hehir, 2002). Each state receiving IDEA monies is required to examine data to determine two aspects related to disproportionality: if disproportionality is the “result of inappropriate identification” [20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(c); 34 CFR §300.600(d)(3)] and to determine if school districts present “significant disproportionality” based on collected and examined numerical data on race or ethnicity [20 U.S.C. §1418(d); 34 CFR §300.646(b)] (Special Edge, 2010).

Although the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* and the 30th anniversary of IDEA were celebrated during the first decade of the 21st century, Ferri and Connor (2005) assert the outcomes of these important legacies “have not yet been fully realized” (p. 3). Orfield (2004) argues that despite *Brown* being considered a legal milestone, the opportunity for integration and learning with students from different races has not occurred at a desirable rate. Even though access to public education for students with disabilities was provided through IDEA, a large percentage (specifically students of color) was placed in more restrictive placements. Such placements were in direct contrast to the IDEA requirement that decisions regarding least restrictiveness environment placement (LRE) were determined on a case-by-case basis—thereby characterizing LRE as a “loophole” that has “contributed to two largely segregated and unequal education systems: general education and special education” (Ferri & Connor, 2006, p. 45; Linton, 1998). My earliest recollections of students in special education involve the segregation of children and serves as a testament of the gradual progress.

Childhood Recollections

In the early 1970s, I was an energetic third grader who enjoyed school, especially recess. Each day I noticed short yellow buses drive away from the classrooms in the farthest corner of the campus. I found it strange that I never saw students on those buses, which were empty in the morning and unseen after school. I questioned, “What children rode those buses to school?” I clearly recall the day I asked my teacher, “Who rides on those short yellow buses?” She replied, “Kids who are crippled.”² After contemplating, I asked, “Why don't they play with us?” While pointing to the farthest corner of the campus, my teacher replied, “Those kids have their own teachers, schedules and they all play together over there.” My teacher's response influenced my early thoughts of children in special education. From that point on, I and the rest of the students were keenly aware that *those* buses were for *those* kids who stayed in *those* classrooms. As well, I surmised that *those* classrooms were the best place for *those* students. I now realize the dominant narrative of my elementary school was to avoid interacting with

² Appropriate term used in the late 1970s to describe people with physical disabilities.

those children while at school. As an adult, I reflect and acknowledge that that narrative dominated the entire K-8 school district in which I attended. Unfortunately, I experienced the same narrative in junior high school.

It was not until my high school years that I interacted with students enrolled in special education. Here, they received their academic instruction in segregated settings and were integrated in physical education, lunch and school-wide assemblies. Because of our daily interactions, I soon forgot that several of my new friends were part of *those* students who, since my elementary years, I believed were in the best educational setting for them. Although the race of my friends in high school was of no importance at the time, I now realize that more than half of the students from special education were African American.

At the end of our lunch, I recall thinking why my friends, who on several levels behaved as the majority of the high school population, had to return to segregated classrooms for their instruction. That question went unanswered for over 30 years. Although I earned a master's in special education, it was not until my doctoral studies that I became aware of the persistent and appalling problem of disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education.

Definition of Disproportionate Representation

The issue of disproportionate representation is evident and positioned as a continued problem in special education (Artiles, 1998; Artiles, Kozleski, Trent, Osher, & Ortiz, 2010; Dunn, 1968; Losen & Orfield, 2002; Zhang et al., 2014). Disproportionate representation is a result of members of a particular group repeatedly being referred to and often erroneously labeled as needing special education and related support services (Council for Exceptional Children, CEC, 2002). According to Oswald, Coutinho, Best, and Singh (1999), disproportionate representation is defined as “the extent to which membership in a given (ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, or gender) group affects the probability of being placed in a specific disability category” (p. 198). Likewise, Zhang and Katsiyams (2002) stated disproportionate placement occurs when the percentage of students from a particular group in special education exceeds the percentage of those students in the entire school population. Similarly, Harry and Anderson (1994) offered the following explanation for the disproportionate placement of students of a particular group in special education, which is “the group is represented in such programs in a greater percentage than their percentage in the school population as a whole” (p. 602). Among other definitions, Gabel, Curcic, Powell, Khader, and Albee (2009) define disproportionality as the “over- or under-representation of particular ethnic groups in such programs” (p. 625). In contrast to overrepresentation, Ford (1998) argues categories which denote giftedness or exceptional ability, have an underrepresentation of students from minority groups. Both labels, whether overrepresented or underrepresented have the same function, “to separate White

students from students of color who were attending otherwise desegregated schools” (Ferri & Connor, 2006, p. 46). In this paper, the terms, *disproportionate representation*, *disproportionality*, and *overrepresentation* are interchangeable.

While a significant amount of literature on disproportionality in the US is evident (Artiles, 1998; Chinn & Hughes, 1987; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Harry & Anderson, 1994; Ferri & Connor, 2005; Harry & Klingler, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002; Skiba et al., 2008), this paper will discuss the literature related to the persistent problem of disproportionality of African Americans in special education, examine the disability categories in which disproportionality is evident, and explore the use of a multi-tiered academic intervention and other potential solutions to this persistent and appalling problem.

Disproportionality in the United States

Despite the increase in the number of students with disabilities who are served in general education (Sullivan & Kozleski, 2008), students from “historically underserved” groups continue to be disproportionately placed in special education (Artiles, Trent, & Palmer, 2004). Similarly, in the case of many African American students in school districts across the US, they are inappropriately referred to and subsequently labeled as requiring special education services when in fact they do not require such services (CEC, 2002). As well, Hehir (2002) argued “overrepresentation and inappropriate placement of minorities have been historic problems within special education” (p. 219).

Additionally, the overrepresentation of African American students in special education is evident in data provided by the United States Department of Education (USDOE, 2011). The total enrollment percentage of African Americans in public elementary and secondary schools was 16.8 %, while the 30th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of IDEA (2008) identified a large percentage of African Americans in the following categories: emotional/behavioral disturbance, 10.7 %; intellectual disability, 13.6 %; and specific learning disability, 44.2 %. According to Parrish (2002), the combination of these three cognitive disability categories comprises the largest amount of children in special education.

Parrish (2002) referred to the categories in which African American and other ethnic minority students were disproportionately represented as *soft* and *hard* categories of disabilities (p. 24). Parrish (2002) considered it noteworthy to mention the division of these terms as an *artificial distinction* because in the definition of all disability categories, there has been some form of medical determination.

The categories called specific learning disability, mental retardation, and emotional disturbance are sometimes referred to as soft categories because they are more subjectively and less medically determined than categories such as deafness or blindness, which are

deemed hard categories because they are less prone to subjectivity and are readily diagnosed medically (Parrish, 2002, p. 25).

Similar distinctions serve to identify the difference between more subjective categories (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Harry & Anderson, 1994; Hosp & Reschly, 2004). Harry and Anderson (1994, p. 603) defined “judgment” categories of disability as “[t]he milder disability categories whose diagnoses are based essentially on clinical judgment rather than verifiable biological criteria.” As a result, the assessment aligned with such subjective measures may be inequitable. As Christian educators, we must consider that inequitable, unequal, and dishonest scales of measurements are detestable to the Lord (Proverb 11:1, HCSB). A cautionary note: the implication of soft categories is that the role of judgment creates a potential source of bias (Harry & Anderson, 1994). Worthy of further investigation yet beyond the scope of this paper is an examination of teacher perception and bias in the referral, identification, and placement processes of students referred and placed into special education.

The causes of overrepresentation exist among several hypotheses (Special Edge, 2010), including placing the blame on general educators without knowledge to effectively educate children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to the ills of poverty. Additionally, Skiba et al. (2008) describe the complexity of disproportionality as including the interaction of teacher capabilities and attitudes, student characteristics, and sources of structural inequity and racial stereotypes that have gone unanalyzed.

Adult Recollections

On January 21, 2013, two memorable events occurred: the second inauguration of President Barack Obama and the Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday. On a day when millions of Americans paused and reflected on Martin Luther King Jr.’s contributions to our nation, my thoughts dwelled on the former inequities in the United States. A sense of patriotism was my companion as I prepared for a brunch to view the day’s events in Washington D.C. Inspiring excerpts from King’s (1963) *I Have a Dream* speech were the resounding themes as I made final preparations for the brunch. Before leaving, my thoughts shifted from King’s *I Have a Dream* speech and the events of the Civil Rights Movement, to the topic of current educational inequity that dominated my required readings during my doctoral studies. I thought about the known and unknown activists who, during the Civil Rights Movement, made personal and professional sacrifices with hopes of making a difference in the lives of future generations. I wondered if those activists would be satisfied with the current day inequities. I gathered my personal items and headed out the door, with vivid images of Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks, and the Little Rock 9 in my mind.

On my way to the brunch, I attentively listened to the entire *I Have a Dream* speech, played on a local radio station. As King’s powerful voice pierced the silence, a question from his

speech resonated deep within. In his speech, King (1963) asked, “When can we be satisfied?” I took pen to paper and jotted down this question. During the brunch, I pondered this question and realized that while our nation’s first African American President took his second oath of office, African Americans and other ethnic minority students in the US and around the world will live out the reality of continued educational inequity upon their return to school if the system does not change. This educational inequity pertains to African Americans and other ethnic minority students who have historically been overrepresented in special education (Chamberlin, 2005; Dunn, 1968; Harry & Anderson, 1994; Losen & Orfield, 2002).

Although King was referring to persistent racial inequities prior to and during the Civil Rights Movement, I realized a variation of this question into the special education was pertinent. A central component that accompanied my awareness of the persistent problem of disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education was rooted in my variation of King’s question, “Have we become satisfied?” I maintain the long-standing problem of disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education demonstrates complacency. However, Fleischer and Zames (2001) asserted an aim of IDEA was to break “patterns of segregation” that were based on race (p. 185). Although such patterns were acknowledged, their presence continues to exist. Therefore, I maintain we have become satisfied while this topic continues to dominate the literature and disparities in the placement of African American students in special education continue.

Efforts to provide an equitable education for all children continue to be undermined by overrepresentation of African American students in special education (CEC, 2002). Reports indicate African American students are more likely labeled as mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, or learning disabled than their White counterparts; and they were less likely to return to general education once enrolled in special education (USDOE, 2000). The problem of overrepresentation of African Americans in special education was evident in the 30th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of IDEA (USDOE, 2011). These implications due to overrepresentation are serious and are of concern (CEC, 2002). Students who are misidentified and inappropriately labeled may be denied access to the general education curriculum and may receive services that do not meet their needs. The implications of overrepresentation become evident during high school and after graduation, which include differential graduation rates. Knowing these implications, school communities should be more than willing to address the persistent problem of disproportionate representation.

Potential Solutions to a Persistent Problem

Once students are identified (i.e., whether appropriately or inappropriately) or labeled as needed special education, they are generally removed from the general education setting. The exclusion from the general education classroom should not be the first line of action (Vallas,

2009). Vallas (2009) addressed factors related to system improvements with a goal of potentially reducing the overrepresentation of African American students in special education and identified access to early education as a tool by which students' academic achievement may be maximized.

In addition, Vallas (2009) placed a portion of the responsibility on settings other than school, asserting a "valuable resource for preventing referrals to special education and improving the students' academic outcomes lies not within the school, but at home, with parents" (p. 199). Vallas' (2009) assertion is of concern. Yes, one can state that more involved and aware parents play a crucial role in ensuring the appropriate educational placement of their child. However, it is equally important to determine if schools are consciously cultivating an environment in which parents are welcomed to freely communicate issues related to their child's specific educational needs. In such an environment, teachers must be willing to allow (without taking the critique personally) parents to constructively critique the teachers' methods of instructions that are not meeting the individual needs of their child. Within the critique may be a call for more culturally responsive instruction. This quality of education is pivotal in ensuring these students have an educational experience which allows them to thrive, thereby "minimizing the cultural mismatch that is characteristic of many schools today, and further increasing these students' chance at academic success" (Vallas, 2009, p. 199).

The CEC acknowledged the importance of collaborative efforts among teachers and parents. According to the CEC (2002), schools in which teachers, administrators, family members, and other stakeholders maintain high expectations for student learning and provide positive reinforcement for their achievements and participation typically do not have an issue of overrepresentation. Although, on appearances, the potential solution offered by the CEC (2002) is ideal, the expectations placed on students with disabilities differed. Shifrer (2014) examined data of over 11,000 adolescents to determine if stigma influenced teachers' and parents' educational expectation of students with disabilities. Supporting the predictions of labeling theory, Shifrer (2014) concluded teachers and parents were more likely to hold lower educational expectations for adolescents labeled with a disability than for peers with similar behaviors and not labeled as having a disability. I maintain effective solutions must extend beyond simply setting high expectations and providing positive reinforcements.

Additionally, Response-to-Intervention (RTI), viewed as a potential solution, is a process by which disproportionality may be reduced (Bartholomew, Gray & McKinney, 2010). RTI is a "process that includes the provision of systematic, research-based instruction and interventions to struggling learners" (Bartholomew et al., 2010, p.2). Through this multi-tiered process, interventions were matched with the individual needs of the students and followed by monitoring of students' progress to identify information related to the students' academic level and rate of improvement (Chidsey, Bronaugh, & McGraw, 2009). Although RTI efforts are being

made to address the continued problem, I question its effectiveness if teachers and practitioners align their perspective with the medical model of disability, which views the deficit within the individual without consideration of social, political, economic or cultural views (Thomas, 2004). This counter perspective requires a brief introduction to Disability Studies, the academic wing of the disabled people's movement (Thomas, 2004).

Disability Studies embraces a shift in viewing disability as a *social pathology* rather than a *personal predicament* (Goodley, 2011). Through the Disability Studies lens, questions about societal forms of oppression arise. Within the medical model, disability is considered something to be fixed. Such ideology suggests the person is no more than their impairment (Charlton, 1998; Linton, 1998; Longmore, 2003). Not only should teachers and administrators assist educators in the use of interventions to reduce subjective views and biases but such interventions must be culturally responsive to enact successful change (Moreno & Gaytàn, 2013). Although Bartholomew et al. (2010) acknowledged the need for a paradigm shift in order for practitioners to understand the expansion of their traditional role in schools and their continued gap in science-to practice, the indicator of successful change is the passage of time.

Solution-focused approach is an additional approach to address the persistent problem of overrepresentation. Watkins and Kurtz (2001) examined the position of the school social workers with regards to intervening and potentially preventing inappropriate and unnecessary testing and placement into special education. While working with social workers, students' strengths and abilities can be explored. Such exploration allows the social worker to determine alternatives to special education placement. A key feature of a solution-focused approach is attention paid to the client's concerns and an explanation of the problem, which is preceded by a focus on the solution through examining what the client brings with them. Here, the social worker provides *careful assessment of the environment* and short-term interventions to determine if additional testing or placement into special education is appropriate.

More importantly, Watkins and Kurtz (2001) describe the solution-focused method as valuable for students with a "high probability of being treated unfairly" (p. 230). Although I was intrigued by the potential solutions offered by Watkins and Kurtz (2001), I contend that a discussion of the social construction of difference is warranted. The students discussed in this paper are residents of a society in which they deviate from the prescribed norms and thereby judged by agents of society (Freire, 1970). Likewise, Artiles and Trent (1994) identified the social construction of difference with regards to disability and culture. Given that a notion of what is *normal* is held in all societies (Davis, 1995), the notion of normal means conforming to the present standard of behavior (Towler & Schneider, 2005) and the values of the dominant group determine what is acceptable and what is deemed a deviation (Coleman, 2006).

The historical conceptualization of norms were applied to the *law of error*, which was an averaging technique used in astronomy. The notion of the normal as imperative derived from the contributions of the French statistician Adolphe Quetele (1796-1847) (Davis, 1995). Quetele later noticed the *law of error* used outside of astronomy and applied to the distribution of human features such as weight and height (Davis, 1995). The concept of the *average man* resulted from an additional step in the formulation of this concept. Although the average man was abstract, Quetelet maintained this as the “average of all human attributes in a given country” (Davis, 1995, p. 26). The error curve later reconceptualized to the normal curve, which is a current method used to determine how far one deviates from the norm on a range of intellectual, physical, and economical attributes.

I maintain that in the midst of our complacency, educational gatekeepers, professionals, parents, and any stakeholder in education needs to resist aligning with the established norms and deviations set by the dominant society. As well, these gatekeepers “must be cognizant of their dominant knowledge and how power and authority can emanate from it” (Watkins & Kurtz, 2001, p. 230). Reflecting on the variation to King’s question, “Have we become satisfied?” my response remains the same. Yes, I consider the gradual reform to this persistent problem as the reason why the current system continues to exist without being disrupted. In my closing, I want to include an additional question to the questions I have asked throughout the course of my life, “How much longer are we as educational professionals going to allow the persistent problem of disproportionality to be the reality for African Americans and other ethnic minorities in our American classrooms?”

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*OPEN THE DOOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TO ALL STUDENTS:
A CALL FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOL REFORM
BY TAMMY BACHRACH*

Abstract

Does biblical justice include people with disabilities? Like the orphan and widow of Christ's day, people with disability have historically been marginalized, frequently experiencing poverty and isolation. A biblical worldview of disability and a Christian community, which seeks to have the mind of Christ, ought to challenge the exclusion and injustices people with disability experience in our communities. This article will interweave the author's personal experience as a Christian member of the disability community, disability studies scholarship, and a biblical worldview of disability to examine the current practice of excluding people with disabilities from Christian school education. The goal is to examine our societal biases and practices and respond to people with disabilities in a manner that is pleasing to Christ Jesus and to work toward reform within Christian schools in order to actively include people with disabilities.

Keywords: biblical justice, children with disabilities, Christian schools, medical model, social model, inclusion

“Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals” (Martin Luther King, Jr.).

Defining Biblical Justice

Metzger (2010) defined biblical justice in terms of making individuals and communities whole by upholding goodness and impartiality and reminded us of James 1:27 that says, “the kind of religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” Does biblical justice include people with disabilities? Like the orphan and widow of Christ’s day, people with disability have historically been marginalized, frequently experiencing poverty and isolation. I would propose that a biblical worldview of disability and a Christian community seeking to have the mind of Christ ought to challenge the exclusion and injustices people with disability experience in our communities. This paper will interweave my personal experience as a Christian member of the disability community, disability studies scholarship, and a biblical worldview of disability to examine the current practice of excluding people with disabilities from Christian education.

Underlying much of disability studies scholarship is a critical pedagogical perspective. Critical pedagogy as described in Paulo Freire’s work brings attention to conditions of inequality in our society and encourages us to crucially consider the social conditions of the oppressed and to “imagine transformative ways of engaging in the world” (Monzo, in press, para. 5). As Christians, we know true transformation comes from actively engaging our faith in action as we follow God’s commandments. I encourage us to examine our biases and practices, to respond to people with disability in a manner that is pleasing to Christ Jesus, and to call for school reform within Christian schools that would actively include people with disabilities – not based on a societal or legal mandate but in accord with the mind of Christ.

Personal Reflection on the Two Models of Disability

I find my home in two communities; the Christian community and the disability community. Since childhood, I have held a strong belief in a personal and loving God and as a Christian, hold to the tenant that the Bible is the primary source of God’s revelation to man. As a child my home church was a small but welcoming church and I had the privilege of attending Christian schools kindergarten through college; receiving my bachelor’s degree at Biola University.

I also grew up comfortably within the disability community. Every member of my immediate family has a disability. My parents met in Washington State at the Goodwill Industries’ vocational training program for young adults with disabilities. My dad has a learning disability and my mother and only sibling, Tim, have an intellectual disability. As a result of my exposure to what others term *disability*, I hold a more unusual view of disability. The world sees

disability has an immense tragedy and throughout history has sought to eliminate or exclude people with disabilities through eugenics, euthanasia, and abandonment. Society's discomfort with disability continues today and is called the medical model of disability.

The Medical Model of Disability

The medical model of disability focuses on the flaws and deficits that are exhibited within the individual when compared to the "norm", or standard behavior, rate and style of learning. Even when professionals seek not to harm the person, the focus of their efforts are to "fix" or rehabilitate the individual so they can fit in and then be included in mainstream society; work, school, community, and church. The medical model fails to understand individuals apart from their diagnosis and frequently falls short of delivering an improved quality of life for the individual they are attempting to fix.

In the book of Matthew, Christ calls us to "become as a child" (Matthew 18:3). As a child, I never saw my parents' inability to read or Tim's difficulty with language as a tragedy; it was simply a fact. The most important aspect of family to a child is relational. The relationships I have with my family are rich, mutually rewarding, and mostly typical. My parents were very loving, sacrificial and hardworking. I feel fortunate to have been born into the family that God chose for me.

It was not until I matured, became socialized and exposed to the mainstream view of disability, that I even saw a difference. It was only then that I felt the sting of stigmatization. Not until I was much older did I see how much the members of my immediate family had suffered, not as a result of their impairments, but as a result of people's biases and discrimination. This part of my life experience is reflected in an alternative view of disability, which emphasizes the discriminatory nature of disability.

The Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability views disability through the lens of the social oppression rather than as an individual deficit. The social model "breaks the 'impairment-disability' causal link and turns attention to the sociopolitical, structural and economic minoritisation and exclusion of people with impairments" (Goodley, 2011, p. 14). People with impairments are disabled by society's propensity to exclude people with impairment from education, work, and all aspects of typical life. Shakespeare (2013) stated that within the social model, "the problem of disability is relocated from the individual, to barriers and attitudes which disable her" (p. 217).

Discrimination has peppered my family's life experience. While I continued to live with my parents, they lost legal custody of my brother and me. The general public does not believe that people with disabilities can be good parents and all the way through 1977 laws existed allowing

the forced sterilization of young adults with disabilities solely based only on their IQ. Over 60,000 young women were forcefully sterilized in our country (Stern, 2005). Anderson (2006) asserts that individuals with disabilities have been ghettoized by those in a position of power by assigning a socially constructed stigma to people with disabilities.

Not until 1974 with the passing of the *Education for all Handicapped Children Act* were children with disabilities even assured the right to attend public schools. At the time, Tim was eight years old. I am thankful that most of Tim's education was post-public law 94-142, now modified and re-ratified as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This legislation guaranteed him an education and allowed him to leave the segregated institutional school where he made no progress and to attend his local public junior high school. While I am grateful for the legal mandate that allowed Tim to attend a typical school, junior high was a difficult time for such a transition and did not come without pain. I distinctly remember the hurt we both felt when he came home and asked me what "retard" meant.

In contrast, while Tim struggled to make sense of the world's cruelty and harsh view of disability in his public school, I learned about God's love and biblical worldview by nurturing teachers at a local Christian high school. As Christians we are called to have the mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16). What is God's view of disability and how might the biblical worldview of disability differ from the world's view?

Biblical Worldview and Disability

From a disability perspective, the Holy Scriptures present various ideas about disability, some troublesome and some comforting. Thorsos (2014) posited that the Old and New Testaments offer different perspectives on disability. Disability studies scholar Eisland (1994) pointed out that some principles particular to the Old Testament and Levitical law present disability as a result of sin or as a punishment. Conversely, God intentionally created some people to have disability (Exodus 4:11). People with disabilities were excluded from the temple (Leviticus 21:16-23). However, the Old Testament also provides very strong admonition to protect people with disabilities (Leviticus 19:14).

The New Testament, however, presents a more restorative view of disability. Horne's (1998) analysis of the Leviticus position asserted that Paul, in his New Testament letters, reversed the Leviticus tradition in his statement that "inabilities are the place where God's power is made complete and that inabilities are the place where Christ's power comes to abide" (p. 95).

In John 9, the sin-disability correlation is directly addressed. Jesus and His disciples encounter a man who was blind from birth. Jesus' disciples directly inquire about the sin-impairment conflation by asking, "Rabbi, who sinned? Was this man born blind because he sinned? Or did his parents sin?" (John 9:2). Jesus answered: "It isn't because this man sinned.

It isn't because his parents sinned. It happened so that God's work could be shown in his life" (John 9:3). In Christ's reply, we see the severing of the assumed causal relationship between sin and impairment, at least in this particular instance (Kelley, 2007). In addition, Swinton (2011) reminds us of Romans 2:23 which states, "All people have sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard" and as such, human variation, disabled or able-bodiedness, are aspects of our created universe and neither can be attributed to sin nor claimed as a representation of the image of God.

Grant (1998) and Black (2006) both speak of Jesus' inclusive action to reach across the societal boundaries and the purity laws by touching people who were ill or disabled, providing healing and reconciling the person back to the community. Christ specifically teaches that his followers have a special responsibility and mission to marginalized people who are unable to provide for themselves (Eiesland, 1994). This is not intended to make people with disabilities solely the recipient of care. Anderson (2012) warned against this tendency, stating, "rather than seeing a person who has a disability, many see a person who has (or is) a need" (p. 153), which can lead to the assumption that a person's primary need is for our assistance, with no thought to the possibility that the disabled individual has something to offer to those who are not disabled.

Anderson (2012), Mitchell (2013), and Reynolds (2008) pointed to I Corinthians 12:22-26 as encouraging and inclusive verses which speak of the body of Christ as the Christian community, giving every member a place of value. The passage stresses how all members are parts of the body. Even those who appear to be weaker are highly valued and play a vital role in the functioning of the church. Anderson also points to the principle espoused in this scripture as a means to support inclusive classrooms, especially in Christian schools.

Christian Schools' Exclusion of Students with Disabilities

If God sees disability as a normal part of life in a fallen world, the work of disability is reconciliatory and in fact people with disabilities have a vital role within the body of Christ.

Ironically, my brother Tim was never allowed the experience of attending a biblically oriented, Christ-centered school. While public schools are forced through legal mandate to include students like Tim into their school, Christian schools retain the freedom to exclude. Christian schools then and now often exclude Christian children with disabilities from attending their schools. Despite the admonition to "not be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Roman 12:2), few Christian schools offer services to children with even mild learning disabilities (Cookson & Smith, 2011; Ramirez & Stymeist, 2010). Ramirez and Stymeist in their informal observations of schools accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) found that most Christian schools claimed

that they could not accept or retain students with disabilities due to a lack of financial and professional resources. Current review of the schools published on the ACSI website shows that 95% of the accredited “Christ-centered” schools in California still do not accept children with disabilities.

Many people with disabilities do not find a loving, inclusive welcome within the doors of the church but instead find the doors of Christian schools historically bolted shut by applications designed to accept only those students deemed to be of appropriate academic and social standing. In fact, many Christian schools exhibit an elitist entrance criterion. For example, one local Christian school stipulated that only students who were at or above grade level and who had no “needs improvements” in citizenship and work habits were *acceptable*.

Thorsos (2014) reminds us that to have the mind of Christ (i.e., to be transformed toward Christ-likeness) involves thinking and understanding the truth about the world as God’s creation. Ramirez and Stymeist (2010) hold that it is unjust to withhold the precious gift of a Christian education from the population of students with special needs, reporting that when administrators from seven Christian schools were challenged by parents regarding their school’s lack of special education services, the principals could not articulate from a biblical principle why they did not service the disability community. So what do Christian school administrators report are the barriers for providing a Christian education to all children?

Barriers to Inclusion Within Christian Schools

The research literature (Anderson, 2010; Ramirez & Stymeist, 2010; Pudlas, 2004) and my personal communication with local school administrators cite financial barriers (i.e., the increased cost of providing the appropriate services to children with disabilities) and the lack of qualified personnel as the two primary reasons for this exclusion. Other barriers include the lack of space and fear that providing these services will compromise the standards of excellence for the children without disabilities or will be objected to by parents of typical children.

The fear of compromising the educational standards of the nondisabled students will be addressed first. Christian schools focus on providing rigorous education and fear “gaining a reputation of being a school that specializes in special education rather than an academically excellent institution” (Shaywitz, 2003, p. 297 cited in Ramirez & Stymeist, 2010; Pudlas, 2004). Cookson and Smith (2011) and Anderson (2012) also found that teachers and parents of general education students feared that providing accommodations to some children would take too much of the teacher’s time and compromise the education of the majority of the class. This objection is not reserved to Christian schools and arose in public schools following the *Brown vs. the Board of Education* and the *Civil Rights Act*, mandating equal educational rights for Black

Americans, and after the adoption of IDEA and the subsequent inclusion movement designed to make our classrooms more diverse.

Addressing the Barriers

Freytag (2008) questioned whether Christians should adopt the world's definitions of excellence. Freytag pointed to the perpetuated view of excellence in education today which emphasizes the process of climbing and scaling to get ahead, striving for personal achievement at the expense of others. Should success or failure for Christian children be defined in such narrow terms as the mastery of a prescribed curriculum? Freytag challenged Christians to rethink the meaning of excellence in education beyond simple academic achievement as defined by the current culture. Many excellent secular schools exist to provide an academically rich and rigorous education designed to prepare the child to get into highly competitive colleges and to "make it" in our capitalistic society. However, most Christian parents enroll their children into faith-based schools to learn how to lead a distinctively Christian life in addition to receiving a quality education. Do not all children, particularly those who are most vulnerable to the influences of the world, benefit from this form of education? In addition, will not those with disabilities provide a valuable means for teaching all of our Christian children the value of diversity as well as the immensity of God's unconditional love and mercy for all his children?

The question may still remain, however, whether the academic progress of nondisability children will be hampered by inclusion. Many studies have examined this issue and the research concludes that this fear is unfounded (Dessemonet & Bliss, 2013; Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, 2007). The literature review in Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, and Kaplan evaluated multiple studies that examined the impact of including children with disabilities into general education classroom on students without disabilities. The literature review summarized the outcome of each study and found that of the 12 studies, eight showed neutral outcomes and four showed positive outcomes for children without disabilities when children with disabilities were educated alongside them. No study showed negative outcomes for nondisabled children as a result of inclusive practices. These results were also consistent with a study conducted by Dessemonet and Bliss who found that the "progress of primary students without disability, regardless of their level of academic achievement, seems not to be compromised by the inclusion of a child with mild or moderate ID in their classroom" (p. 28).

Since the research does not support that the inclusion of children with disabilities into the classroom is detrimental to the education of nondisabled children, we are left with the responsibility to change our misunderstanding and attitudes toward people with disabilities, to examine the true purpose of Christian education, and to improve the Christ-honoring purposes of our school cultures. Following their study on ACSI-accredited Christian schools, Ramirez and

Stymeist (2010) concluded that the primary barrier within the leadership of the schools was an undeveloped heart for children with special needs. What about those who have a heart to include all children in Christian education but worry about the financial commitment to do so?

It is true that there are additional expenses required to provide the additional services and supports that a child with unique learning may require (Cookson & Smith, 2011). Best practices in education today, however, do not advocate for special and separate classes for children with disabilities but rather for all children to be taught in an inclusive classroom with differential instruction provided to every child. Some schools that serve the disabled population have created a shared network of supports whereby inclusion specialists, behavioral therapists, or other specially trained experts are paid for and shared by multiple Christian schools (Van Dyk, 2010) decreasing the financial burden. IDEA requires public school districts to provide psycho-educational testing and speech therapy even if the child attends a private school or is home-schooled. Other school districts access public school funds and pass the additional, unfunded educational cost to the parents of the child who needs extra support (Cookson & Smith, 2011).

However one addresses the economics of providing services to children with disabilities, the argument against educating children with disabilities in Christian schools due to limited financial resources strikes me as ironic. You see, in all my years of Christian school attendance I was taught that God's plan could not be thwarted (Job 42:2), that God is powerful and mighty (Psalms 147:5), and that God provides for his people (Philippians 4:19). As a child I recall spiritual emphasis and missions' weeks filled with testimonies about how God miraculously provided the money for his work. One of the many names for God found in the Old Testament is *Jehovah-Jireh*, the Lord will provide. It seems ironic to me that the very teachers and administrators who taught me to put my faith in God's mighty hand and trust God with my stewardship seem to develop faltering faith when it comes to meeting God's call to provide services to all children.

Christian Faith in Action

Could the financial argument be a matter of "You receive not because you ask not"? (James 4:2). John 15:16 reminds us that we have been chosen and appointed by God and that we would "go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you." How might the exclusion of children with disabilities within some Christian schools be changed if teachers, principals, and school boards developed the heart and vision for special education services and repeatedly presented this request before God in prayer?

Cookson & Smith (2011) researched Christian schools that have answered God's call to provide services to all children including those with severe disabilities within integrated

environments and examined the results. Christ teaches in Matthew 7:13-14 that the way to salvation is hard, and we see in the Bible examples of godly men who followed God's call, resulting in personal sacrifice and difficulty but receiving great reward.

Cookson & Smith (2011), Van Dyk (2010), and Buursma (2010) all attest to the positive changes in the climate and Christian maturity of their staff and students as a result of following God's call to admit students with disabilities into their Christian school community. Many times the person with a disability is seen primarily in terms of their limitations or need for compassionate care. Within this view the caregiver cannot envision that the individual with the disability has something to offer those who are not disabled (Anderson, 2010). In my professional capacity, I have had the privilege to both assist and be assisted by hundreds of people with various disabilities. I can attest to the mutual benefit of relationship with many considered disadvantaged. Cookson and Smith (2011) interviewed principals and change agents who reformed their respective schools to include individuals with severe disabilities. They reported increased joy in their labors, spiritual growth, change in school culture, and change in the student body to be more caring and sensitive to the needs of others. One teacher spoke of her experience as having "broadened my horizons as a teacher, as a person, and as a Christian" (Cookson & Smith, 2011, p. 243). Stegink (2010) contended that people with disabilities can serve as the catalyst to develop a biblical worldview. By seeing people with disabilities not as pitiable, burdensome, or defective, but as beneficial and needed members of the Christian community, our Christian schools will positively change.

Conclusion and Call for Action

It is time to "not conform to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds" (Romans 12:2). Some of our Christian schools still need to grow in this area, and I believe it is time to reject the negative view of disability which leads to exclusion and to be transformed by the biblical view of disability as people created in God's image, specifically purposed to do His will, and to be included as a valued member of the body of Christ. I believe the time has come to:

- Pray specifically for a changed heart within our Christian community.
- Speak out against the injustice of exclusion.
- Educate our educators, administrators, and governing boards about the benefits of including children with disabilities and how to partner with others to provide services to all children.
- Evaluate the accrediting agencies for Christian school and encourage examination of disabilities exclusion.

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**CALIFORNIA ACADEMY EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL: CREATING
COMMUNITY THROUGH RIGOR, RELEVANCE, AND RELATIONSHIPS
BY ERIN CRAIG, DENNIS EASTMAN, AND NATALIE BATTERSBEE**

Abstract

California Academy Early College High School (California Academy)¹, an independent charter high school serving at-risk students in Santa Ana has created, developed, and sustained a community of family through rigor, relevance, and relationships. Over the past 10 years three different educational leaders, each with unique professional training, experiences, and leadership styles, served as California Academy's principal from its founding and development, to a sustained thriving early college high school (ECHS), effectively educating traditionally underserved students in Santa Ana. This longitudinal narrative case study depicts how aligned successive leaders created an academically successful community of formerly at-risk students in a California charter school, through the enduring values of rigor, relevance, and relationships.

Keywords: early college high school, charter school, community, rigor

¹ Pseudonym.

Introduction

Over the past 10 years, California Academy Early College High School (California Academy), an independent charter high school serving at-risk students in Santa Ana has created, developed, and sustained a community of family through rigor, relevance, and relationships. California Academy is a public high school, founded on Christian principles with the belief and understanding that God would guide their efforts. The founders' vision and mission for California Academy has always reflected faith, value, and human dignity. One of the distinct callings referenced in the Bible is to those who will serve as teachers. In the founding days of California Academy, the leaders were filled with the conviction found in Matthew 25:40: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." The principals in turn sought teachers who could provide a significant and needed ministry to at-risk students who were often overlooked or experienced great difficulty in traditional school settings.

California Academy readies students for lifelong success through an educational journey inspired by the power of a family environment. California Academy's vision is to provide underrepresented students access to an academically rigorous, blended high school and college curriculum. California Academy identifies students who are academically, behaviorally, and socio-emotionally prepared and offers them college courses, in addition to high school courses.

To prepare students for the 21st century, California Academy offered advanced opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills needed for them to smoothly transition to higher education or to be equipped with marketable skills necessary for the workforce. Woven into the rigorous academic experience was the opportunity for social clubs, including a student-led Bible club that met weekly at lunch time with the intent of providing students the ability to grow spiritually, as well as academically. The ECHS educational program implemented at California Academy was initially designed to increase the high school graduation rates and ultimately college and career success from 50% among students living in Santa Ana, as reported by the 2006-2008 US Census.

Table 1: Santa Ana Urban Hardship Indicators

URBAN HARDSHIP INDICATOR	SANTA ANA	ORANGE COUNTY
Per capita income	\$16,891	\$34, 550
Poverty rate	16.5%	9.5%
Lacking health insurance (non-elderly)	43%	22%
College degree attainment	11%	35%

Source: "Santa Ana Building a Healthy Community: A 10-year strategic plan, 2010-2020" by The California Endowment, 2010, *10 Year Strategic Initiative*, p 2.

Additionally, census data from 2008 indicated that the per capita income for a Santa Ana resident was approximately \$18,000 less than residents living in other cities in Orange County. Further, Santa Ana reported almost twice the poverty rate and percentage of residents

without insurance as compared to Orange County. Among students attending college, data revealed that Santa Ana residents had an 11% college degree attainment rate, as compared to Orange County's 35%, with the majority of Santa Ana students having attended a Santa Ana Unified public school.

With over 57,000 students, the Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) is the largest school district in Orange County and the sixth largest in the state of California. SAUSD operates 36 elementary schools, nine intermediate schools, nine high schools, and has also authorized charter schools, one of which was California Academy (www.sausd.us). California Academy opened its doors in fall 2005 with eight students and has grown to serve approximately 400 students in grades 9-12.

From 2005 to 2013, the demographic of California Academy was approximately 95% Hispanic, with nearly 90% of these students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, and 30% considered homeless. These statistics created a challenging environment for basic survival, as well as a daunting environment for learning and college readiness to occur. As an independent charter school in California, California Academy is publicly funded and functions as an independent public school and district. California Academy, as all charter schools in California, is held to the same state testing accountability and measures as traditional public school but has the autonomy to create an academic program to best meet the needs of its diverse learners. In addition, every five years California Academy is required to participate in a charter renewal process with the local authorizing district.

Over the past ten years (2005-2014), California Academy has evolved from a very small charter school serving eight students who resided in group homes, to a school now serving approximately 400 students with future plans of adding a middle school. During the past decade, three different educational leaders, each with unique professional training, experience, and leadership styles, have served as principal from California Academy's founding and development, to a sustained thriving ECHS educating traditionally underserved students in Santa Ana.

The academic leaders discussed in this longitudinal narrative are: Natalie Battersbee, founding principal from 2005-2007; Dennis Eastman, who served as principal during the developing phase of California Academy from 2007-2010; and Erin Craig, who guided California Academy through the developing phase and into a time of thriving from 2011-2014. Each principal served at California Academy for approximately three years while striving to create a highly effective school through the intentional creation of an actively involved teacher/student community.

Creating a student community within a school must be deliberate and involve all stakeholders, addressing school needs from multiple perspectives simultaneously. According to Lezotte (1991), to create community resulting in a highly effective school, the school must: (1) have a relatable leader; (2) state a clear mission; (3) be a safe and organized place; (4) set high expectations; (5) provide opportunities to learn; (6) monitor student progress; and (7) create partnerships between school and home. The academic leaders at California Academy, though varied in technique, implemented the components identified above to promote a dynamic academic community that resulted in increased student learning, post-secondary enrollment, and contributions within the larger community as educated and productive citizens.

A 30-year quantitative analysis of data, theoretical insights, and professional wisdom by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) identified 21 leadership components that when consistently employed by principals and academic leaders, provided essential components that positively impacted student achievement. Each principal responsibility in Table 2 is significantly correlated with student achievement.

Table 2: Principal Leadership Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES	TO THE EXTENT IN WHICH THE PRINCIPAL
Culture	fosters shared beliefs & a sense of community & cooperation
Order	establishes a set of standard operating procedures & routines
Discipline	protects teachers from issues & influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus
Resources	provides teachers with materials & professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs
Curriculum, instruction, assessment	is directly involved in the design & assessment implementation of curriculum, instruction, & assessment practices
Focus	establishes clear goals & keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention
Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, assessment	is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction assessment instruction, & assessment practices
Visibility	has quality contact & interactions with teachers & students
Contingent rewards	recognizes & rewards individual accomplishments
Communication	establishes strong lines of communication with teachers & among students
Outreach	is an advocate & spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders
Input	involves teachers in the design & implementation of important decisions & policies
Affirmation	recognizes & celebrates school accomplishments & acknowledges failures
Relationship	demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers & staff
Change agent	is willing to & actively challenges the status quo
Optimizer	inspires & leads new & challenging innovations
Ideals/beliefs	communicates & operates from strong ideals & beliefs about schooling
Monitors/evaluates	monitors the effectiveness of school practices & their impact on student learning
Flexibility	adapts leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation & is comfortable with dissent
Situational awareness	is aware of the details & undercurrents in the running of the school & uses this information to address current & potential problems
Intellectual stimulation	ensures that faculty & staff are aware of the most current theories & practices & makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture

Source: "Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement" by Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003, p. 5.

Relatable Leader

As the educational leader of the school, the principal, more than any other individual is responsible for the promotion of an academic environment of engagement and attempt among teachers and students. Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities identified by Waters et al. (2003), 16 are associated with the concept of the leader being relatable to all stakeholders within the school: culture, discipline, resources, focus, visibility, contingency rewards, communication, outreach, input, affirmation, relationship, change agent, optimizer, ideals/beliefs, flexibility, and situational awareness.

In 2005, Battersbee was invited to serve as the first principal of California Academy Early College High School after over 40 years of educational service in Los Angeles Unified School District. Interestingly, Battersbee had declined the offer to become principal twice before, and believing she had served her time in the trenches she was ready to retire. However, after a series of prayers for God's direction regarding his plans for her life and this proposed new school, through a series of providential events Battersbee accepted the post. As the principal of a brand new school, Battersbee was responsible for establishing an academic foundation and a school culture. She began by hiring teachers based upon their love for students and solid character rather than solely on the basis of subject area skill. Simply, she was looking for teachers to inspire students who had been labeled "lazy, troubled, and broken." As the school year began, Battersbee started with a message of family and accountability, and then proceeded to live out this maxim to the staff, teachers, and students. Battersbee believed wholeheartedly that each student could and would graduate, and set out to create that belief system school-wide with all stakeholders (Kouzes & Posner, 1987).

Battersbee's ability to communicate clearly and firmly, while providing affirmation and feedback, created authentic relationships that were built on faith, absolute honesty, and trust that did much to create a structured academic environment as well as one where students felt love and acceptance, and the understanding that God had created them to do great things. In 2007, as Battersbee transitioned the principal role to Eastman, it was clear that California Academy's school-wide academic and community had taken hold among the students and that a family atmosphere of trust had been created. However, though the school population was tightly knit, new challenges were afoot as California Academy was in need of student population growth to sustain existence. This growth phase would bring exciting changes and significant challenges during the next three years.

Eastman and Battersbee worked together to continue to foster the belief that students were created to do great things. Eastman's commitment to student success, sense of humor, and persistent accountability measures for all students appeared to be the ideal characteristics

needed to transition California Academy from a fledgling school into a period of maturation and development. The California Academy community and culture were on the forefront of Eastman's mind in his first year as he sought to create intentional experiences to build relationships with all stakeholders. To ensure meaningful relationships could be extended to all stakeholders, Eastman established a "five day per week" open door policy. Eastman believed that the school leader should be both visible and accessible and utilized every opportunity from early morning (working the car line, picking up trash, walking through classrooms) to early evening (teacher conferences and inspecting the needs of the school property) to send a message of presence, relatability, and reliability to parents and students alike. As a result, teachers, students and parents felt extremely comfortable with his openness to their input, school changes, and decisions regarding what measures would serve the best interest of the students. This practice was critical in the development of stakeholder pride during the developmental years of the school.

When Craig assumed the role of principal, she was pleased to encounter a school whose passion for educating underserved students was well intact but needed refinement to ensure California Academy could transition from a developing school into a thriving academic community. The California Academy stakeholders needed stability, instructional support, feedback, and shared governance in the building of the academic community. Craig sought to establish credibility by giving all stakeholders an opportunity to share strengths and areas of growth in each facet of the school anonymously. This data was compiled, analyzed, and presented to determine the best first steps in solving school wide challenges. This process did much to bolster the confidence and team concept of the teachers, as they were provided the opportunity to collaborate and evaluate school needs through a data based approach rather than imposing administrative edict. Craig used positive, constructive, instructional, and evidence-based professional feedback to support and affirm strengths and collaborate to discuss area that needed improvement. California Academy teachers and staff soon felt empowered that they had a voice and were able to contribute to school-wide program changes as California Academy continued to grow.

State a Clear Mission

The creation, development, and expansion of California Academy relied heavily on the school's mission. The mission of California Academy ECHS is to inspire, educate, and prepare all students to be successful in college, career, and in life. Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities, seven are associated with the concept of school mission: state a clear mission, culture, communication, focus ideals/beliefs, change agent, optimizer, and situational awareness (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

Battersbee led California Academy through the founding of the charter petition and then obtained the authorization required for opening a charter school in California. Battersbee led efforts to create a mission centered on early college, the idea of family, and implementation of support, fidelity, and loving relationships throughout the school. She believed that following biblical principles of acceptance, hope, and forgiveness were key elements when seeking to develop relationships with students and staff. Through consistent practice of these principles, Battersbee held the indefatigable belief that students and staff could be actively involved in creating a unique learning environment and become successful at the tasks before them.

As an experienced educational leader, Battersbee heavily emphasized the human resource and structural frames when working collaboratively to develop, state, and implement a clear and meaningful school mission (Bolman & Deal, 2003). After California Academy's charter petition was approved, the implementation, focus, and communication of the mission were critical elements that Battersbee discussed each day with students, teachers, staff, parents, and community members. The message from Battersbee was clear, "The voice of all stakeholders mattered and needed to be heard if California Academy was to become a thriving Early College High School." The demonstrated actions of this message spurred on school-wide ownership of the concept of family as the school continued to grow during Battersbee's service as principal.

As the California Academy student population grew during Eastman's tenure, the number of social-emotional challenges of the students also grew. Eastman continued to develop the culture where each stakeholder understood they were an active participant in California Academy's existence and success each day. The mission was reset each day through conversation, celebrations, and school-wide goal setting carried out by the staff, teachers, and Eastman. Teachers and students were encouraged to become active participants in the academic experience at California Academy rather than passive recipients who occupied classrooms and hoped for the best. Eastman's leadership style sought to support each teacher and student with the belief that the teachers and students were the very best assets of the school by encouraging them to "act like what they do matters" no matter the venue, be it in the classroom or local community.

As California Academy entered the 2012-13 academic year with almost 400 students, Craig led the school through two major accountability measures: charter renewal and accreditation through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Charter renewal is a mandatory reauthorization process that occurs with the authorizing district (SAUSD) every five years and is based on a 16-element charter petition (CA Ed Code 47605). Through this process, California Academy's mission, vision, educational program, and finances were scrutinized through a very complex process that coincided with the election year of members of the school board. Throughout the course of the charter renewal, Craig led the California Academy team to

work collaboratively with families, community leaders, and district leaders and obtained a 5-0 charter renewal approval with an addition of California Academy Middle School. Similarly, the WASC accreditation process demonstrated that California Academy had exercised diligence in creating, developing, and implementing the mission of the school with integrity over its eight-year history.

A Safe and Organized Place

Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities, nine are associated with the concept of a safe and organized place for learning: order, discipline, resources, visibility, communication, input, affirmation, monitors/evaluates, and intellectual stimulation (Waters et al., 2003).

Battersbee created a safe and organized learning environment by challenging the traditional educational process; enabling others to act and advocate for themselves; and offering heartfelt encouragement to relentlessly support California Academy students (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). Battersbee ensured every California Academy student and teacher was active within the safe and organized learning place with a daily class called Family. Family is a time when teachers provide students with strategies directed toward being successful in school, career, and life through authentic relationships, discussions, and supportive activities (Berger, Turk-Bicakci, Garet, Knudsen, & Hoshan, 2014). Students are assigned to a Family upon enrollment, and progress is monitored with their Family throughout their time at California Academy. The success of California Academy students was of the utmost importance, and Battersbee led the teachers to use community and Family to ensure California Academy was a safe and organized place for learning.

During the growth of the school, California Academy continued to recruit students who had frequently struggled to find success in traditional educational settings. Eastman modeled and led teachers in demonstrating relentless encouragement, support, and accountability for student behavior without using expulsion as a consequence. As the student population grew, Eastman and the teachers had to create new structures and policies to maintain a safe and organized place as California Academy's student population increased rapidly. However, it was necessary for the maxims of the California Academy mission to be introduced before an interested student set foot on the campus as an actual enrolled student of California Academy Early College High School. The message of the mission of California Academy was provided at the very earliest possible moment of student contact with the campus – during the student interview. These interviews involved parents and students and were utilized as a vehicle for preparing interested students for the rigors of an ECHS curriculum and community. During interviews students were encouraged to become active participants in their own learning, success, and behavior. In addition, parents were invited to get involved in various capacities as

volunteers. The results of the student interviews proved fruitful as the student population grew and parent involvement levels increased California Academy was taking shape as a place where students looked forward to come to school.

During the 2011-12 school year California Academy had grown to well over 300 students. At the end of 2011-12, data on student detention, suspension, and expulsion rates were analyzed within the current discipline system, and the need for a revised school-wide discipline plan was becoming clear. Following input from staff, teachers, students, and families, a positive behavior support plan was developed and implemented, resulting in the elimination of detentions and suspensions. This positive behavior support plan was based on the principle that students exhibit positive behaviors when they have strong relationships with California Academy staff. As a result, expulsion rates showed a significant decrease (National Student Clearinghouse, 2014). Peer pressure existed between students, but the pressure was to make positive choices and show character, which was modeled by all California Academy teachers and staff. With the implementation of a positive behavior support system and the addition of a Dean of Students, Craig shifted her focus to raising academic expectations for California Academy students and teachers.

Set High Expectations

Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities, nine are associated with the concept of setting high expectations: resources, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, contingent awards, input, affirmation, monitors evaluates, change agent, optimizer, and situational awareness (Waters et al., 2003).

High expectations are celebrated at California Academy. These efforts began with Battersbee, who insisted that meeting high expectations is made possible when administrators, teachers, and students optimize and maximize each facet of the education process by claiming 100% responsibility for the learning in all of the arenas in which life offered lessons (character, classroom and community behavior, in college courses, and of course, at home). The highest of expectations would best prepare California Academy students for life beyond high school—specifically, college and careers (The Education Trust, 2005). Many students entered California Academy not understanding how to be outstanding and responsible, but Battersbee’s firm, fair, consistent, and loving demeanor guided them toward opportunities to grasp the concepts and “big life lessons” she was presenting.

During the 2008 school year, Eastman aspired to build upon the formidable foundation laid by Battersbee. He desired to inspire and encourage the hearts of all California Academy stakeholders by introducing the theme: Attempt Difficult Things! The message that was consistently set and reset for the students was about realizing that everyone had choices, and

characteristics such as: endurance, fortitude in character, and a commitment to solid academic marks was built into a student, not born. These expectations required an enormous amount of time, tenacity, and leadership from teachers and Eastman, but produced results that were the most celebrated in California Academy's short history. Under the guidance and efforts of a tireless teaching staff and leadership of Eastman, (1) the first graduating class completed over 300 transferrable units of college credit; (2) Academic Performance Index (API) scores improved from 539 to 705 (an increase of 166 points), becoming the largest API increase in the state of California; and (4) California Academy was awarded a Bronze Medal as one of the top 60 schools in California by US News & World Report (2010).

High expectations and optimization were core values stressed by Craig to California Academy teachers, staff, and students on a daily basis. To identify where change should be focused, Craig utilized Clark and Estes' gap analysis methods to close knowledge, motivation, and organizational gaps within the California Academy community, realizing that most gaps were primarily due to knowledge and organization gaps (Clark & Estes, 2008). The intersection between Craig's doctoral coursework and principalship at California Academy allowed for theory to directly inform programs and practices each day. There existed a laser focus on all student learners, teacher instruction and planning, and continual academic improvement.

Students were guided to be more reflective, analyze their academic strengths and weaknesses and set goals for the quarter, semester, year, and upon high school graduation. Craig exemplified these methods by having high expectations for herself that were then translated to the California Academy team. Students continued to raise themselves up and strive for academic and personal excellence. Each year higher percentages of students were passing all of their classes, taking college courses, graduating, and applying and enrolling in postsecondary institutions.

Provide Opportunity to Learn

High expectations for all students should be coupled with access and the opportunity to learn. Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities, seven are associated with the concept of providing opportunities to learn: knowledge of curriculum and instruction, resources, focus, relationship, change agent, monitor/evaluates, and intellectual stimulation. (Waters et al., 2003).

Battersbee's 15 years as a middle college principal in LAUSD directly impacted the blend of high school and college curriculum that students experienced at California Academy. Battersbee's expertise and ability to be a change agent in the early college model were invaluable during California Academy's development of student learning opportunities. Battersbee knew and actively demonstrated what a highly functioning ECHS

looked like, and then methodically went about to develop and provide these learning opportunities for students from their first day on campus at California Academy. Examples of these learning opportunities included the following: the creation of the relationship with California Academy's initial college partner; ensuring the high school courses at California Academy directly aligned to the rigor required at the college level; and the development of a concurrent high school/college rigorous modular curriculum that addressed academics, study skills, time management, social-emotional needs, and the rigor required at the college level.

At the onset of the 2008 school year, Eastman insisted that a "one size fits all curriculum" was not an option at California Academy and that student learning strategies be differentiated to meet the needs of the growing student population. New opportunities were also developed in concert with teachers and school partners who identified learning gaps and actively contributed time, talent, and energy to closing those gaps. The results of these collaborations were exciting: a student-centered California State standards-driven curriculum, a relationship with the Pacific Investment Management Company financial literacy program, college pathway support curriculum, after-school tutoring, and the implementation of a California high school exit exam boot camp.

Craig's focus for learning opportunities was to examine, modify, and expand the current learning opportunities based on data analysis and action planning. The expansion of these opportunities included new grade level seminars, creative writing courses aligned with college courses and mentors, teacher peer review protocol to improve instructional practice, and the elimination of D grades through standards based grading techniques. New community partnerships were formed centered around student learning, and various prestigious colleges reached out to partner with California Academy. California Academy then introduced a tiered college course system to identify and support students taking diverse community, private, and University of California (UC) college courses in high school. These opportunities for learning with differentiated support resulted in California Academy having the largest API point increase of 66 points as compared to all other public schools in Orange County in 2014 (James & Terrell, 2014). California Academy students were applying and being accepted to universities at the highest rate in California Academy's history. Most importantly, a community of California Academy family members existed where each person could contribute to the decision-making process and felt supported and empowered.

Monitor Student Progress

To determine success and new programs and opportunities, student progress should be monitored. Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities, six are associated with the

concept of monitoring student progress: order, focus, contingent awards, affirmation, monitors/evaluates, and flexibility (Waters et al., 2003).

The monitoring of student progress within the context of California Academy's educational program was necessary to determine effectiveness and refining. In the beginning years, academic and family teachers overlapped due to the small number of students and staff. Regular student monitoring was handled by teachers by: grade level, content area, and families due to the small size, and focused on differentiated grade level support rather than remediation. This support structure ensured students were supported proactively and personally rather than at the end of the semester, when it was too late (The Education Trust, 2005). This monitoring supported student resilience and persistence even after failure. Battersbee's commitment to each student's success was relentless. Moreover, Battersbee was dedicated to the idea that students of California Academy were family members and as family members were welcome to seek academic and life assistance through high school graduation and beyond.

Eastman emphasized real time data with real time action to support and ensure all California Academy teachers could successfully monitor each student's progress. Teachers were supported through professional development to understand and ensure each student's academic standing was communicated to students and parents regularly. Teachers then took ownership and action in assisting students to take responsibility for missing assignments, content knowledge, overall academic grades, and ultimately, their high school graduation. Craig added yet another dimension of student accountability – self-accountability.

Since Eastman's student monitoring systems were already strongly rooted, Craig had immediate access to multi-layered analysis, support, and monitoring. A mathematician at heart, Craig first built a foundation for data-driven decision-making. She then established a culture of data use through weekly professional developments, invested in and expanded upon an information system, and continually built school capacity for data-driven decision-making using key indicators for student improvement (Datnow, Park, & Wohlstetter, 2007). The California Academy students started to experience success with a deep understanding of how they achieved the success, and then they started to feel empowered. Innovative ideas and programs were introduced and discussed, some of which were implemented with data analysis as the driving component. Student monitoring was multilayered and accomplished from multiple lenses.

Family teachers took ownership over their family students' grades in all of their courses, and subject area departments generated content specific interventions to ensure systems existed to support students in need. Students monitored their own academic progress weekly, and

parents monitored their child's progress monthly at a minimum. Systems with accountability were the key to success. Students felt supported and knew they would be checked on, resulting in a decrease of negative academic and social behaviors.

Create Partnerships Between Home and School

Lastly, home and school partnerships extend and reinforce California Academy's work with each student. Among the 21 principal leadership responsibilities, seven are associated with the concept of building partnerships between home and school: culture, order, focus, visibility, outreach, relationship, ideals/beliefs, and situational awareness (Waters et al., 2003). Authentic partnerships between school and home sit on the foundation of strong relationships among all stakeholders.

Battersbee believed that if California Academy were to succeed, it would need to be a collective force united around loving and supporting students while holding them to high expectations. Their students needed to be taught the power of overcoming obstacles, the beauty of laughter, and the ability to accept failures and forgive themselves just as God forgives.

Battersbee made certain that California Academy's founding years involved all stakeholders in order to establish a foundation of trust that included parents, guardians, extended family members, and community members.

Battersbee established relationships with a family member or mentor in each student's life, no matter their living situation or family structure at home. The result of this care was that every California Academy student authentically believed they were cared for and held accountable by their California Academy family. Battersbee also initiated community partnerships in two strategic ways: using partnerships to support students' preparation for postsecondary opportunities and partnering with local businesses that allowed students to have hands-on experience working in their field of choice (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). The home and school partnership strategy Battersbee laid supported all stakeholders in believing and living their lives as a "California Academy Family" member.

Eastman continued to develop the idea of the "California Academy Family" during his tenure. The decision to hire Santa Ana residents as California Academy team members produced a positive environment of honesty and trust among parents and students. California Academy parents felt comfortable calling California Academy administrative assistants, teachers, and counselors who understood and lived in their community, and the California Academy parent participation, engagement, and trust increased. After the noticeable increase in trust, Eastman introduced new programs and events to enable parents to further engage. Monthly parent meetings were introduced, and the number of school events involving parents increased to include an annual Career Day, Science Fair, and La Kermes. Parents were encouraged to

participate, engage, and learn at California Academy regularly, which further developed the concept of “our school” and “our California Academy Family.”

Education and empowerment were major components of Craig’s vision for all California Academy family members, not just the students. A new parent education program was introduced with monthly topics and an annual end of year parent graduation. California Academy was a community where education of the entire family was a priority for the school, which further increased the trust between California Academy and California Academy families. Craig also regularly went to students’ homes if they were having attendance challenges, embodying a “whatever it takes” attitude. When the trust and community at California Academy thrived, the partnerships between home and school were natural. Parents then sought leadership roles and wanted to further contribute to the decision making process.

Conclusions

California Academy was founded, developed, and continues to thrive due to the rigor, relevance, and relationships created and sustained through the aligned efforts of teachers and administration alongside the students and their parents. California Academy is now in the 10th year of operation and has greatly impacted individual lives and the Santa Ana community. The academic outcomes below are the results of increased rigor through a student centered and relevant curriculum.

Table 3: Number of Students Passing College Courses and Graduation Rates

ACADEMIC YEAR	QUANTITY OF STUDENTS	GRADUATION RATE
2007-08	N/A	100%
2008-09	86	100%
2009-10	108	98%
2010-11	164	90%
2011-12	173	98%
2012-13	192	95%
2013-14	N/A	95%

Source: "DataQuest" by the California Department of Education, 2014.

California Academy students have choice in their college course enrollment. College courses have been aligned to both students’ interest, academic level, and future career paths. Between 2008-09 and 2011-12, the number of students enrolled in at least one college course per year doubled, as the school size grew at approximately half the rate. More California Academy students qualified, enrolled, and succeeded in college courses.

California Academy not only increased the high school graduation rate among students living in Santa Ana (The California Endowment, 2010) but virtually doubled the rates. The graduation rates at California Academy have consistently remained at or above 90%, exceeding both the average high school graduation rate in the state of California and in Santa Ana. This is due in

part to the strong relationships students have with other California Academy students, teachers, and staff. Moreover, California Academy students have been accepted to and graduated from UC Irvine, UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, UC Davis, UC Merced, UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, CSU Fullerton, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Northridge, CSU San Francisco, CSU Fresno, CSU Chico, CSU San Diego, CSU San Jose, CSU East Bay, Biola University, Cal Poly Pomona, Vanguard University, Concordia University, Point Loma, along with other colleges and universities.

The rigor provided at California Academy continues to support alumni as they garner graduate degrees, as well as obtain increased career opportunities, both results of which work to break the poverty cycle within their families. Each of the three principals in this longitudinal narrative has different instructional strengths, leadership styles, and experience but all led with aligned core values based on relationships with all stakeholders. California Academy's needs shifted as the student population increased, and continual innovation required new leadership and practices. Even with diversity between principals and skills, the common commitment to educational excellence for underserved students was clear and consistent throughout.

Consistency in the principal role and thoughtfulness during transitions of leadership are two ways to ensure California Academy will continue to thrive and move forward.

Since the first day of school the principal and teachers of California Academy have sought to provide an exceptional educational experience to all students, especially those recognized as struggling students. Spirituality connects people to the most profound realities of life, and thus it has a very important role to play in education. By bridging biblical principles and commitment of people who desire to create a generation of young men and women who understand their God-given direction to make the world a better place – amazing things can happen at school. This type of commitment requires the leadership of the school to create and foster a rich environment in which all stakeholders can serve, contribute, be heard, and thrive.

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THE IMPACT OF GENTRIFICATION
ON FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
BY ORVIC PADA

Abstract

Urban renewal and gentrification are current catchphrases in many urban initiatives, mostly centering on housing development, new urbanism, and community building. By focusing on re-envisioning community building, development, and social services in urban contexts, religious institutions and organizations adapt to urban changes and adjust accordingly with various initiatives to address social needs, put their spirituality and faith into practice, and attract adherents. This paper is the theoretical piece of a larger work in progress that provides the context for understanding the changes brought about by gentrification in “inner cities” and how religious organizations operate within the changing sociological landscape brought about by urbanization, urban decay, and gentrification. The focus of this article is specifically on faith-based organizations, drawing out the implications of gentrification on evangelical and faith-based organizations to highlight the fiscal, structural, and demographic changes associated with the gentrification process.

Keywords: gentrification, urban, inner cities, reformation, transformation, theory

Introduction

Cities are centers of commerce, trade, and the exchange of ideas. In the twentieth century, cities were characterized by industrial centers of production (Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). Manufacturing industries mushroomed and the demand for laborers attracted people from rural and suburban areas to seek jobs in urban areas (Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). With the socio-economic diversification and stratification of cities and density, social ills such as alcoholism, illegal drug use, crime, violence, and prostitution escalated (Jayne, Holloway & Valentine, 2006). Due to this, urban centers are often portrayed in the media as the underbelly of society. The media representations show the contrast between the more affluent suburban neighborhoods with the horrid living conditions in the seedy and oftentimes unsanitary urban neighborhoods.

The diversification of urban areas created a new social landscape and the propagation of inequalities. Segregationist attitudes prevailed and the polarization between blue collar workers and white collar bosses shaped the social fabric of urban society (Curran, 2007). Low income housing had a pervasive presence in tandem with urban manufacturing centers where affordable living arrangements cater to low-income and working class families (Barnes, Waitt, Gill, & Gibson, 2006).

A number of religious institutions in urban areas accommodate the religious affiliations of adherents who practice religiosity. These institutions also offer services ranging from youth programs, education, clothing distribution, food distribution, feeding programs, vocational training, and rehabilitative programs that address alcoholism and addiction (Unruh, 2004). In effect, these institutions practice ethical and religious traditional “value-rational” (Weber, 1968) social action. They carve out religious institutional identity motivated by a sacred spiritual dimension of their calling and religious expression (Unruh, 2004).

Gentrification of an urban space converts the urban landscape from a manufacturing center to a cultural center (Curran, 2007; Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). It introduces a new form of diversity. Urban renewal transforms urban space, “cleans up” the neighborhood and retrofits it with new features distinctive from a manufacturing urban center. It becomes a cultural center where information and ideas reign rather than manufactured products (Florida, 2005). A bohemian feel replaces the drab and gray of an industrial place. A new cultural class is created, and it challenges the existing social structure of urban places (Florida, 2005). This change creates new forms of social inequalities (Hackworth & Rekers, 2005; Karner & Aldridge, 2004) as the economic structure shifts from being mechanically industrial to an information-based, culturally centered economy (Atkinson & Hope, 2009; York, Smith, Stanley, Stark, Novic, Harlan, Cowgill, & Boone, 2011).

Religious organizations are faced with an identity crisis as gentrification transforms the urban landscape. They face economic challenges as the cost of real estate rises (Mian, 2008). In addition, old religious dogmas are challenged by the influx of new dwellers that predominantly emphasize rationalization and diminish the emphasis on traditional belief systems (Weber, 1968). Identities and organizational structures undergo significant change due to the shift from a machine-driven industrial urban character to a culturally centered paradigm (Landry, 2008). Religious institutions face the danger of extinction (Mian, 2008) and are challenged to adapt to the changes by forming a hybrid identity.

Studies on the hybridization of religious organizational identity in urban contexts are gaining traction, opening up the avenues for discussion regarding organizational reformation or transformation (Caldwell, 2005; Karner & Aldridge, 2004; Mian, 2008; Tavory, 2010; Taylor, 2007, Turner, 2005, Unruh, 2004). Thus, this paper is a theoretical analysis of urban centers classified in the category of “inner cities” associated with urban decay, crime, poor or low educational outcomes, and urban poverty. This provides the context for understanding the changes brought about by gentrification in “inner cities” and how faith-based organizations operate within the changing sociological landscape brought about by urbanization, urban decay and gentrification.

Changes in Urban Spaces

There is a resurgence of interest in recent years regarding the process of gentrification, economic renewal, development and growth in urban areas. Pre-gentrified and underdeveloped urban places are generally associated with crime, drunkenness, drugs, prostitution, homelessness and poverty (Jayne, Holloway & Valentine, 2006; Barnes et al., 2006; Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). Many urban centers formerly housed multiple manufacturing industries that provided jobs for blue collar workers (Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). Gentrification of an urban area converts the space from a manufacturing center to a cultural center (Curran, 2007; Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). Therefore, displacement of manufacturing industries and blue-collar workers is a key discussion point in the literature on gentrification (Curran, 2007).

This shift from a manufacturing center to a cultural center creates industries in urban places that cater to the preferences of new urban residents (Barnes et al., 2006). This leads to the marginalization of pre-gentrified residents because of the rise in housing costs (Sullivan & Shaw, 2011). Curran (2007) emphasized that residential factors influence the displacement of manufacturing industries because these spaces are being converted from industrial buildings to residential units. Gentrification makes urban places more palatable and attractive for a wide range of middle class, bohemians, and yuppies (Zukin, 1998; Sullivan & Shaw, 2011).

Demographic Changes in Urban Areas

The gentrification of urban places brings about the influx of new urban dwellers that are attracted by the allure of the new urban spaces and cultural ethos. The architectural aesthetics of gentrified urban places and cultural production centers such as movie theaters, art galleries, information technology hubs and office spaces, ubiquitous coffee shops, and fine dining restaurants create the new urban character (Zukin, 1998). Gentrifiers come in many forms ranging from varying family structures, religious affiliations or non-affiliation, gender orientations, and cultural backgrounds (Zukin, 1998). Gentrifiers bring about significant urban renewal and economic change and transform the physical and social landscape of an urban space.

Florida (2005) coined the phrase *the creative class* to categorize the gentrifiers. The creative class embodies a different ethos. They prefer creative, open-minded, and diverse places to live, work, and play (Florida, 2005). This is why they flock to urban places where suburban homogeneity is absent. Urban places are culturally diverse, edgy, and artsy (Florida, 2005). Landry (2008) and Florida asserted that the centrality of the inseparable connection of creativity and culture is the driving force of cities. Art, media, and information become the new commodities in gentrified areas (Zukin, 1998). Manufacturing companies are now seen in the background while cultural industries take front stage (Landry, 2008).

Cities have a way of fostering creativity, which tends to push back the iron curtain of traditions to create a hybridization of ideas, new expressions, identities, and institutional structures (Landry, 2008). Landry (2008) also developed a conceptualization of the city as a “living organism, not a machine” (p. 8). Florida (2005) provided a different lens, observing that the focus was on people rather than corporations or institutional structures. He developed this discourse by focusing on the definition, identity, and the rise of the creative class and the geographical trends of their relocation patterns (Florida, 2005).

Gentrification and Social Stratification

Atkinson and Easthope (2009) criticized Florida (2005) and Landry (2008) regarding urban policies and economic renewal, stating that while the creative class indeed catalyzes significant urban renewal and dramatic economic change, this change propagates inequalities under the guise of diversity. As an urban place is gentrified, new identities are shaped as the growing presence of diversity pushes the wall of homogeneity (Hackworth & Rekers, 2005). What is interesting to observe is that despite the exterior façade of this new diversity, inequalities are perpetuated in gentrified urban places by the homogenization of the economy (Barnes et al., 2006). Social inequalities, gender, economic, and racial inequalities persist despite the hope of a diverse utopian urban world (Karner & Aldridge, 2004).

The phenomenon of social and ethnic clustering which is commonly observed in urban places where segregationist attitudes prevail (York et al., 2011) tends to fade away in newly gentrified areas. This is taken to a different level in gentrified urban places. Instead of segregating and clustering, marginalized groups are eventually pushed out. The working class, urban poor, ethnic minorities, and the elderly are seen as undesired residents and are eventually displaced (Barnes et al., 2006). This exodus is preceded by urban redevelopment into a bohemian and elitist consumer space. The salience of consumerism is pervasively seen in the mushrooming of retail stores, restaurants, and specialty shops that cater to an upscale clientele (Sullivan & Shaw, 2001; Zukin, 1998).

Faith-based Organizational Presence in Urban Areas

Faith-based organizations in urban areas have a far reaching historical presence and impact, addressing social issues ranging from poverty, homelessness, education, substance addiction, women's shelters, welfare, and charitable programs. According to Ley (2008):

Churches in particular have a long history of charitable and service work, and before the emergence of the welfare state were key organizations in the development of education, healthcare (notably through hospital foundations) and rudimentary welfare and charitable relief (p. 2058).

Thus the church and faith-based organizations provide a social function for society by addressing various social needs. Furthermore, Ley posited that faith-based organizations and churches also provide social support for the immigrant community, specifically those who practice religiosity or affiliate with churches or faith-based organizations. The presence of faith-based organizations and programs in urban areas addresses different needs that are either inadequate or not provided for by local government agencies.

With the changes brought about by gentrification, the general thread in the literature reflects that the rise of a new demographic also reflects a form of secularization that dissociates from religious symbols, institutions, and practice (Berger, 1967; Ley & Martin, 1993; Cimino, 2011). Religious organizations are forced to move out of the area, cease to operate due to rising property values, or reconfigure their identity, methods, and approach to cater to a different demographic group (Sullivan & Shaw, 2011; Mian, 2008). The changing face of the neighborhood eliminates the need for the existence of religious organizational programs (Unruh, 2004) that address hunger, homelessness, drug addiction, alcoholism, gang activity and a variety of social services catering to underserved populations. Despite this, some religious organizations are pushing back to maintain a pre-gentrified dynamic by seeking to maintain diversity (Mian, 2008). This does not address the diminishing need for a physical presence in urban areas if their main services and programs catered to people and groups of lower socio-economic status who are being pushed out due to gentrification. Caldwell's (2005)

ethnographic study in Moscow presents that “to be religious in Russia today means to be a consumer” (p. 31). The shift from an atheistic state to a free-market breeds a new form of religious utilitarianism “according to which church or religious movement provides the most attractive set of goods” (Caldwell, 2005, p. 26). An understanding of the theoretical concepts of religion is essential to understand how the “sacred” in religious institutions is impacted by gentrification.

Online religion is an emergent platform for exploring, engaging, and practicing religiosity and spirituality, and this technology is a useful tool for faith-based organizations who have the resources and who are technologically skilled and equipped to engage a secular demographic. Technology, especially the Internet, is an influential tool for the marketing and propagation of religious ideas and the hybridization of religiosity (Turner, 2005). The Internet is a hub for disseminating information and knowledge in contemporary society. It is through this avenue that some religious groups and faith-based organizations create sacred spaces and broadcast their beliefs and ideologies to consumers of information and technology (Turner, 2005). Youth and pop culture are rabid consumers of this technology and freely embrace the supermarket consumer approach to religious beliefs (Turner, 2005; Karner & Aldridge, 2004).

Modernity and Secularization

Berger (1967) contended that modernization catalyzes secularization where “sectors of society and culture are removed from the domination of religious institutions and symbols” (p. 106). Western religious tradition is classically viewed as a polar opposite to modernization and secularization, but Berger suggested, “there may be an inherent connection between Christianity and the character of the modern Western world” (p. 110). This is a noteworthy statement to guide the analysis of the relationship between gentrification and the hybridization of religious institutions.

Taylor (2007) provided an exhaustive treatise on modernity and the meaning of secularization, describing modernity and secularity as being the “fruit of new inventions, newly constructed self-understandings and related practices, and can’t be explained in terms of perennial features of human life” (p. 22). Karner and Aldridge (2004) expanded on the concept of secularization and propose a new framework of theorizing religion in a globalizing world.

Karner and Aldridge (2004) posited, “the millenarianism of the disenfranchised and the postmodern religiosity of affluent consumers represent different responses to the crises brought about by the forces of globalization” (p. 23). Postmodern religiosity brings about a shift from traditional Western religious beliefs and practices to a hybrid type. This can be attributed to the influx of people who are creative, innovative, open-minded, pluralist, and consumerist (Karner & Aldridge, 2004). Eastern religious institutions are cropping up in urban gentrified areas because the creative class is attracted to its ideologies and practices (Karner &

Aldridge, 2004). In light of this, urban gentrification becomes one of the vehicles for the transmission of the ideas and ethos of a globalizing world.

From theological debates on religious dogmas and public policy to the development of programs and services addressing social needs, faith-based organizations, religion, and religious institutions play a prominent role in the warp and woof of society. Despite changes in gentrified urban places and accusations of being secularized or syncretized, religious institutions maintain their utility and importance by adapting to their new consumers (Mian, 2008).

Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Education

In the urban context of faith-based organizations, organizational innovation and entrepreneurship are gaining traction especially in urban gentrified places. With the change in the demographic makeup brought about by the urban gentry, religious institutions that remain in the neighborhood reconfigure their services to adapt to the changes (Mian, 2008). Religious institutions are left with the option of extinction if they fail to re-engineer their identities to adapt to urban gentrification. Because of the ethos of freedom and individuality brought about by gentrification, some religious organizations are marginalized (Mian, 2008). For example, Mian's study uncovered the entrepreneurial strategy used by some churches in New York to stay fiscally alive by "turning to real estate development" (p. 2155). This keeps them financially viable to continue addressing the needs of their congregants and remain in the area rather than being pushed out by the gentrification process.

Tavory (2010) stated that gentrification "specifies and refines arguments regarding the role of 'urban pioneers' and 'place entrepreneurship' in the development of ethnic neighborhoods" (p. 90). Tavory questioned the "models of community construction posited by sociologists of religion who have adopted a Rational Choice approach" (p. 90), focusing instead on the human interactions rather than economic structures to explain the importance and "role of networks and ethnic geographies in which leaders and congregants are embedded" (p. 90).

Studies of urban areas present significant facts on gentrification, economic renewal, inequalities, and the rise of the creative class. The literature on the theoretical concepts of religion, religious institutions and organizations, class, inequalities and creation of new identities provide a relational link between gentrification and religion. It also highlights a need for a new framework of theorizing religion. The literature suggests that the hybridization of institutions is rooted in secularization and Western privatization and individualism that are elements of gentrification.

Previous research mainly focused on Judeo-Christian religious institutional identity in urban areas. The goal of this paper is to extrapolate the influence of the creative class, if any, on the formation of hybrid forms of faith-based organizations and present a theoretical foundation for

understanding the changes brought about by gentrification in reforming or transforming urban centers. This paper explains the distinctions between reformation and transformation lays a theoretical foundation, providing a working theory of the effect of the gentrification process on faith-based organizations.

Theoretical Framework

Institutional change and secularization are key features in the literature on gentrification and urban renewal. Religious institutional hybridization is at the fore of this change. Émile Durkheim (1964) and Max Weber (1968) are heavily cited in the sociological body of literature that deals with religion. For the purposes of this study the theoretical foundation will be tethered on Durkheim's concepts of the sacred and the profane, as well as mechanical and organic solidarity. Weber's theories focusing on typology of actions and rationalization will be expanded by Giddens' (1984) structuration theory.

Religious institutions are in flux as diversity increases. They move along the continuum from mechanical to organic societies. As individualization begins to emerge, attachment to tradition is weakened, and the collective conscience needs no intermediaries (Durkheim, 1964). Collective ideas and behaviors are replaced by individual ideas and the focus shifts toward the superiority of individual beliefs and actions (Durkheim, 1964). Rather than being bonded by common beliefs and sentiments, utilitarianism is emphasized by the division of labor (Durkheim, 1964)

Durkheim (1964) observed the following:

This is not to say, however that the common conscience is threatened with total disappearance. Only, it more and more comes to consist of very general and very indeterminate ways of thinking and feeling, which leave an open place for a growing multitude of individual differences. There is even a place where it is strengthened and made precise: that is the way in which it regards the individual. As all the other beliefs and all the other practices take on a character less and less religious, the individual becomes the object of a sort of religion. (p. 172)

Rationalization promotes secularization, privatization, and individualism (Weber, 1968). Weber suggested that rationalization is the use of the most efficient means of achieving a most reasoned goal and leads to bureaucratic organization. When gentrification introduces a new form of diversity into the neighborhood of a religious institution, there is a shift within the institution from value-oriented and traditional action to goal-oriented action (Durkheim, 1964; Weber, 1968). Weber presented instrumentally rational action, "that is, determined by expectations as to the behavior of objects in the environment and of other human beings; these expectations are used as 'conditions' or 'means' for the attainment of the actors own rationally pursued and calculated ends" (p. 24). For Durkheim (1964), diversity can be

problematic. The challenge of working together and communicating rises as diversity increases. Thus, in religious institutions, cultural integration and social solidarity are weakened, and cultural values change by the diversity brought about by gentrification. In Durkheim's (1964) view, this can lead to normlessness, which he defined as animalistic human tendencies that weaken mechanical solidarity and division of labor, replacing the moralistic common beliefs and sentiments of the group (Durkheim, 1964). Therefore, gentrification can be dangerous for religious institutional identity because it introduces diversity, promotes secularization, and exalts individuality.

The hybridization of religious institutional identity may be a way to avert Durkheim's concern of anomie (Durkheim, 1964). This deconstruction and reconstruction of religion may be formed by aggregates that seek to experience a new sense of a common, moral culture with a set of ideas, values, norms and practices that guide them to act collectively rather than individually. Giddens (1984) provided an explanation for how aggregates and agents may transform structures despite the constraining power often attributed to structures.

Agency is equated with action (Giddens, 1984). Power and authority is not merely in the hands of an invisible structural force or hegemony. According to Giddens (1984), "Structure is not 'external' to individuals: as memory traces, and as insatiated in social practices, it is in a certain sense more 'internal' than exterior to their activities in a Durkheimian sense" (p. 25).

For Giddens (1984), agency is involved in structuration. People are engaging in practice. It is through that practice that both consciousness and structure are produced. Giddens (1984) posited that human agents rationalize their world and often act despite having minimal knowledge of the consequences of their actions. Giddens (1984) purported, "the moment of the production of actions is also one of reproduction in the context of the day-to-day enactment of social life" (p. 26).

According to Giddens (1984), structuration theory explained structure and agency as "always both constraining and enabling" (p. 24). For example, the hybridization of religious institutions in urban places offers structures from which those who practice religiosity create a new sense of themselves and become self-actualizing agents. This is a microcosm of how agency influences structure and conversely how structure affects agency. Gentrification influences the transformation of some religious institutions into a fiduciary entity (Mian, 2008, p. 2151). Applying Giddens's structuration theory to the process of gentrification, the change in social structure affects the ontological outlook of people. Practice or self-actualization determines the gentrification process, and conversely the gentrification process affects agency.

To survive extinction, religious institutional traditional and value-oriented actions are overcome by goal-oriented and affective action (Weber, 1968). In traditional and value-oriented actions, conformity is hinged on the legitimacy from an objective order or a

charismatic prophetic leader (Weber, 1968). The shift to instrumentally rational, goal-oriented and affective action validates utilitarianism (Weber, 1968). Social action in this sense is anchored on rationality. The goal, process and secondary results are considered in a rational manner compared to traditional action that emphasize ethical or religious considerations or value-rational action that emphasize habitual customs and practices (Weber, 1968).

As an example, Mian's (2008) study uncovered the entrepreneurial strategy used by some churches in New York to stay fiscally alive by "turning to real estate development" (p. 2155). This keeps them financially viable to continue addressing the needs of their congregants. The core of hybridization is the duality of structure. Giddens (1984) stated that agency draws "upon the modalities of the structuration in the reproduction of systems of interaction, by the same token reconstituting their structural properties" (p. 28). Thus, in the example of the churches utilizing an entrepreneurial strategy for fiscal survival, the core of their belief system and faith remains intact, as the structures and modes of societal interaction adjust to the altered surroundings.

Discussion: The Impact of Gentrification

As people struggle to share or make their claim on space in gentrified or gentrifying urban centers, religious groups and institutions from different religious affiliations and socio-economic status across the board either take on the form of cultural enclaves, adapt and assimilate, move out of the area, or close down. What are the implications of gentrification on faith-based organizations and churches?

A cursory drive through most urban centers in the United States reflects the different territories occupied by cultural groups and religious institutions. The zoning of land is an important piece of the discussion as certain sections are zoned off for business and commercial districts, while other sections include residential, industrial, and religious assembly zones. Gentrification presents challenges to religious assembly zones since one of the consequences of gentrification is the change of land use. The process of gentrification retrofits buildings and sections of the city for housing, the arts, coffee shops, boutiques, restaurants, parks, and recreation (Zukin, 1998). Former cathedrals or church buildings have been retrofitted for varying purposes, ranging from pizza shops, coffee shops, boutiques, or demolished to make space for condominiums, apartments, shopping malls, or industrial information and office centers. As an example, the Gospel Tabernacle, located in Times Square in New York City, was formerly the center for the ministry and world-reaching transformative work and spiritual revival led by Albert Benjamin Simpson of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (Niklaus, Sawin, & Swoesz, 1986; Nienkirchen, 1987). Historically, Simpson reached out to marginalized peoples in the surrounding areas of the tabernacle, and urged his congregants to do the same. Simpson also emphasized the urgency of addressing social and spiritual needs, both locally and overseas

(Niklaus et al., 1986). Currently, Simpson's legacy is not tethered to the urban site of the Gospel Tabernacle, but has spread both nationally and globally, addressing both social and spiritual needs (Niklaus et al., 1986). The site of his initial work is currently an upscale Italian restaurant specializing in gourmet pizzas (<http://www.johnspizzerianyc.com/More-Info/Our-History>). This is an example of how a faith-based organization moves out of an urban area and loses its immediate impact on a specific urban site.

Another example of how churches adapt to the changing urban landscape is Mosaic in Los Angeles, California. (The First Southern Baptist Church of East Los Angeles, previously located on Brady Avenue, or popularly known as The Church on Brady, is currently known as Mosaic.) This example highlights how the various decisions church leadership has made through the years to adapt to the times remain rooted in their orthodoxy and mission, and remain viable in the urban context amidst demographic shifts and the changes brought about by secularization and pluralization.

Mosaic sold its building in 2003 and adopted a model of multi-site churches, meeting in places ranging from nightclubs, schools, and sites where people who would not step foot in a cathedral or church would go (Marti, 2005). The importance of this example is in regards to adaptation of the modalities of church models, and yet also the importance of the type of crowd it attracts. The Mosaic crowd is a group predominantly comprised of hipsters and bohemians. This is the general definition of the stereotypical gentrifier, yet the faith-based organization does not operate out of a single cathedral or church building, but rather utilizes different urban spaces to meet with adherents and congregants, while inviting others to explore the message and the mission of the church in a non-traditional format and atmosphere. Thus, rather than maintaining an urban presence by being rooted in a building, Mosaic moves with the crowd and utilizes various urban spaces as meeting places.

Another example of the impact of gentrification is that of the storefront model. Faith-based organizations are using the storefront model to remain financially viable in the changing tide of real estate, while still meeting the social and spiritual needs of their congregants and the community. The storefront model can be seen in the coffee shop model, where the operational function of the building is primarily a coffee shop, yet it is also a space devoted for the community of believers, or community of faith to gather. Gatherings are often held when the coffee shop is closed, or a service or meeting is conducted in one section of the shop even during operating hours, and people are invited to join if they are interested.

Another hybrid of the storefront model is the establishment of pre-schools and daycare centers by faith-based organizations. This is an important piece of meeting a social need, as well as addressing the educational needs of a community. Many churches are used as sites for Head Start, a governmental organization that “promotes school readiness of children under five

from low-income families through education, health, social and other services” (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs>). The implications of the gentrification process on this form of educational services are that it can push out both low-income families and the educational service provider or faith-based organization. This leads to displacement and the structural dismantling of an educational institution and service that is an important aspect of human and social development.

One of the challenges for faith-based organizations is the increase in real estate prices which becomes a financial burden especially for those who are renting or leasing their space. Another result of gentrification is the change in the demographic and socio-economic make-up of the city. The influx of more affluent groups, generally younger, single professionals, or dual-income couples without children pose a new challenge for faith-based organizations because their services are often geared towards a different demographic. Unless faith-based organizations adapt or modify their services to cater to a new gentrified demographic, they could face extinction or eviction as the space they occupy becomes gentrified. Thus, many faith-based organizations that included a spiritual and biblical element to their services, specifically Christian evangelical churches, are criticized for being seeker sensitive or for watering down orthodoxy. Yet a closer look at this phenomenon necessitates careful analysis in light of Durkheim's (1964) theory of the sacred and profane, and organic and mechanical solidarity. The issue might not necessarily be orthodoxy, but rather the grey area of praxis and modalities that often lead to organizational divisions and rifts in solidarity.

Another effect of social structural changes in urban contexts is the growing trend of new forms of faith-based social entrepreneurial initiatives in cities that are gentrified or gentrifying. This is not a new phenomenon; cities have historically been the site of many religious institutional social justice ministries and social services. Some examples are the establishment of the YMCA, YWCA, soup kitchens, feeding programs, clothing distribution programs, after school programs, literacy programs, and recovery programs for substance abuse, sexual abuse and/or domestic violence.

The difference between the old and new forms of social entrepreneurial initiatives is the people and groups they serve. Previous social justice ministries and initiatives mainly focused on social needs that often cater to those in a lower socio-economic status, but because gentrification often pushes out low-income residents and attracts the creative class (Florida, 2005), newer forms of social entrepreneurship targets a new crowd, who are generally more affluent and have different interests and needs. For example, some faith-based organizations are establishing cafes, restaurants, and other forms of business as a strategy to stay financially viable and to reach the needs and wants of a new demographic.

The model of being an urban nomad is also an interesting concept because it removes the centrality of a building by utilizing various urban spaces to meet as congregants. Thus, older programs that have no relevance to the needs of the new demographic dissipate along with the buildings and structures that formerly housed different services catering to people and groups from lower socio-economic status. As a consequence, the people who organized and ran the previous social service initiatives are also pushed out.

Conclusion

Gentrification changes the physical and sociological landscape of urban areas. These changes have an effect on demographic groups, economic, social, and religious institutions. Gentrification also reforms and transforms physical buildings, social relationships, solidarities, and faith-based practice. Some faith-based organizations are using creative ways of connecting people in gentrified urban places to the sacred. The focus of religious organizational social justice programs have shifted from a cathedral centered, monolithic modality toward a social entrepreneurial model with greater emphasis on human interaction and phenomenological discourses. Thus, the impact of gentrification both reforms and transforms religious organizational life by altering the modalities of the expression of faith and the architectural-structural representation of sacredness.

What are the implications of the theoretical analysis of gentrification in light of a Christian worldview for justice and spirituality? What is the purpose of a faith-based organization, movement, or community? Gentrification is a social force that challenges religious organizations and faith communities to dig deep to re-evaluate orthodoxy and praxis. Some groups are entrenched in modalities that will not be compromised. They emphasize mechanical solidarity, ensuring group cohesion, social integration, shared values, and beliefs. These are the groups that are most likely to become religious enclaves, or those who will be pushed out due to their inability or unwillingness to adapt to the changes brought about by financial constraints, loss of parishioners, or land zoning. Other groups adapt and walk a fine line of compromising orthodoxy with new modalities, but the challenge is to adhere to the essentials and leave room for contextualization.

Due to the debates on what constitutes religious organizational or denominational essential orthodoxy and doctrine, it is noteworthy that both these groups strive to live out their convictions and become self-actualizing agents. The first group takes a vanguard stance as gatekeepers of mechanical solidarity, orthodoxy, and the historical value of sacred spaces such as cathedrals and houses of worship. The second group promotes diversity, innovation, and organic solidarity, erasing the lines of sacred and profane space, creating a welcoming atmosphere that openly encourages people to come as they are regardless of gender, race, age, cultural differences, political views, or socio-economic status. An example of this is seen in

faith-based initiatives that use a storefront approach or a business model that is unabashedly represented as a faith community where the house of worship is both a place of commerce and a sacred space.

The semantic and semiotic web of reformation and transformation is complex. In the sociological literature of gentrification, it is evident that there is both a reformation and transformation of urban space. The issue with reformation is that linguistically and semantically, it overemphasizes structural change and change in form, neglecting a deeper need for intrinsic change of values and ethos. In contrast, transformation connotes a radical change and metamorphosis, a revolutionary change that has the power to transform structure intrinsically rather than just retrofitting or painting over the previous layer.

Cities and societies remain in a state of flux. Social injustice, poverty, and all forms of social inequalities will continue in one form or another. There will always be room for faith-based organizations to address social justice and spiritual needs. The difference is in the organizational response to demographic change, urban change, and policy change. How can one advocate for and seek justice? One way is through empirical sociological research, building a theoretical foundation that informs praxis and methodologies. Other ways to affect change is through participatory action, education, and social entrepreneurship. There is a need to expand and apply the semiotic understanding of reformation and transformation in the theoretical framework for addressing urban change, specifically in light of gentrification. An expansion of this theoretical framework is needed to flesh out the intrinsic details of the difference between urban reformation and urban transformation.

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*FAITH AND LEARNING IN ACTION: TANGIBLE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN
BIBLICAL INTEGRATION AND LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE*
BY CALVIN G. ROSO

Abstract

I am at my best being and serving in the trenches – having my boots on the ground – mentoring students to meet the needs of others. As a Christian educator, I feel compelled to help others make a sustainable impact on the lives of those who cannot help themselves. The desire to help others is an important part of professional and personal journey in understanding faith and learning integration (FLI). In the past I have felt that faith and learning integration was a great technique to train students to help others. I also believe that the integration of faith and learning should help students understand how the Bible applies to real life. However, due to the teacher-centered approach to FLI (where the teacher tells students what FLI is instead of enabling students to discover for themselves how faith applies to everyday life), the integration process can potentially become an empty academic exercise that has minimal lasting impact on students' lives. I believe that FLI should be both authentic and practical. In addition, it should be impactful – FLI should have a transformational and lasting impact on students' minds, beliefs, and actions. I have concluded that faith and learning *in action* is a transformational and sustainable approach to biblical integration that can help students and adults grow in spiritually, academically, and professionally. This study describes my reflections as an educator and researcher studying faith and learning integration in contexts beyond the classroom. Autobiographical narratives of multiple strands of experience and research are presented and analyzed to explain pivotal turning points in my life both in and outside of the classroom. The reader is asked to consider these stories and their outcomes as my interpretation of how readings, events, and reflections have influenced my beliefs, theories, and actions in the area of faith and learning.

Keywords: biblical integration, faith and learning

Introduction

I recently told a colleague about some of my recent interests and research on orphan education, during which he asked, “What has made you interested in educating orphans?” My answer was neither simple nor concise, and I am sure I gave him a lot more information than he wanted at the time. Looking back at that moment, I realize that my answer was embedded in a transformation of belief, theory, and practice that I had been undergoing for decades. Through my reflections, I have come to the conclusion that if I could spend the rest of my life doing anything, it would be training students to use their professions to meet the needs of the poor and the needy – this includes helping orphans and anyone else less fortunate. I have concluded that I am at my best being and serving in the trenches – having my boots on the ground – mentoring students to meet the needs of others.

As a Christian educator, I feel compelled to help others make a sustainable impact on the lives of those who cannot help themselves. The desire to help others is an important part of professional and personal journey in understanding faith and learning integration (FLI). In the past I have felt that FLI was a great technique to train student to help others. I also believe that the integration of faith and learning should help students understand how the Bible applies to real life. However, due to the teacher-centered approach to FLI (where the teacher tells students what FLI is instead of enabling students to discover for themselves how faith applies to everyday life), the integration process can potentially become an empty academic exercise that has minimal lasting impact on students’ lives.¹

FLI is a relevant term currently researched in Christian higher education (Bailey, 2012; Boyd, 2006; Claerbaut, 2004; Eckel, 2007; Harris, 2004; Sites, 2009; Stegg, 2012). I have observed that the process of integration can appear tedious, impractical, or compartmentalized to students. As a graduate school professor, curriculum writer, and a former high school teacher, I have found that one of the most common concerns of teachers and administrators in Christian education is that FLI sometimes appears artificial and impractical. I believe that FLI should be both authentic and practical. In addition, it should be impactful – FLI should have a transformational and lasting impact on students’ beliefs, thoughts, and actions. This paper discusses how my own beliefs regarding FLI have morphed into a greater desire for application outside the classroom in both students’ lives and my own.

Research Methodology

Because of the personal nature of this study, an autoethnographical approach was used as the method of research. The autoethnography is autobiographical in its approach, ethnographical in its methodology, and cultural in its interpretative direction (Chang, 2008).

¹Because *biblical integration* is the terminology used in K-12 schools to describe *faith and learning integration*, in this study the terms are used interchangeably.

[The] Autoethnography seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno). [When writing an autoethnography] the author does not live through...experiences solely to make them part of a published document; rather, these experiences are assembled using hindsight. (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, para. 1, 5)

For this study, I have chosen to use a *layered accounts* approach to autoethnography, focusing on personal experience in conjunction with abstract analysis, data, and relevant literature (Ellis et al., 2011). Ellis et al. described a layered accounts approach as one that shows how the collection of data and analysis work together and frames current research as “questions and comparisons” (¶ 20).

Unlike grounded theory, layered accounts use vignettes, reflexivity, multiple voices, and introspection to “invoke” readers to enter into the “emergent experience” of doing and writing research, conceive of identity as an “emergent process,” and consider evocative, concrete texts to be as important as abstract analyses. (Ellis et al., 2011, ¶20)

This study is organized by time periods of research and application. Epiphanies have emerged through retrospection (Ellis et al., 2011) upon these periods within the culture and context of Christian education. Data was collected through reviewing past journals and research documents in conjunction with personal memories and self-observation. In the process of writing and reflecting, my goal has been to both analyze my experiences and compare and contrast those experiences with current research (Chang, 2008).

Personal Background

I grew up in a small Midwest town in the United States in the 1960s and 70s. At the time our family would have been considered low income by U.S. standards. My parents were hard-working: my father an automobile mechanic and my mother raised four boys (I was the youngest). Our family attended a Protestant church on Sundays and an occasional Wednesday night. My parents did their best to meet our needs. For most of my life, I grew up believing that college was not an option. We were told, “Only the very rich or the very smart will go to college, and you aren’t either of those.” My parents’ influence and my own insecurities convinced me that college was not an option for me. The only reason I even considered attending college was because I could not think of anything else to do. So, despite all these factors, I stumbled into college the fall after I graduated high school without either a vision or the tools to succeed.

My undergraduate study habits were feeble at best. Proverbs 29:18 “without a vision, the people perish” sums up my life as an undergraduate student. The bachelor’s degree that took most students four years to complete took me nearly six years. I switched majors multiple times, dropped courses I thought took too much *work*, moved in and out of academic probation, and often thought of quitting. Although still visionless, I was granted an undergraduate degree in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1986. Years later, by the mercy and grace of God, I became a teacher.

The Journey

Boy Meets Biblical Integration

I never heard the terms *biblical integration*, *faith and learning*, or *worldview*, while attending literature classes at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (fondly referred to as *the Berkeley of the Midwest* because of its liberal philosophies and teachings). Most everything I was taught came from humanistic and atheistic perspectives, arguing that God did not exist in humanities or sciences, so therefore, God did not exist in history (past or present). Yet, whether by accident or providence, when the professor argued that Kafka had proven there was no God, I saw in Kafka's characters people who were desperately hopeless without God. Because I was less disciplined in those days, I rarely journaled. In spite of not journaling, I did process what I was learning . . . and there rose inside me something that defied the empty attempts of others to rationalize their atheistic beliefs. To me, every work of literature seemed to either cry out "Where is God?" or "Here is God!" In the literature I read characters either wished God existed or claimed He existed.

After college graduation, I worked for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship on a project called Marketplace. We were developing conferences and materials to help college students see that God had called them to be ministers in their chosen professions. My boss, John "Pete" Hammond, was the founder of the project, and I had the privilege of hearing him teach multiple times about the important ministerial role of the laity. (Hammond later developed *The Word in Life Study Bible* for Thomas Nelson.) During my InterVarsity years, I was exposed to theories from Tony Campolo, Eastern College; William Diehl, *Thank God It's Monday* (1982); Gordon MacDonald, *Restoring Your Spiritual Passion* (1986); William Pollard, *ServiceMaster*; and Forrest Turpen, Christian Educators Association. Each of these authors, and others like Ray Bakke and Floyd McClung, insisted it was the job of the layperson – the average churchgoer – to be a minister of the gospel.

These authors helped me to understand that God can use everything for His good – there should not be a separation between the sacred and the secular. I learned it was the job of the laity to bring Christ into their neighborhoods and professions. I did not realize it at the time, but my belief system was shifting to align with Ephesians 4:11-12, which says it is the job of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teacher to "equip . . . the saints for the work of the ministry." I discovered that God calls Christians to minister in every profession. This belief of the important role of Christians in the marketplace was something that I would return to again and again.

Welcome to Christian School Education

A few years after my wife and I were married, I began teaching high school English at a Christian school. Teaching students gave me a vision and purpose for my life and a passion to learn. However, initially I had little understanding of what the purpose of Christian education was. Somehow I stumbled across authors like C. S. Lewis, Leland Ryken, and Franky Schaeffer

who shaped my philosophy about Christianity and the arts and literature. Lewis (1961) wrote that literature enables one to better understand the worldviews of others, explaining, “In reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself” (p. 141). Ryken (1990) reminded me that reading literature encourages critical thinking, as “great literature is the enemy of the idle mind” (p. 29). Likewise, Schaeffer (1981), reminded Christians of the necessity to engage culture.

My new passion for understanding literature from a biblical perspective carried me into graduate school, where I studied Christian school administration and curriculum and instruction. I studied worldview by reading Sire (1997), Schaeffer (1976), Van Brummelen (2002), and Colson and Pearcey (1999). I examined 20th-century writers like Gaebelein (1968) and Schindler (Schindler & Pyle, 1986) who wrote about the purpose of Christian school education. Gaebelein claimed “all truth is God's truth,” reminding Christian educators that biblical truths can be stumbled upon throughout education. While working on my master’s thesis, I discovered that St. Augustine (1958) said something similar to Gaebelein centuries earlier:

We should not think we ought not to learn literature. . . . the pagans dedicated temples to Justice and Virtue. . . . Rather, every good and true Christian should understand that wherever he may find truth, it is his Lord’s. (p. 54)

The writing of H.W. Byrne (1977) became foundational in my study of practical methods for integrating biblical integration into the academics. Byrne showed how biblical principles existed within each academic subject. According to Byrne, the purpose of Christian education was to reveal God and qualify students to reveal God to others. Byrne’s definition revealed the mentoring/discipling elements of Christian education – biblical integration happened in the school so that students could later integrate God wherever they went.

Through mentors and professional practice I began building stronger opinions about methods of developing biblical integration in K-12 schools. What began as a purely academic interest became an empathetic interest as well, because in spite of great schools, great teachers, and great curriculum, I continued to see students leave the Christian faith—*run* from the Christian faith—as soon as they graduated from high school. “What can we do to make it (Christianity) stick?” became a driving question inside of me.

In the midst of the process of growing professionally, a subtle desire to help other nations was growing inside of me. Occasionally I thought about traveling to another nation, and I even contemplated teaching English abroad. During those years, however, I had two small children, and our family was barely surviving on my Christian school teacher’s income of \$18,000 a year. For the time being, my focus would need to remain on further developing biblical integration in my own classroom. Yet, unexplainably, whenever I heard someone speak about the need for Christian educators in other nations I would have to fight not to cry.

Man Meets World

When I was 37, my wife and I and our two young daughters moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, where I would pursue my doctorate in education at Oral Roberts University. I soon became an adjunct professor, teaching courses in curriculum and instruction. Theorists who were new to me helped me see that *integration* was not enough. For the Bible to work in students' lives, the integration approach needed to be foundational. Other authors also reinforced that the effective integration of beliefs or skills (e.g., multiculturalism, character education, technology) into the curriculum required a holistic approach (Banks, 1996; Bauer & Kenton, 2005; Bennett, 1988; Lickona, 1992).

*The Principle Approach*² (Slater, 1975) presented a tangible way to help teachers integrate biblical principles into the curriculum by understanding the biblical foundation of each academic subject. In addition, definitions of curriculum by Doll (1995), Glatthorn (2000), and Posner (2007) implied that curriculum is everything the student learns in the school setting. Therefore, curriculum is holistic and goes beyond textbooks, materials, and classroom instruction; it also includes textbooks, instruction, learning, and school culture. Consequently, for faith and learning integration to be at its best, biblical principles must be embedded throughout the entire school.

During our early years in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the persistent inner conviction to do something for the world found an open door. In June of 2000, I had the opportunity to go to Bogota, Colombia, to present at a Christian school conference on topics of curriculum and biblical integration. As I prayed and struggled with whether or not to go, I sensed God assuring me that He would meet my financial needs and that somehow this was “only the beginning.” This educational missions trip, and several other opportunities, helped shape my thinking about how FLI applies in Christian schools outside the United States.

More opportunities emerged for me to share my thoughts about biblical integration at Christian School conferences in the years that followed. I was confident that a modified Principle Approach (Slater, 1975), was the ideal method, perhaps the *only* method, for biblical integration in the school. Nevertheless, God sent individuals along my path to cause me to think critically about further issues surrounding the concept of integration, asking questions like, “What can we do to make sure that what we do in the classroom isn’t artificial . . . that it’s really practical?” Or “Sure, *you* can do this with what *you* teach, but I’m not sure that everyone can.”

Or “What about countries outside the US where Christian schools aren’t allowed to teach anything outside of the national curriculum? Is biblical integration possible there?” It was then that I began to realize the answers to biblical integration might not be as simple as I had originally thought.

²The Principle Approach teaches that FLI should begin with the biblical principles *first* and then integrate the academic subjects into God’s original intent for teaching that subject. Educators using the Principle Approach use Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary to find the definition of a word and then search scripture to find biblical concepts further clarifying the foundational reasons for teaching the academic subject.

Mary Could not Bike on Shabbat

I was soon teaching full-time at the university level and enjoyed engaging with students helping them see how God applied to learning and their future careers. In the meantime, I continued to search for biblical integration methods that would have a sustainable impact on students' lives. It was the desire for sustainability that led me to study moral education in Jewish education (Roso, 2004). I knew that the Jewish people had been integrating faith and learning for centuries, so I thought this study would add to the Christian discussion of FLI as well and it did.

My study of Jewish moral education confirmed that integration must be holistically embedded into everything at the school (Baeck, 1961; Barclay, 1974; Elkin, 2002).

The values taught in Jewish tradition are naturally connected to what we teach in academics—for example, “doing your best.” We try to directly make connections to Jewish tradition as often as possible. One way is by teaching letters in kindergarten—we teach words dealing with both Jewish tradition and character. (H.A.R., personal communication, 2003, as cited in Roso, 2013, p. 41)

Moral education was so well integrated into the Jewish school curriculum, instruction, and culture, that the biggest struggle I had as a researcher was being able to identify where moral education started and where it ended. This holistic approach to integration was well supported by other educators outside the Jewish school (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004; Lickona, 1992). I also felt that the Bible supported a holistic approach to our own growth and transformation as Christians (Romans 11:16; Romans 12:1-2).

Another new concept that I observed in Jewish education was service learning. The children took what they knew and applied it to helping those who could not help themselves. Service learning in the Jewish day school was student-driven. *Mitzvot* (good deeds) was the principle that motivated students toward service learning. The school was even located next to a retirement center where the students were highly involved.

The Jewish custom of *Tzedakah* focuses on a “life-long responsibility” of charity, righteousness and good deeds. Teaching *Tzedakah* reinforces character education throughout the curriculum by including several *Mitzvah* projects during the year. (Roso, 2013, p. 35)

Because service activities were strongly connected to Christian beliefs as discussed in the New Testament book of James, I felt that this concept could be easily transferred to Christian education.

Jewish education also reinforced the importance of critical thinking. I visited classrooms where elementary school children discussed difficult questions on moral behavior. For example, although Jewish people are called to do good deeds, Mary could not participate in a bike-a-thon on Shabbat because according to the *Torah*, Shabbat is a day of rest. According to the *Talmud*, you can only break Shabbat to save a life. Students were asked to use the *Torah* and the *Talmud* to solve the problem (Roso, 2013). The idea of using biblical integration to

develop critical thinking skills in students became important to me. I began to challenge Christian educators to become *good Bereans* who eagerly received instruction, and went home daily to study the Scripture to see if what they were taught was true or not (Acts 17:11).

Rice, Beans, and a Soccer Ball

Professional work with Christian schools in other nations later opened the door for me to lead high school students on short-term missions (STM) trips to Latin American countries. What began with a STM trip to Honduras in 2008 grew into a passion that now takes my full attention every summer. On our trips, we intentionally connect with local pastors and churches to help them meet the needs of those they serve. Sometimes this is simply serve rice and beans while our older students kick around a soccer ball with kids down the street. I have since developed travel devotionals for students to learn how to reflect on their STM experiences and apply missions into their own lives back home.

Sadly, the outcome of our STM adventures sometimes reminds me of the disappointments I have experienced with FLI in Christian education. For example, our team walked through remote villages and prayed for people, only to have some students leave church and their faith a few short weeks later. *What could we do to make their experiences stick?*

The literature I studied said there were both good and bad ways to do STM (Corbett & Fikkert, 2009). Studies also stressed that for people to make STM trips a lifestyle of service (instead of a one-time experience) those involved need consistent and long-term follow-up after returning to their homes. In a desire to help students make STM experiences permanent, we now meet monthly to reflect on world missions abroad and at home. After a devotional, we spend our morning playing with children at a local children's shelter. Students participating in this "afterworld" experience have noted the changes in their own lives:

"I want to show more love to strangers and keep God in front of my mind more."

"I kind of look at people differently now."

"I want to make my career—whatever it is—about serving."

"I have learned to put Jesus first in everything I do. I can be Jesus with skin on."

The Juxtaposition of Missions and Academics

I have begun to bring my love for missions into the classroom. For example, when I teach Comparative Education, I challenge my graduate students to think and act globally as one outcome of the course. The final assignment requires them to research needs in education in a developing nation and propose ways they can partner to help meet those needs. I have also added problem-based service learning to help students walk away with faith and action instead of simply faith and learning. Research shows that service learning has positive effects on "higher order thinking, empathy, cultural awareness, personal and interpersonal development,

motivation to engage in social issues, motivation to study, life skills, self-efficacy, civic engagement/ responsibility, and student learning outcomes” (Warren, 2012, p. 56). The book of James stresses that faith and learning are not enough to create sustainability in the lives of Christians. Instead, the answer to sustainability requires faith and action.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world (James 1:22, 27 NIV).

Similarly, Jesus said, “Everyone who hears these words of mine *and puts them into practice* is like a wise man who built his house on the rock” (Matthew 7:24 NIV, italics added). Practice brings permanence. Practice brings sustainability. Three students participating in problem-based service-learning in my class noted the difference it made in their own lives:

- I enjoyed this experience, and evidently the church did as well as I was asked to be a Co-Coordinator for the program for the 2014 calendar year. I am stretched relatively thin already, but I could not turn down the opportunity to help unveil this new plan for this program. I am excited about the endless possibilities that lie ahead for these boys and young men. (Josh, personal communication, 2013)
- Personally it was uplifting to help people in need . . . I’m thankful that this service learning project was a part of the course requirements. Service learning provides a venue to make learning into action. (Melissa, personal communication, 2013)
- Overall, this was an amazing experience. I found that I have a passion to work with students that have been faced with adversity and need help finding a path to help them be successful. I hope to continue to work with this program and contribute what I have learned to positively impact these students’ lives. I hope to model my behavior in a way that influences the students to stumble onto biblical truths. As scripture says, “a student fully trained will become like his teacher.” (Audrey, personal communication, 2013)

Assessing Faith and Learning in Action

Two years ago several of us in my college began a study of models of assessing faith and learning in the university classroom. The purpose of this task was to create a tool for faculty to self-assess their progress in developing FLI. This project discovered many common factors that Christian educators see as important faith and learning integration: (1) the life of the educator, (2) scholarship, (3) instructional planning, and (4) instructional delivery. Two studies (Korniejczuk & Kijai, 1994; Rassmussen & Rassmussen, 2005) included the elements of student engagement and student assessment in the FLI process. Rassmussen and Rassmussen’s *Faith-Learning-Living-Integration* model proposed both summative and formative assessment of students’ ability to practice implementing biblical concepts in both the subject area and the

profession. Our department's study assessing FLI confirmed that integration must include the students' ability to apply biblical principles in the subject area and their profession.

Final Reflections and Future Discussions

It has occurred to me lately that effective FLI, like all effective teaching, is less about the teacher lecturing and more about the teacher engaging students in learning and practicing faith in the context of academics and professional practice. Perhaps the teacher-centered academic approach to faith and learning integration should be replaced by *faith and learning in action* (FLA). FLA implies that students are taught how to find the Bible's relevance to the subjects they are studying, and they are taught how to find the Bible's relevance to their chosen profession. Consider this analogy: if I teach a student *what* to think, he thinks for a day, but if I teach a student *how* to think—how to put it into practice—he thinks for a lifetime. “Consider what happens when all of us begin to look at our professions and areas of expertise . . . not merely as means to an income but as platforms for proclaiming the gospel in contexts around the world” (Platt, 2010, p. 203). By teaching students how to discover and practice biblical principles, students will experience application that goes beyond the classroom setting.

The goal is for students to be qualified to reveal God to others (Byrne, 1977) through their chosen professions. How can I as a professor of education reveal God to others? Hosea 12:6 says I am to return to God, observe kindness and justice, and wait for God continually. I must walk close to Christ while also showing compassion to those who need it the most. I have concluded that the neediest in my profession are orphans and vulnerable children. My job is also to equip teachers to use their profession to take words and deeds of grace and mercy to those who need it most.

Ironically, I return to the idea of Christians being effective in the marketplace. God has taken me on a journey that makes me feel most alive when training others how to show God's grace in word and action both away and abroad. I am convinced that the idea of a short-term missionary is not biblical. Instead, we are all called to full-time missions—occasionally some of us take trips to do so (Davis, 2008; Platt, 2010; Sicks, 2013).

FLI without action is often limited to an academic exercise. It should not be limited to an event in the classroom, or even a project for students to create. Instead FLI should become FLA—active and daily. Like yeast in the dough (Romans 11:16), biblical principles should permeate not only everything I teach, but everything I do. What begins at the head and influences the heart needs to be walked out in daily life to bring permanence. When this happens, Christ followers become less concerned about survival and more concerned about meeting the needs of those who need help the most. I have concluded that it is the job of Christian educators in the church and in Christian colleges to train students how to be with Christ and serve others in their professions.

Converts need to be trained in a biblical worldview that understands the implications of Christ's lordship for all of life and that seeks to answer the question: If Christ is Lord of all, how do we do farming, business, government, family, art, etc., to the glory of God? (Corbett & Fickkert, 2009, p. 45)

I'm interested in orphan education because I believe that Christians are called to help the most poor and needy through their life at church, home, and profession. Reflecting on my own story and transformation has reminded me why I am an educator. In addition, these reflections remind me that there is no separation between the sacred and the secular—that my STM experiences can have a natural connection to my profession. My job as an educator is to do more than integrate faith into the academics. My job is to help students discover the connection between faith and action in their church, home, and professional lives.

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*THE BOOK OF ACTS AS A CASE STUDY EXAMINING
THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION
BY GLEN KINOSHITA*

Abstract

This literature review identifies ethnic diversity and reconciliation as a consistent theme throughout the book of Acts and explores some of the sociological, educational, and theological factors that help identify reconciliation as a ministry of the early church. This meta-analysis explores foundational concepts that develop an understanding of biblical reconciliation, examines the concept of “ethnicity” as it arises out of the biblical text, and describes the historical context and backdrop of the time of Jesus and the early church. After having established these concepts, the author will walk through the book of Acts, processing the various narratives with these concepts, in the mix of biblical exegesis, considering how reconciliation, inclusiveness, and social justice are part of the Spirit’s work in each of our lives as we influence our homes, churches, schools, and communities.

Keywords: social justice, reconciliation, inclusiveness, equity

Introduction

Despite assertions that we live in a post-racial society, religious organizations remain some of the most segregated in the United States (Christerson, Edwards, & Emerson, 2005). Our reality as a church continues to be that 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning remains for many Christians the most segregated hour of the week. The society around us also faces challenges regarding diversity. Many remain isolated from one another and live separate lives along class and racial divides. Using Southern California as a focal point, Myers and Colwell (2012) painted a picture of a socially divided society:

Southern California today is one of the most multicultural metropolises in the world. Latinos are now (again!) a majority, according to the most recent census. But the diversity of this place is as old as it is contemporary. Prior to European colonization, this land was populated by widely heterogeneous peoples. The various indigenous tribes used different linguistic systems, and while there was rich cultural and economic interaction between them, no one tribe exercised hegemony. This is important because in the United States today we are still socialized to believe that cultural diversity is a dubious modern development to be feared, not a deep past to be learned from. Yet our local demographic trends represent the future of the United States as a whole; we are *already* being trans-formed, regardless of whether or not we wish to be a multicultural society. (pp. 17-18)

The history of Southern California and the Americas is not the only “deep past to be learned from.” Our experience with diversity as Christians goes back to biblical times where people in the Mediterranean world struggled to relate across ethnic and cultural divides to live and mirror a “one new humanity” community as Paul noted in Ephesians 2:14. Focusing on the writings of Luke, specifically on the book of Acts, we get a glimpse of how the early church engaged in the ministry of racial reconciliation, both as a historical precedent as well as a catalyst for our future.

Perkins and Rice (2000) connected the ministry of racial reconciliation described in the early church to their own life narrative. “One motivator in my reconciliation pilgrimage as a white person has been discovering comrades from the pages of the New Testament who wrestled with the racial separations of their day” (p. 151). Perkins and Rice emphasized, “Like the Serbs and Croats or Palestinians and Jews or Tutsis and Hutus who separate and struggle today, the life of the early church recorded in the book of Acts was made up of distinct ethnic and cultural groups with histories of animosity and distrust” and “To Peter and Paul, destroying the ‘dividing wall’ was more than good theology—it became practical as it was hammered out on the anvil of their own lives” (p. 151).

Perkins and Rice (2000) framed the book of Acts as a text for how to address racial tensions in our day by studying how the early church dealt with similar issues in biblical times. During the days of the early church, themes of salvation for Gentiles, becoming an inclusive church, and establishing the Kingdom of God were taking center stage. These biblical themes are timeless truths for us to embrace today. This literature review explores the various narratives as they unfold in Acts and identifies the challenges that Jews and Gentiles faced as they encountered one another in entering the New Covenant.

Foundational Concepts for Reconciliation

To begin a discussion on the role of reconciliation in the book of Acts, it would benefit us to explore the definition and meaning of reconciliation. Two of the foremost scholars in evangelical circles on reconciliation unpacked the meaning of “reconciliation” in its biblical context:

The word translates several related Greek words: the verbs *katallasso* and *apokatallasso* and the noun *katallage*. These words were utilized by Greek writers to discuss interpersonal relationships. In particular, they were used in peace treaties between nations and groups. So, in common Greek usage, there were very often political dimensions to the meaning of reconciliation. When Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek they used these words to translate the Hebrew words related to atonement—that is, to God being reconciled with humanity. In this usage of *katallasso*, they did not retain the political dimension found in the Greek understanding of reconciliation. On the other hand, when Greek writers used the words, they never implied a spiritual connotation to reconciliation. In Paul’s use of *katallasso* and related terms, we find both the spiritual and political meanings. (Boesak & DeYoung, 2012, pp. 11-12)

The consistent thread that weaves the many issues and subject matter together is how the Bible, in this case the book of Acts, addresses marginalized people. Throughout history, as well as in contemporary times, there is often a divide between those who are privileged (dominant) and those underprivileged (subordinate) in a given society. Goodman (2011) addressed societal inequality to further clarify, “Systems of oppression are characterized by dominant-subordinate relations. There are unequal power relationships that allow one group to benefit at the expense of another group” (p. 5). Goodman pointed out, “The various ways people name the two sides of this dynamic reflect these qualities: oppressor and oppressed; advantaged and disadvantaged; dominant and subordinated; agent and target; privileged and marginalized; dominator and dominated; majority and minority” (p. 5).

Educator Beverly Tatum commented on the “dominant and subordinate” dynamics and its relevance in contemporary society. “Dominant groups, by definition, set the parameters within

which the subordinates operate. The dominant group holds the power and authority in society relative to the subordinates and determines how that power and authority may be acceptably used” (Adams, Blumenfeld, Castaneda, Hackman, Peters, & Zuniga, 2013, pp. 7-8).

There is relevance for both students and educators in this challenge of identity in the midst of dominant and subordinate status. As was the case for Israel in the midst of being dominated, those in a subordinate position will feel a need to define themselves. As was the case for subordinate groups in biblical times, internalization of a subordinate status has its emotional and social damage. Those in society who are in a subordinate position may internalize the messages that they are an inferior people. For the educator, students who have internalized a subordinate status may not feel they are capable of excelling in the classroom and thus under-perform. Other students may have come to a place in their thinking where they understand the injustice of being subordinate in society and engage in resistance to those who are dominant. The educator faces many challenges in navigating social identity development and ultimately to create a climate in the classroom that is inclusive.

These issues of inequality and dominance become very relevant as we focus on the historical context of Roman domination during the days when the Gospel of Luke and Acts took place.

Luke and Acts in Historical Context

In 63 B.C.E., Roman General Pompey conquered Jerusalem and from that time Israel again experienced domination from an imperial power (Kraybill, 2003). After the death of Herod the Great, Israel was divided into three major sections and was ruled by different leaders. Kraybill summarized, “Thus as Jesus began his ministry about 25 C.E., Palestine was a churning cauldron of revolution. Philip, Herod the Great’s son, ruled the northeast region as a quasi-Jewish king. Herod Antipas, another son, ruled the Galilee area in similar fashion” and, “A Roman ruler (procurator), from the seacoast port of Caesarea, directed the Judean affairs including Jerusalem, in the southern region” (p. 48).

Linthicum (2005) asserted that the Jewish religious system was also a governing system along with the Roman government and worked alongside the Roman procurator in Judea and with the Herodian nobility in Galilee. This may give some insight as to the tension that occurred regularly between Jesus and the religious leaders of his day. Linthicum also commented on the socio-economic situation of Palestine during this time. The religious leaders, Herodian nobility, and landowners consisted of only 2% of the population yet controlled up to 70% of the region’s wealth, often leading to tension and unrest throughout the land. Linthicum emphasized the larger percent of people were peasants who “perennially lived on the edge of economic disaster” (p. 34), stating further that after subtracting taxes paid to the government, Jewish authorities, and the landowners, a typical farmer realized “only about 12 percent of his harvest as his family’s annual income and the monies to purchase next year’s seed” (p. 35).

Many biblical narratives involve peasants who interacted with Jesus and were amongst his closest followers. However, Linthicum (2005) introduced another social class referred to as the “expendables” that were a major focus of Jesus, commenting, “Every peasant family lived in fear that one day they would slip over the edge into economic disaster and become one of the ‘expendables.’ The expendables of Israelite society included the beggars, the excess children of peasant farmers, the widows and orphans, the unclean, and the shepherds” (p. 34). Linthicum explained, “Most of the people Jesus healed were expendables” (p. 35).

Under the dominance of Rome, the vast majority of people lived in strained socio-economic conditions; they were either peasants or expendables. The poverty in the land of Israel paints a sobering reality that is a significant factor for Israel and its economic instability. This historical context of the Roman Empire, the strained economic situation for most of those who lived in Palestine, along with the plethora of people groups (*ethne*) residing in the land, leads us to some interesting challenges in building a holistic understanding of the ministry of reconciliation in the book of Acts.

DeYoung, Emerson, Yancey, and Kim (2003) also addressed the issue of inequality in time when Jesus lived in Galilee, as follows:

The world in which Jesus and members of the church lived did have distinction that brought division and hierarchies that produced discrimination rooted in personal and societal understandings of ethnicity and culture. These differentiations often contained the same emotional and structural power to divide as race does today. This was particularly true of the divide between Jews and Gentiles (people from other nations). Biblical scholar Joachim Jeremias notes that the attitude of many Jews toward Gentiles in Jesus’ time “was largely determined by the oppression which they had undergone at the hands of foreign nations, and by their fear of the increasing prevalence of mixed marriages” (p. 11).

Here the parallels are drawn to show how much of the challenges we face today regarding inequality were also present in biblical times. The people groups, location and historical context may be different, but power and dominance were challenges faced then as they are now.

Boesak and DeYoung (2012) painted a picture of Roman occupation in Palestine when Jesus was born:

Residents in Bethlehem in the first century lived under the colonial occupation of Rome. Their circumstances were not tranquil. Jews in Palestine were oppressed. The olive wood nativity scenes do not display this reality. The Gospel writers though did not hide this reality when narrative the birth of Jesus. Luke’s story began, “In those days a

decree went out from Emperor Augustus” (2:1). Matthew’s story began, “In the time of King Herod” (2:1). Luke identified the colonial contest of Jewish oppression under the Roman Empire. Matthew identified the daily reality of occupation by citing the name of King Herod, Rome’s appointed overseer of Palestine. While Matthew and Luke told the story differently, they both shared the perspective that the birth of Jesus foreshadowed a confrontation with the empire. (pp. 43-44)

The power dynamics in a land that is occupied would lead to much conflict both economically, as well as racially. Building an understanding of the oppression Jews lived under can give readers a richer understanding of not only the Gospels and Acts, but the whole of the New Testament. With an understanding of the colonization by Rome in Palestine and the Jews being an oppressed people, one can put in context the discussions that often took place with Jesus and the religious leaders of the day, as well as with his disciples. One such question comes up as we read the opening verses in Acts chapter 1:6, “So when they had come together, they asked him, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” Here is a question that sounds like the disciples, still bearing the burden of being an oppressed people in their homeland, as they were still looking for Jesus to be the political Messiah that was going to free them from the bondage of colonialism and be their King in their earthly home.

Lutheran pastor Barndt (1991) described oppressed people as those who when “pushed to the bottom refuse to stay there, from the time when Moses led the uprising of the Hebrews, through the rebellion of oppressed people all over the world in our own day, those who are stripped of dignity and their basic human rights will rise in strength, demanding that which God has promised to all people” (p. 25). People who are oppressed or colonized rarely passively accept being at the bottom of society’s social class.

As we ponder the themes of injustice and marginalization present during the time of the Gospels and the book of Acts, the relevance for the Christian educator in today’s world is the challenge of incorporating social justice into our teaching and practice as a witness for our Lord. Educators Adams, Bell, and Griffin (2007) defined social justice education as that which “focuses on understanding the social power dynamics and social inequality that result in some social groups having privilege, status, and access,” adding, “*Social power* can be defined as access to resources that enhance one’s chances of getting what one needs or influencing others in order to lead a safe, productive, fulfilling life” (p. 58).

Adams et al. (2007) continued to frame social justice education as a means to empower people in our society to be agents of change and “to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to understand oppression and their own socialization with oppressive systems,” as well as “to develop a sense of agency and capacity to interrupt and change oppressive patterns

and behaviors in themselves and in the institutions and community of which they are a part” (p. 2).

To summarize, the situation in the Middle East during Roman occupation was oppressive. The majority of people in Mediterranean society struggled with living in poverty; they no doubt yearned for social justice in their land. Our challenge is to learn about the historical context of the injustice in the land and how the gospel brought healing to those who encountered injustice.

Diversity and the Ministry of Reconciliation in the Book of Acts

In the beginning of Acts, Jesus directed his disciples’ attention to the power of the Holy Spirit that will come upon them, enabling them to build a kingdom that God rules, not just in Israel, but worldwide. As mentioned earlier, Acts 1:8 lays foundations for the rest of the book of Acts regarding how the disciples will be witnesses in “Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria and to the end of the earth.”

As we proceed to Acts 2, we see the global scope of God’s plan begin to unfold. Writing on the diversity of the local church today, Milne (2007) revealed, “Thus the dawn of the new age of the kingdom at Pentecost exhibits a significant muting of nationalistic vision (Acts 2:8-11) and presses irresistibly forward to the explicit inclusion of Gentiles (Acts 8-13)” (p. 27). Acts 2:1-5 describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, after which the people began to speak in tongues “as the Spirit gave them utterance,” further explaining that “there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.” De La Torre (2002) remarked,

According to Acts 2:4-11, Peter full of the Holy Spirit, addressed the crowd that had gathered ‘from every nation’ outside the house where the disciples met. Amazingly, each person heard the message in his or her own language. The miracle of Pentecost is not that the crowd representing various nations understood the language spoken by Peter but, rather, that they heard the message in their own tongue. The Genesis story concerning the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9) is reversed. In the Genesis story, diverse languages are used to separate people. Now the ushering in of God’s Spirit unifies God’s people, transcending the earlier separation. As a result, three thousand were converted, representing Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judeans, Cappadocians, Pontusians, Asians, Phrygians, Pamphylans, Egyptians, Libyans, Cyrenes, Romans, Cretans, and Arabs, all of whom represented the first Christian church, a very multicultural church. (pp. 57-58)

Despite the common tendency towards a *colorblind* approach to reading scripture, the biblical text is rich in giving insight to ethnic diversity revolving around the concept of *ethnos* or *ethne* (plural). Yamada and Guardiola-Saenz (2009) commented on ethnic diversity and its role in scripture, explaining, “Historically, ‘ethnicity’ tends to refer to issues of identity that are

related to the identity of a people or a nation. In biblical terminology, the Greek word *ethnos*, from which we derive the word *ethnicity*, refers to a people or a nation,” adding parenthetically, “(although in the New Testament the NRSV consistently translates the plural *ethne* as ‘Gentiles’)” (p. 35). The gathering on the day of Pentecost was a very diverse group of people as Acts 2:7-11 emphasizes the ethnic and regional diversity. Luke lists either the ethnicity of the people, or the region from which they came when describing those present at Pentecost.

Diversity in the New Testament world, however, encompasses more than just ethnicity. For example, Acts chapter 2 references gender and generational diversity. In his sermon Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32, by stating, “in the last days it shall be as God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on *all flesh*, and *your sons and daughters* shall prophesy, and *your young men* shall see visions, and *your old men* shall dream dreams; even on my *male servants* and *female servants*.” Commenting on these verses, Milne (2007) maintained, “The coming of the Spirit awakened a whole new sense of ‘belonging together,’ a communal experience in which everybody was important and everyone had a contribution to offer” (p. 45). The diversity of God’s people thus encompasses ethnicity, region, national origin, gender, class, and languages.

Moving forward in the book of Acts, we come to what many have often referred to as the first ethnic, or cultural conflict found in Acts 6:1-6 pertaining to how the Hellenists, or Hellenistic Jews, complained against the Hebraic Jews, due to their widows being neglected in the daily distribution. The beginning chapters of Acts established the church in Jerusalem as a diverse group, yet this did not preclude certain groups from being marginalized. As DeYoung et al. (2003) point out:

Yet many in Jerusalem regarded the individuals in the culturally and linguistically diverse Jerusalem congregation as marginal persons. Second-class Galilean Jews and migrant Hellenized Jews made up the membership of this first church. Not until chapter six of Acts does the author mention anyone from the mainstream of Jerusalem’s life joining the congregation: ‘and a great many priests became obedient to the faith’ (6:7). Many of the Jews who migrated to Jerusalem from the Diaspora spoke Greek. They worshiped in synagogues for Greek speakers and read from a Greek translation of the Scriptures called the Septuagint. So the Jerusalem congregation bridged a divide found in the first-century Judaism culture and language specific synagogues. (pp. 22-23)

Perkins and Rice (2002) commented on what they refer to as the Jewish caste system where there were “three rungs on the racial ladder: Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles” (p. 52), further explaining that the Jews were on the top of this ladder; however, “pure” Jews, or Hebraic Jews, were better than “foreign-born Jews” (p. 52). Perkins and Rice observed, “Jews of Greek descent were looked down on by Jews of Hebrew descent, and the two groups even worshiped in segregated synagogues” (p. 53).

As we see from these references, those who address the biblical basis for diversity and reconciliation are prone to expound on the ethnic diversity and social status present in the culture of New Testament times. Hebraic Jews and Hellenistic Jews spoke different languages and had different cultural backgrounds, which gives historical and cultural context as to why they worshiped in different locations or synagogues. As a result, the oversight of neglecting the Hellenistic widows occurs despite the fact that it may not have been intentional. Perkins and Rice (2000) go on to comment, “Like other Americans, we Christians do not interact closely with people of other races in everyday spheres of life, the end result is that the needs and concerns of the minority are often overlooked as the majority pursues its priorities” (p. 155).

The response of the Apostles in Acts 6 is noteworthy. Upon realizing their neglect, they urged those of the Hellenistic community to choose seven men from among themselves who they would appoint to this service (the names of the seven that were appointed were Greek names, members of the Hellenistic Jewish community). The twelve appointed members of the Greek Jewish community to leadership and thus sought to address the needs from which the murmuring or complaints arose. Here we see an act of justice and empowerment as those who may have been in the numerical minority, and certainly those whose needs were being neglected, were appointed to positions of leadership to serve their people. The Hellenists were well aware of the needs and could best serve their own community knowing the culture and background.

Regarding the adversity that sometimes arose along ethnic lines during biblical times, Hays commented on how some historical animosity existed between Jews and Samaritans. “It is clear that the majority of Jews in Judea and Galilee hated them. For several hundred years animosity between the two groups had been growing, but this animosity exploded into serious violence in the first century AD” (p. 166). Hays purported that the mention of Samaria in Acts 1:8 pertains to more than just the spread of the Gospel. “Indeed, Jesus’ model for the gospel expansion as he proclaimed it in Acts 1:8 required the early Jewish Christians first to take the gospel to the hated Samaritans” (Hays, 2003, p. 166). Hays expanded on this notion of the attitude many Jews had regarding the Samaritans:

Yet the expansion of the gospel into Samaria as described in Acts takes place within a few years of Jesus’ homily on the Good Samaritan, and the prejudices between the groups had hardly abated during that time. Therefore the phrase “in all Judea and Samaria” can hardly be relegated to a mere geographical description. If Jesus had said, “in all Judea and *Galilee*,” then the emphasis would be geographical. But when Jesus mentioned Samaria, he was, no doubt, making a statement with strong ethnic connotations. Furthermore, if Acts 1:8 is read within the context of the gospel of Luke and there references to the Samaritans within this gospel of Luke and their references to the Samaritans within this gospel, then the ethnic animosities permeating the Jew-

Samaritan relationships cannot be ignored, and Jesus' words must be understood within that context. (pp. 167-168)

In Acts 8:5, Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ. As the gospel is preached and a revival breaks out in Samaria, the Apostles send Peter and John. Hays (2003) offered his commentary on how the proclamation of the gospel to the Samaritans was also requiring reconciliation and overcoming years of animosity: "Thus the proclamation of the gospel by Philip, Peter, and John to the Samaritans was, no doubt, an extremely difficult cross-cultural step for them to take. Throughout all of their lives they had been taught by their own culture to hate and despise the Samaritans," clarifying, "Yet, in Acts 8, by the power of the Spirit, these early Christian preachers crossed over one of the central and most fixed ethnic boundaries of Judaism" (p. 168)

Acts chapter 8 is often referred to as the "Samaritan Pentecost;" as we move to chapter 10, we come to what is often referred to as the "Gentile Pentecost." Here we can see how the challenge for Peter was to minister to a Gentile, Cornelius, who was a Roman soldier, a centurion of the Italian Cohort. Given the context of Roman domination, this may have caused tension for a Jew like Peter, but the Lord had revealed that he should not call anyone "common or unclean." Hines and DeYoung (2000) commented on the challenge Peter faced as he was called to minister to Cornelius:

After the vision, the Holy Spirit prompted him to go to the house of a Roman centurion named Cornelius living in Caesarea. This request was not easy for Peter to obey, because when Peter entered the home of a Gentile, he would lose his ritual purity. Further, this was the home of a Roman Gentile, and the Jews were under the oppressive colonial rule of Rome. Even the name of the city where Cornelius resided—Caesarea—served as a reminder of Caesar's reign. As a Roman military officer, Cornelius enforced the oppression mandated by Rome. Thus, Peter required a vision from God to enter Cornelius' house. (pp. 61-62)

The historical backdrop can give insight as to the depths of the Jew-Gentile hostility that had gone on for centuries prior. Understanding this history gives context as to how significant building bridges through this historical divide was. A key passage in Acts 10 is verse 34 where Peter declares that he now knows God shows "no partiality." Cornelius was a God fearing man who was seeking after the Lord, yet the reaction from Jews in Acts 11:1-3 was confrontational against Peter because he went to "uncircumcised men and ate with them." Here the concept of "table fellowship" may give some insight as to why there was so much negative reaction on the part of Jews to Peter eating with a Gentile. Eating with people in the days of the New Testament signified acceptance and close identification with those with whom you ate. DeYoung (2009) explained "table fellowship" using the example of Jesus from the Gospels:

Jesus intentionally shattered the boundaries instituted by society and fashioned a new understanding of community rooted in the grace of God. He boldly reached out to those who were shunned by society and brought them to his table. Jesus publicly ate meals with individuals like Zacchaeus, “a chief tax collector” (Luke 19:2-10), and others who had been ostracized and isolated by society and religion. The personal implications for the people around the table were significant. As Marcus J. Borg writes, “It must have been an extraordinary experience for an outcast to be invited to share a meal with a man who was rumored to be a prophet . . . and therefore his acceptance of them would have been perceived as a claim that they were accepted by God.” The table of God’s community was open to everyone. (p. 159)

As we reflect back on the many instances in the Gospels where Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners, it is evident that Jesus offended the religious leaders of his day and was also communicating a strong message of *inclusiveness* in the Kingdom of God. As we see in Acts 10, the gospel is for all people. It was, however, a struggle to preach across the Jew-Gentile divide. So again we see, as the gospel is being preached, so also is the ministry of reconciliation.

The attention then shifts to Antioch of Syria in Acts 11:19, where Luke continues to describe those who were scattered from the persecution after Stephen’s death went preaching in Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, “speaking the word to no one but the Jews” (Acts 11:19). The next verse declares that men from Cyprus and Cyrene, as they traveled to Antioch, preached to the Hellenists and many came to the Lord. Hines and DeYoung (2000) called attention to the diversity of peoples in these verses:

According to the depiction of the early church in the book of Acts, the influence of the church in Jerusalem waned as the church in Antioch took center stage. Samuel Hines wrote: “Notice what happened at Antioch: When the evangelists began preaching to everyone, all kinds of people entered the life of that church—all kinds of races and nationalities, all kinds of vocations and social classes. God chose the church at Antioch, therefore, to be the beginning of the missionary movement.” As the church in Antioch sent forth Saul, Barnabas, and others (13:2ff.), they took the Antioch model of church with them. They added to the powerful model developed in Jerusalem a broader multicultural vision. The Holy Spirit who empowers our efforts today is the same Holy Spirit that visited Jerusalem, Samaria, an Ethiopian official, a Roman house, and Antioch in the first century. (p. 63)

Acts 13 reveals greater insights on the diversity in the church at Antioch. In Acts 13:1 we read of prophets and teachers in the church of Antioch, and Luke gives a list of five men from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds that made up the leadership of the church. Conde-Frazier, Kang, and Parrett (2004) described the leadership team in Antioch:

After a season of critical preparation for ministry, Saul of Tarsus becomes one of the five key leaders of the church at Antioch. The others are Barnabas from Jerusalem; Simeon, called Niger, meaning “black” or “dark-complexioned”; Lucius of Cyrene, the capital city of Libya in northern Africa; and Manaean, who had been brought up with Herod Antipas. It is significant that this group of leaders is a diverse one in terms of both national origins and cultural and ethnic identities. (p. 59)

The significance here is that diversity was represented in the leadership of the church in Antioch. In these verses we see how the leadership team in Antioch reflected the diverse population of the city as well as the church. We can only wonder, in a setting like Antioch, *how did the leadership make decisions amongst such diversity? How were differences addressed? What did the worship look and feel like? How did the sermons address justice and diversity in the New Covenant?* What we do know, as recorded in Acts 11:23, is that when those in Jerusalem heard what was happening in Antioch, they sent Barnabas, who described what he saw as the “grace of God.”

As the biblical text reveals in Acts 11:26, the name to describe this new reality in Antioch was “Christian.” With the divisions of humanity that existed in biblical times, it was the grace of God at work being reconciled in regular gatherings to worship where the main focus was on the Lord Jesus Christ. Milne (2007) continued, “It was a new thing and required a new name, but one which identified it with its primary focus—the Lord Jesus Christ—and with its most obvious feature; its welcoming of every race and every type—hence ‘Christ-ones,’ Christians.” (pp. 46-47)

A crucial point in the history of the early church comes to us in Acts 15, where the narratives unfold of how some, probably Judaizers, were making the assertion that Gentiles needed to be circumcised in order to be saved. After much discussion, the Council at Jerusalem determined that Gentiles would not have to be circumcised but could come to the faith as they are. The shifts occurring as the New Covenant became a reality is that Jews and Gentiles were to be one in the Body of Christ. Barndt (1991) commented on this passage by making a contrast to Acts 10 and Peter’s struggle to embrace Cornelius, a Gentile brother, asserting that God shows “no partiality.” Barndt’s commentary on Acts 15 follows:

Our mothers and fathers in the early church resolved this second issue with the same indisputable clarity as they did the first. After lengthy discussion and debate, it was ruled that Gentiles need not first become Jews in order to be Christians. This decision was made at the second meeting of the church council in Jerusalem. The theological basis for the first decision had been the radical, unconditional acceptance by God of all humankind. No one was to be excluded from the church because of race, culture, gender, or nationality. The second decision added a crucial corollary: Within the church,

no race, culture, gender, or nationality was to have superiority or dominance, nor could one group determine the behavior for any other group. (p. 129)

The Gospel is being established for all people from all walks of life. This was obviously a struggle for many Jews who were accustomed to being the chosen people and who often separated themselves from Gentiles (as well as Samaritans). The issue with the charge of Gentiles needing to be circumcised is that they would have to become Jewish first in order to become Christians. The additional issue here is one of control, or power over people having to do with the Christian faith. As we have covered in the topics of the colonization of Palestine by Rome and that Jews were a conquered people, here it was a struggle of power with Judaizers asserting that Gentiles would have to be circumcised.

Acts 17 describe Paul in Athens and before the Areopagus Council, where he addresses the Epicureans and Stoics with quotes from their own poets to connect with his audience prior to delivering the message of the Gospel. The relevance of this passage for reconciliation and for educators is Paul's ability to connect to his audience based on his knowledge of their cultural context.

Doing cross-cultural ministry and educating for justice is not just something we do, it must start with who we are. The people that we are, and that we are becoming, is of crucial importance in this reconciliation journey that we read of in the book of Acts, and it is key to effective service in the church, in our schools, and in the world around us. Moreau and Snodderly (2011) commented on the multicultural identity of Paul as one whose upbringing and identity embraced many of the cultures and languages of his day, making this multi-faceted dimension of Paul's identity uniquely qualified to carry the Gospel message to a plethora of diverse people, when considering his Greek citizenship and linguistic abilities in Greek, Latin, Hebraic, and Aramaic. Moreau and Snodderly indicated that Paul the Apostle is a prime example of being able to cross cultures and effectively contextualize his message as an evangelist and teacher because of the person he was.

Nieto (1992) addressed the importance of how multicultural education connects the teacher or educator as key in achieving transformation in our schools stating, "Becoming a multicultural teacher, therefore, first means becoming a multicultural person. Without this transformation of ourselves, any attempts at developing a multicultural perspective will be shallow and superficial" (p. 275). Nieto continued to emphasize that being a multicultural person is one who can embrace adaptability and personal growth, by further pointed out: "We need to learn to approach reality from a variety of perspectives. Re-orienting ourselves in this way can be exhausting and difficult because it means a dramatic shift in our worldview" (p. 279). Nieto explained that after shifting our worldview, "we can turn with renewed vigor to make our schools and classrooms to remake them into multicultural environments" (p. 279). Since Paul

the Apostle was one who is so prominent in the New Testament as an example of a multicultural person, it is a powerful challenge for us to pursue this path of being a person who embraces transformational growth for ourselves, always in process of becoming educators who can function in a wide variety of cultures and with people of diverse cultures.

As Paul progressed in his message to the Stoics and Epicureans on Mars Hill, he moves to the message of the inclusiveness of the Gospel. Piper (2011) commented on this particular passage with a focus on Acts 17:26:

Paul says, “He made *from one* man every *ethnos*.” This has a special wallop when you ponder why he chose to say just this to these Athenians on the Areopagus. The Athenians were fond of boasting that they were *autochthones*, which means that they sprang from their native soil and were not immigrants from some other place or people group. Paul chooses to confront this ethnic pride head-on. God made all the ethnic groups—Athenians *and* barbarians—and he made them out of one common stock. So you Athenians are cut from the same cloth as those despised barbarians. When you put this teaching of Acts 17:26 together with Genesis 1:27 (“God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them”) what emerges is that all members of all ethnic groups are made in the image of God. (p. 153)

This concept of inclusiveness also has significant relevance for educators. Our teaching practices and scholarship can be a means of tremendous influence on our society. Ginsberg and Wlodkowski (2009) addressed the issues of diversity and educational practices:

From an educational perspective, achieving a pluralistic democratic society that meets its ideal of equity and social justice is inextricably linked to the pedagogical practices of its educational institutions. An approach to teaching that meets the challenge of cultural pluralism and can contribute to the fulfillment of the purpose of higher education has to respect diversity; engage the motivation of all learners; create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment; derive teaching practices from principles that cross disciplines and cultures; and promote justice and equity in society. (p. 23)

As Acts continues the focus moves to the missionary journeys of Paul and the churches he planted. Throughout Asia Minor and Europe, Paul crossed cultures and preached the gospel, resulting in new congregations and leaders to whom he would later write. Milne (2007) described Paul’s ministry to Philippi (Acts 16:11-40), Corinth (Acts 18:1-18), and Rome (Acts 28:11-31). Milne clarified the various content of the letters, or epistles, of Paul and the themes of reconciliation. In Corinth, many of the congregation came from the lower strata of society and thus the mandate for unity was to work out differences having to do with social status. There were conflicts between Jews and Gentiles in the church at Rome. Toward the end of the

epistle, Paul sends greeting to the church in Rome and in so doing compiles a list of members encompassing ethnic, gender and class diversity (Milne, 2007).

The Social Dimension of the Early Church

As we move historically beyond the book of Acts and as the church continued to grow in number and influence, we can read of the impact that the gospel and the ministry of reconciliation had on the society around them. Maynard-Reid (1997) commented that as one reads the history of Christianity, one discovers, “renewal movements engaging in missions and evangelistic outreach never failed to include the social transformation of the individual and society as part of their task. The biblical records portray the post-resurrection Christian community as a socially aware body” (p. 17). Both the history of the church as well as the scriptural account of the early church reveals that Christians were active in society as they spread the gospel. Maynard-Reid goes on to quote the Roman Aristides as he described the early Christians to the emperor Hadrian:

They love one another. They never fail to help widows; they save orphans from those who would hurt them. If they have something, they give freely to the man who has nothing; if they see a stranger, they take him home, and are happy, as though he were a real brother. They don't consider themselves brothers in the usual sense, but brothers instead through the Spirit in God (from Miles: 125). (p. 17)

Milne (2007) comments on the impact the early Christians made on their society, “The new humanity which emerged through the New Testament period evinced a new, inclusive form of human society, an all-embracing love, in which the old polarities-Jew/Gentile, male/female, slave/free, elder/youth, powerful/powerless, rich/poor, cultured/uncultured-came under increasing pressure,” adding, “precisely here lay a large part of its manifest attractiveness” (p. 52).

For the early church or early Christians who lived under Roman domination, the proclamation of the Gospel went hand in hand with a commitment to love one another, to breaking down social barriers and to meeting the needs of the poor and under-class. No doubt when proclamation of the Gospel is in the midst of a church that lives out its mandate do justice, to live a life of unity and reconciliation with a diverse congregation, the message of the gospel is compelling. This made for a powerful testimony and impression on the non-Christian world around them.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the various authors who address reconciliation from the book of Acts, we see that many are prone to highlight much of the historical context that reveals issues of systemic or institutionalized dominance. We can see throughout scripture many instances of nations

dominating and being dominated. Understanding the captivity and colonization that were present in scriptural times can give greater meaning and context for much of the reconciliation messages that arise from Scripture. As a Gentile and a physician, Luke is especially sensitive to the outcast and marginalized of Israel in the time of Jesus and the Book of Acts. Thus many aspects of human oppression are mentioned throughout the writings of Luke.

Understanding the history of hostility of the various people groups about whom we read in Scripture also yields deeper insight to the ministry of reconciliation, whether at home, school, church, or in your community. As the Gospel was being proclaimed, so also was the ministry of reconciliation active alongside. From the multi-ethnic gathering at Pentecost, the Hellenistic Jews, the Ethiopian Eunuch, the Samaritans, Cornelius the Roman Centurion, people from Cyprus and Cyrene who took the Gospel to Antioch, the multi-ethnic leadership team at the church at Antioch, to the many converts throughout the Roman empire resulting from Paul's three missionary journeys, the book of Acts describes what was formerly separate peoples, now forming a united family under the New Covenant.

Hays (2003) challenged us with some concluding thoughts on the Christians' responsibility on the witness of the Gospel and reconciliation:

As a pattern of true discipleship, Luke reminds the Church today that the gospel demands that we forsake our inherited, culturally driven racial prejudices and accept all people – especially those different from us – as integral parts of the Church. The demolishing of racial barriers within the Church is a task in which the Spirit leads us. I would also suggest that the inverse is true; flourishing racial prejudice within a church is probably indicative of the Spirit's absence. The gospel therefore challenges each of us to do some serious Spirit-led soul-searching on this issue. Do our attitudes and actions toward those who are ethnically different reflect the prejudiced culture that we inherited, or do they reflect the new worldview of racial acceptance that the gospel proclaims and the Spirit empowered? (p. 179).

May we heed the exhortation to examine ourselves, to consider the example of the early church, in all its historical hostility between various people groups throughout the years, and how they brought the gospel and the ministry of reconciliation to the ends of the Earth. With the racial unrest and tension that we see in our world today, the church and school must embrace the challenge to examine our legacy from the book of Acts to be a spirit-filled people and break down barriers, in word and deed, reconciling people to our Lord and to one another.

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BOOK REVIEW:
*MULTICULTURALISM: A SHALOM MOTIF FOR THE CHRISTIAN
 COMMUNITY (DOMNWACHUKWU & LEE)*
 BY NICHOLAS C. BLOCK

This rather short treatise is nonetheless ambitious in its aims. Seemingly written for a largely evangelical Christian audience, the authors from the beginning of the book seek to address misgivings that they believe their readers hold about multiculturalism. While conceding that multiculturalism has flourished in tandem with such belief systems as post-modernism, critical pedagogy, and even Marxism, the authors affirm that the faith community benefits from diversity and has a long-range redemptive goal that includes unity among people groups. Therefore, the authors emphasize that the mandate of multiculturalism cannot be ignored. As in the case of any philosophy or ideology, multiculturalism should be evaluated on its own merits. The rest of the book is an effort to do just that.

In trying to give multiculturalism a sympathetic evaluation, the authors first discuss both non-Christian and Christian views of the topic (Chapters 1-3), then review the basic tenets of multicultural education (Chapter 4), provide a discussion on the related topic of social justice (Chapter 5), and demonstrate the biblical foundations for multiculturalism (Chapter 6) -- all before setting forth their understanding of how a biblical understanding of *shalom* provides an appropriate framework for understanding multiculturalism (Chapter 7). Steps to achieving *shalom* are described in Chapter 8 before an interlude describing two exemplars of multicultural interaction in Chapter 9. The book concludes with a suggestion of broadening the application of multiculturalism to churches and Christian universities.

While it should be evident that the authors attempt to cover wide swaths of subject area in a short amount of time, they are able to provide some provocative insights and perspectives along the way. The initial defense of multiculturalism is indeed necessary for the target audience of conservative Christians. The authors' effort to ground multiculturalism biblically is discerningly accomplished with social justice in mind, while also providing a fresh view of Pentecost in light of the Tower of Babel: "Whereas at Babel one spoken language became many confusing tongues that divided, at Pentecost a diversity of tongues became a unifying force" (89). The authors intriguingly suggest that after Babel, where humanity demonstrated rebellion to God's mandate to spread out and differentiate, any interference with this process is tantamount to interference with God's mandate for cultural differentiation, and in effect, multiculturalism. Later on, the argument for a *shalom* motif in terms of physical well being, relational health, and moral integrity is informative, as is the effort later in the book to guide the reader to understand that multiculturalism requires intentionality.

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Unfortunately, along with the significant insights the reader may encounter more than a few difficulties. A definition of multiculturalism is critically needed early on in the book, since readers come with diverse conceptions in mind. Instead there is an extended discussion of political ideologies, which, although somewhat helpful, hinders the forward motion of the discussion. On a more substantive note, the *shalom* motif, with its great potential, is not clearly extended beyond its initial discussion, which leaves one wondering: How exactly does multiculturalism relate to the specific categories of physical well being, relational health, and moral integrity? While the two exemplars in Chapter 9 are edifying, they stand more as noble testimonials rather than illustrations of the specific dimensions of the motif. What is needed once the idea of *shalom* is introduced are examples of how bringing two or more cultures or other societal groups together would assist both groups in moving toward *shalom* as here defined.

With reference to what was stated at the beginning of this review—that the authors are ambitious in their aims—their attempt to deal simultaneously at times with both multiculturalism and multicultural education becomes problematic. While biblical multiculturalism is shown to have firm biblical grounding and clear implications, multicultural education is not as clearly situated biblically. As a result, the boundaries between these two sometimes become muddled, especially when the authors seek to contrast secular and biblical approaches. For example, in Chapter 7 the secular approach to multicultural education is described as focusing on curriculum, equity, and social justice, and the biblical approach as focusing on carrying out the Great Commission, yet the authors themselves subsequently insist on social justice as essential to biblical multiculturalism, which certainly would impact biblical multicultural education as well.

Problems in the use of terminology can also distract or mislead the reader. For example, “American Christianity,” what the authors surely know to be a diverse entity, is several times referred to as though it were monolithic. There is also a naive use of Scripture at times. While Luke 4:18-19 is no doubt a challenge to many historic approaches to Christian ministry, to conclude from it that Jesus understood his role as a social liberator is in need of explication in light of how liberation theologians have proceeded in a reductionist manner partly based on this same passage. Perhaps most troublesome are occasional statements that cry out for referencing or evidence, such as when we read without any supporting detail that, “The Church has remained miles behind government and non-Christian organizations in providing employment access across ethnic lines” (133), although factual evidence of this statement can surely be verified.

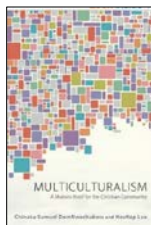
Multiculturalism: A Shalom Motif for the Christian Community, in sum, provides stimulating material for members of the conservative Christian audience who might venture into this field

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for the first time. The reader needs to be aware, though, that—whether or not a casualty of the ambitious aims of the authors—some of the material lacks conceptual unity and depth, as well as illustrative and evidential sections, which would better enable the book to serve its critically needed aims in the Christian community in the next edition.



MULTICULTURALISM: A SHALOM MOTIF FOR THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Chinaka Samuel DomNwachukwu, PhD; and HeeKap Lee, PhD

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CHINAKA SAMUEL DOMNWACHUKWU

Chinaka Samuel DomNwachukwu is Professor of Multicultural Education and Associate Dean for Accreditation at the Azusa Pacific University School of Education. He is also Senior Pastor of The Potter's Wheel Assembly of Chino Hills, California. Among his many other works are *Incessant Warfare: A Critical History of Spiritual Warfare Through the Ages* (2011), *An Introduction to Multicultural Education: From Theory to Practice* (2010), and *The American Mosaic: Ministry in a Culturally Diverse Society* (2006).



HEEKAP LEE

HeeKap Lee is Professor of Teacher Education at the Azusa Pacific University School of Education. He has been invited to speak at national and international settings, lecturing on Christian education, multicultural education, curriculum development, training evaluation and assessment, and school change. Among his other works are *Faith-Based Education that Constructs* (2010) and *Why Does a Well-Planned Innovation Fail? The Importance of Concern Analysis* (2010).



NICHOLAS BLOCK

After beginning his career in education as a science teacher in Bogotá, Colombia in 1984, Nick Block has worked most of his years in the U.S. as a public school teacher in grades three to five, in a variety of language settings. While concerned with all subject areas, in his teaching in East Los Angeles he most recently concentrated on issues of vocabulary development as a basis for reading comprehension and writing growth. Now with the implementation of the Common Core Standards, he feels that there is even greater urgency for improved teaching supported by sound research in these areas, especially for English learners. Past research in dual language education as well as decades of experience as a bilingual educator (including 26 years in Montebello USD) contribute to his concern that students grow as expert users of language. In addition to his work in K-12 schooling and teacher preparation as an adjunct at CSU Long Beach, Nick has been involved in theological education in Los Angeles, Colombia, and Rwanda. Whether supporting new teachers in teaching words or new pastors in teaching the Word, his greatest desire is to help others to be fruitful in their calling.

BOOK REVIEW

MULTICULTURALISM: A SHALOM MOTIF FOR THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Justice, Spirituality, & Education Journal; Spring 2015, Vol. 3, No. 1; ISSN 2379-3538



BOOK REVIEW:
I AM MALALA: THE GIRL WHO STOOD UP FOR EDUCATION AND WAS SHOT BY THE TALIBAN (YOUSAFZAI & LAMB)
BY KAY HENRY AND JUNE HETZEL

We honor Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan whose courageous will to live and speak up for girls' rights to education not only built the foundation of her personal story, *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban*, but also earned her many international awards for her dedicated bravery, including becoming the joint recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize (shared with Kailash Satyarthi, an Indian who campaigns for the rights of children).

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban is a "must-read" for those interested in promoting the educational rights of women globally. Raised by a father and mother who understood the importance of women's education, Malala experienced a flourishing educational environment. Their fierce love for their daughter reigned in a society that favors sons and strengthened Malala to graciously and painstakingly demonstrate the will to live, even when, as a 15-year-old, she was shot by the Taliban at point blank range for speaking up regarding women's rights to an education.

Although unknown outside Pakistan before being shot as she travelled home from her father's school in the back of a converted truck, Malala was already a well-established public figure inside her own country. She did radio interviews as a 13-year-old, speaking out for girls' education. Her courage in championing girls' rights to education and freedom from fundamentalist restrictions in the face of threats is unquestionable. Malala is a bright, articulate heroine whose story continues to inspire millions, as did her speech at the United Nations once she had recovered from her injuries. She is an example of the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.

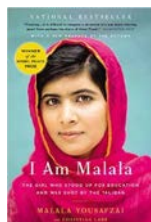
Malala experienced a miraculous recovery from the cowardly attack, but was forever changed. Her tragedy led her from a remote valley in Pakistan to the podium of the United Nations, where on July 12, 2013, at the first ever Youth Takeover of the UN, Malala said, "we realize the importance of light when we see darkness. We realize the importance of our voice when we are silenced. In the same way, when we were in Swat, the north of Pakistan, we realized the importance of pens and books when we saw the guns." Malala has become a global spokesperson for women's rights and the youngest to have ever received a Nobel Peace Prize, encouraging all women to empower themselves with the weapon of knowledge, shielding themselves with unity and togetherness.

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban is inspirational, rich, and complex. Pakistani culture and history, which is woven throughout the book, allow the reader to feel an infinity towards the beauty of the countryside, the courage of its people, and the complex cultural clashes among the Pakistani people . . . from those who support education for all to those who would shoot a young girl riding a bus home from school. This book provides insight into what many intelligent, principled Muslim families in Pakistan want for their children and for their future – equality of opportunity and freedom from the crippling burdens of both poverty and religious and political oppression. The reader leaves the book with a deeper understanding of what life might have been like during an invasion of the Taliban into an otherwise peaceful, rural Pakistani valley setting.

BOOK REVIEW

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We salute Malala Yousafzai and her parents and family who have bravely stood by her. Indeed, this is a young woman who has exemplified what it means to transform a tragedy into triumph and to bring honor to the value and human dignity of each person made in the image of God, including women worldwide who desire an education. In Malala's many public appearances since the book's publication, Malala reminds us that her story is also the story of the 16 million children across the world that still await access to an education. Watch for the new version of this book for young readers entitled *I Am Malala, Young Readers Edition: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World* that recounts Malala's tale of being shot at by Taliban, her life in Swat Valley under Taliban rule, and her new life in Britain, where she now lives and studies, written in a way that young readers will enjoy.



I AM MALALA: THE GIRL WHO STOOD UP FOR EDUCATION AND WAS SHOT BY THE TALIBAN (YOUSAFZAI & LAMB)

Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb

\$9.99 eBook ([amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)), \$13.94 paperback ([amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com))

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MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Malala Yousafzai was born on July 12, 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan. As a child, she became an advocate for girls' education, which resulted in the Taliban issuing a death threat against her. On October 9, 2012, a gunman shot Malala when she was traveling home from school. She survived, and has continued to speak out on the importance of education. She was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 2013. In 2014, she was nominated again and won, becoming the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.



CHRISTINA LAMB

Christina Lamb, OBE, is a British journalist who is currently Foreign Correspondent for The Sunday Times. She was educated at University College, Oxford (BA in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics) and was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University. She is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. She has won Foreign Correspondent of the Year four times.



KAY HENRY

Kay Henry (BA, Doane College; MA Biola University) enjoys research on the topics of challenges of some first generation college students that may prevent their continuing matriculation, how the church can use African theology to address the issue of violence against women, and a Native American perspective on Western Christianity that included an ethnographic study of individuals from a variety of American Indian nations. She is passionate about celebrating diversity and new beginnings since her walk with Jesus began at age 38. Kay's undergraduate coursework focused on the critical impact of effective workplace communication and how hiring a diverse population could benefit a company's future growth. Kay enjoys learning about the theology of Ubuntu as it relates to the importance of community. She served as a panel member at an Associated Students CSA-sponsored chapel, "Impact of Gender," April 2010, as a women's advocate, is a member of the speakers' bureau for Friendship Home, a safe place for abused women, and is a Certified Toastmaster.



JUNE HETZEL

June Hetzel, Ph.D., earned her Ph.D. from Claremont Graduate School. She currently serves as the Dean of Education at Biola University in La Mirada, California. Dr. Hetzel has served in public, private, homeschooling, and international educational settings. She is passionate about the role of the Christian educator to live a Spirit-led life in right relationship with God and others, and the centrality of the gospel message as the central hope of all educational endeavors.

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