SHADOWBOXING SECULAR HUMANISM: AN ANALYSIS OF EXTANT THEORIES IN CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world."

-Arthur Schopenhauer

America has always had its civil wars. Whether they are lived out on the battlefield of racism and prejudice, in the offices of economic competition, or from the vestiges of ideological warfare, the democratic spirit has demanded freedom, even when it encroaches upon someone else's freedom. In terms of ideological differences, this century has seen more than its share of civil wars, and among them is the conflict within the educational groups for the control of the curriculum. Rather than drawing battle lines with sticks in the dirt, however, these battle lines are drawn with words. Often the rhetoric is similar to the rhetoric of the military, and the "casualties" cited are always the minds of the children. While many skirmishes continue to exist within education, the major civil war is between private and public education, or more specifically, the battle between the church and the state. In this battle the public schools are

struggling to maintain order and equilibrium in a system that is failing on various levels, while private schools are increasingly becoming the primary option for many Americans who are disillusioned with public schools.

GROWING DISENCHANTMENT WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The mass exodus from public schools since the early seventies characterizes the efforts of the middle class to disengage itself from the institution that helped create it, and the influence of the public schools has been diminishing as a result. Many of these families who left the public schools have been instrumental in pioneering the evangelical movement from a minority effort represented by a few schools to "the most rapidly expanding segment in American education" (Peshkin, 1986, p.27). Those who choose to send their children to Christian schools assume that these schools will act as a corrective to society and provide their students with a theological, educational, and moral foundation upon which to establish a Christian world view. In other words, they hope that Christian schools will provide an antidote to the increasing secularization and anti-Christian bias in public schools by establishing the appropriate innoculation against these forces threatening the minds of children today.

The Christian schools to which I refer represent a unique movement that has emerged within the last twenty-five

years as a reaction against the prevailing secularization of culture and the continuing demise of the family. Although other religious schools exist, and some most certainly are Christian as well, the schools in my study are often referred to as *fundamentalist* or *evangelical* Christian schools and are more often associated with an individual church rather than one of the mainline denominations. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, approximately 1,000 Christian schools were started in the U.S. each year, and even that number is conservative because many of these schools insist on such independence that they avoid reporting their enrollment to the government. Even the dated statistics reveal a monumental increase in church-related schools from 561,000 in 1970 to 1,329,000 students in 1980 (Parsons, 1987, p. xii).

THE CURRICULUM DEBATE

At the heart of the debate between the public and the private education is the struggle for the curriculum because it is through a school's curriculum that many of its values and beliefs of culture are transmitted. Although once thought of as only the body of courses offered at an educational institution, curriculum now is seen as every facet of learning in the school building (Jackson, 1992). The evolution of public school curriculum is the result of a hundred years of philosophical shifts extending their

emphases in various directions, from the belief in "monotonous drill, harsh discipline and mindless verbatim recitation," to the "passing on of the great Western cultural heritage," to an emphasis on the "science of social efficiency" to a "curriculum in harmony with the child's real interests"(Kliebard, 1991, pp. 6-28). As educational paradigms shift, the curriculum in public schools reflects that shift in textbooks and teacher training. As a result American students are significantly affected by inherent philosophical positions. One only need to think of the emphasis on science in the fifties and "back to basics" emphasis in the eighties to validate the effect of a particular curriculum on a generation.

The newly formed Christian day schools have a relatively short history and claim no Tyler or Dewey as the engine behind the philosophical motors that give life and thought to the curriculum. Rather, their claim is a biblical base from which all theories extend from and toward in an effort to identify practices for a sound education. Yet for those of us who revere the Bible, we must admit that the Holy Scriptures are silent about many issues in the world today, and a methodology for education is not provided. Despite directives about the necessity of training children and teaching them "the ways of the Lord," nothing is said about how to do it-as a positivist or a constructivist, or through a traditional or progressive approach. Responding to the

belief that the church should provide direction for every move that is made in modern life, C.S. Lewis (1970) states about scripture: "Christianity does *not* replace the technical. When it tells you to feed the hungry it does not give you lessons in cookery. If you want to learn *that*, you must go to a cook rather than a Christian" (p. 48). The claims that all of the techniques used in Christian schools can directly be pointed back to the Bible ignores the influence of culture and environment on the decisions made by both religious and secular educators.

If Christian schools, along with Christian publishers and educators, claim no allegiance to an educational ideology outside the Scriptures, and if the Bible does not address how and what to teach, what are the philosophical foundations and upon what educational theories do these schools base their curriculum? Do they borrow theories from secular curriculum theorists and give them spiritual sanction? Is the existing curriculum adequately providing all of the options for teaching from a Christian perspective, or do they merely supply what the schools demand?

PUBLISHERS IN THE FOREFRONT

Compared to the crowded, competitive market among curriculum publishers in public schools, the curriculum market for Christian and home school is relatively small,

dominated by a few who service this burgeoning industry quite unchallenged in their position at the the forefront of the Christian school curriculum market. A 'Beka Books and Bob Jones University Press produce the major corpus of textbooks published exclusively for the Christian school market; ACE produces "teacherless" curriculum or independent study packets, and ACSI is the major organization that offers training and accreditation, legal services, curriculum, and a host of other services to the Christian school industry.

ACSI, the acronym for Associated Christian Schools International, is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, hosting over 3,000 member schools in the United States, Canada, and overseas. With Paul Kienel as executive director, ACSI has expanded its offerings to include accreditation and certification programs, legal and legislative support, an equivalent to standardized tests called the SAT 9, a periodical titled "Christian School Comment" claiming readership of 160,000, conventions that claim more than 40,000 teachers and administrators, three additional publications for educators, and extensive print and mediated curricula for elementary through the secondary level.

ACE, the former acronym for Accelerated Christian Education, has recently changed its name to "The School of Tomorrow." However, I will continue to use the traditional ACE acronym in this study. Founded by Dr. Donald Howard in

Lewiston, Texas, the organization's expenditures have been quoted at over 50 million dollars which indicates the vast clientele it serves in both the Christian and home school market. Its unique appeal is its PACE learning, geared to individual instruction and self pacing where students are responsible for their own progress. In her book, Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan, Susan Rose (1988) describes how students are provided with flags that they raise at their desk to notify their teacher when they have a question or when they are ready to begin a new task. Rose questions how much teaching and interaction occurs when students are expected to work in such isolation. The appeal of the curriculum appears to target home schoolers, which would be a likely choice for parents who have chosen the epitome of individualized learning, independent work in the home.

A 'Beka Books, a subsidiary of Pensacola Christian College, is the "largest distributer of Christian curriculum in North America" (Van Brummelen,1994, p. 18). Known by its owl emblem on the book covers, A 'Beka (named after the wife of the founding president of the college, Rebecca) services a large clientele in the Christian and home school market. It appears that both A 'Beka and Bob Jones are used simultaneously rather than exclusively. For example, one school may adopt a science series from one company and a language arts series from another. Both publishers emphasize a traditional curriculum, with phonics rather than whole

language, heavy grammar and skills instruction rather than process writing, and rote memorization in the social studies and mathematics courses. Both textbook companies freely editorialize in the lessons, commenting on the mistakes of particular leaders in history or the ungodliness of particular scientific conclusions.

Bob Jones University Press, a division of the college with the same name, produces a large portion of the textbooks among all Christian and home schools, sharing its dominant position with only one other company, A 'Beka Books. BJU, as it is called, started publishing in 1974, and since then has increased its offerings to include computer software for classroom use as well as personal enrichment in math, science and reading. One has to only peruse a BJU catalogue to discover this is no small enterprise. In addition to the academic offerings in print and software, BJU offers support material including novels, biographies, and adventure games, to name a few.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problems facing a growing fragmented educational system such as we have today in the United States is that even among those who choose alternatives outside the public schools (Christian schools or home schooling), the individual distinctives create a heterogeneous rather than a homogeneous

group, making it difficult to utilize their growing numbers to affect the changes they hope to enforce in the culture. Because of this diversity of beliefs, the more strident voices articulate societal problems in oversimplififed terms, like accusations against secular humanists and debates about school prayer. Therefore, rather than empowering their voices through solidarity, the cacaphony of disparate voices are often more muffled than clear.

A Heterogeneous Movement

It is axiomatic to say that the existence of Christian schools has created a problem in modern culture: philosophically, their separation from the public schools is an anathema to many who believe that public education provides the necessary backbone for a cooperative and meaningful society; educationally, their rejection of the prevailing curriculum exascerbates the conflict between educational groups; and ideologically, the exclusion of those outside their mileau engenders further estrangement from the culture at large. And finally, most perplexing is that the Christian school movement is not a unified front. Rather, the scope of its appeal is so limited that, despite the increasing numbers of students enrolling in these schools, many who also claim to be Christians are as critical of their agenda as those outside their theological orbit.

The "problem" did not begin with the inception of Christian schools, nor did it begin with the reformation or

the inquisition. The interpretation of Christ and his response to culture has been an "enduring problem" since the beginning of Christendom. Niebuhr states: "The repeated struggles of Christians with this problem have yielded no single Christian answer, but only a series of typical answers which together, for faith, represent phases of the strategy of the militant church in the world" (Niebuhr, 1951, p.2). Since no single answer for the Christian's response to culture exists, we are left with numerous hair splitting differences that serve to divide rather then unite those who are part of the faith.

Knowing this perplexing reality, and then finding so much existing research on the topic of the Christian fundamentalist schools, I was forced to question whether or not I could add anything to the conversation. In his book co-authored with Corrine Glesne titled Becoming Qualitative Researchers, Alan Peshkin (1992) advises his readers against choosing a topic that has been exhausted, and he mentions Christian school studies as an example. (Too late, Alan, I thought.) However, as I considered my role as researcher, one exception emerged which I believe lends a different kind of credibility to the existing research, and that is my role *within* rather than *outside* the Christian community. Among the various researchers I used who wrote case studies of the growing phenomenon of Christian schools, none claimed to write from the Christian perspective. Whether or not these

writers felt their personal beliefs were important to their study, inherent in qualitative research is its interpretive nature, where the role of the researcher is never isolated from the researcher's lived experience. Consequently, my response will be different from those I have read before, and for that I will bring into the conversation the perspective of an insider.

This "insider's" role has provided me with a different interpretation of the problem, and although at times I am as puzzled and even exasperated as those who make no claim to Christian faith, when I disagree with those behind the Christian school movement, it is more like feeling embarrassed by a bad family picture than looking at the whole thing as an oddity, like six fingers.

Lack of Understanding Among Groups

The "enduring problem," creates the dilemma of the "existing problem," which is the inability of those who endorse Christian schools and those who endorse public schools to understand each other, resulting in an inability to work together in education, which creates further polarization among them. Some views are extreme enough to be removed from the voices of those who share similar ideologies; hence our society hears more from fundamentalists and politically correct proponents than those in the mainstream. Whether these extremists represent the voices of the fundamentalist Christian schools or the voices of their

most strident critics, they are often unable to engage in meaningful conversation causing misconceptions to occur on both sides.

Among Christian school enthusiasts, some extreme voices are full of panic, and the accusations take on almost comic proportions. Not that their criticism against the public schools is not valid, but rather, some accusations actually oversimplify the more complicated issues that are part of a postmodern society with its increasing cultural diversity and pluralistic ethos. For example, the evils of society, everything from increased crime to lower standardized scores are too many times summed up as the result of secular "humanism," a term that is batted around by many fundamentalists and evangelicals who use it to define things they do not understand. In a pamphlet published by ACSI, Paul Kienel defines humanism as a philosophy in which a person "believes in himself (not God) and is more concerned with his own preservation than he is with the needs of others" (Kienel, n.d.-b, p.1). His indictment is a judgment of character rather than an honest definition of the term, and Kienel loses credibility in the process and gives those outside the right to disregard his voice. In his study of fundamentalist schools, journalist Paul Parsons (1987) writes:

> To fundamentalists, humanism has become an all-purpose buzzword to explain almost every ill in American life.

> They believe secular humanists have brainwashed the nation by infiltrating public education, business, labor unions, the news media, and even liberal churches. Secular humanism is viewed by fundamentalists as a simple, logical, explanation for why everything in American society seems to them to be out of control, why abortion is legal, why divorce is increasing, why homosexuality is accepted, why the traditional family unit is disappearing, and why religious symbols are being deleted from life. (p. 19)

Oversimplification of the Dilemma

Although the astute observer cannot discredit the discomfort and anxiety accompanying the kind of shift in culture that we have experienced in the last twenty years, relegating all social ills to one phenomenon is a tragic oversimplification. Rather than dealing with specific problems, an all-encompassing accusation against secular humanism attempts to eradicate genuine complexities facing our world in the nineties, and as a result much rhetoric is spent "shadowboxing" a vague and undefined enemy rather than working toward understanding a real enemy, whether it is culturally or individually induced. Consequently, Christian schools spend a great deal of energy on reactive defenses against secular forces rather than proactive language that could augment significant change. When the metaphors for

curriculum reform become metaphors of battle and warfare, the language inevitably becomes defensive and combative.

Biases in Secular Textbooks

Despite apparent incongruities, Christian schools, with all the limitations characteristic of fledgling institutions lacking time's advantage and perspective, still appeal to many Americans who have grown disenchanted with the public school's effort to create a value-free environment through programs like values clarification and other efforts attempting to objectify all reality. The textbooks have become the rhetorical battleground for proponents of sectarian groups, religious or secular, to play out their defenses in an attempt to draw their battle lines with words.

In their article "Making Room for Religious Conviction," Charles and Joshua Glenn (1992) state that in an effort to disengage itself from moral teaching, the public school has expunged religion from textbooks to the point that they either reflect a distortion of reality and censorship similar to the omission of women and minorities in past literature, or they avoid confrontation so vehemently that texts are nothing but a weak and ineffective representation of what really happened. They state that "in this long march of earnest, mind-numbing prose there is no hint of hard and costly choices, real sacrifices that underlie success, or possible failures to solve particular problems" (C. Glenn & J. Glenn, 1992, p. 110).

In her article "A Call for Reform Schools," Patricia Beattie Jung (1992) calls the phenomena of value-free education "neutered" education, which, she points out, is not the same as neutral. In fact, she claims that a liberal education, far from neutral, "actually favors secularism and cultural assimilation" because moral formation will occur despite assumptions otherwise; "character is shaped by what is omitted from a curriculum as well as by what is blatantly endorsed within it" (p. 117).

If omission were the only error of public education, it might be one thing, but in a study by Paul Vitz, a professor of psychology at New York University, evidence revealed that in fact anti-Christian biases do exist in some public school textbooks. He states: "Those responsible for these books appear to have a deep-seated fear of any form of active contemporary Christianity, especially serious, committed Protestantism" (Wilson, 1991, p.36).

Necessary Distinctions

The conundrum created by both secular and religious proponents is too overwhelming and perplexing to resolve in my study. Our system of democracy paradoxically enhances and inhibits our choices, and to do otherwise would impinge on someone else's freedom. So the tension continues—non-Christian parents fear the indoctrination of their children to beliefs not germane to theirs—and Christian parents fear distortion of the faith if "token" acts of religion are

granted in the public schools (Hauerwas, 1992, p.109). If our government upholds the freedom of its citizens to provide whatever education parents deem important for their children, religious schools can provide not only an alternative for some families, but they also can provide a system of checks and balances to powers that could otherwise survive unchallenged.

Stephen Carter (1993), an attorney who has been involved in church and state issues in his teaching at Yale, defends the need for the religious American to be heard in the public square: "It is vital that the religions struggle to maintain the tension between the meanings and understandings propounded by the state and the very different set of meanings and understandings that the contemplation of the ultimate frequently suggests" (p. 273). If all sides are not only heard but also taken seriously, then dialogue is possible, even if nobody "wins."

Part of the problem may be rooted in a vision that goes backwards rather than forwards, an emphasis on tradition or American idealism that, for outsiders, undermines the actual faith, which is less elitist when unstripped of its cultural moorings. Cultural Christianity is indigenous to more than just Christian day schools, however.

Dangers of Cultural Christianity

In a critique of Christian colleges, Michael Cartwright quotes a social sciences professor who claims that

"Christianity is the basis of republican government and the foundation of the private property economic order" (Cartwright, 1992, p. 205). Cartwright, himself a professor at a Christian college questions the credibility of a statement that would exclude those with different political views and create a distortion of the faith "under the guise of nationalistic sentiment" (Cartwright, 1992, p. 205). Supporting capitalism or conservative politics in the name of Christianity has become commonplace—one need only to consider presidential elections—yet the unassailable acceptance of cultural or political status quo is one of the most dangerous positions Christian schools can assume. To assign carte blanche is an error that religious institutions in America have had to live down since the endorsement of slavery. Patricia Jung (1992) states, "Clearly if the status quo within a tradition is deemed unambiguously good, then paideia will consist simply of instilling the acceptance of a tradition, not inspiring its transformation....All traditions, including Christianity, are in need of periodic, if not constant, reformation" (p. 124).

One of the concepts held dear by many Christian school enthusiasts is the belief that America holds a special place in the Divine heart. This assumption represents what James Hunter (1991) calls "collective myths" in his book Culture Wars (p. 55). These myths are constructed by the selective history of different groups. To the evangelicals, this

nation was founded by Christians who envisioned a nation that would be the new Jerusalem and that would become a Christian "commonwealth," protecting its citizens and enlarging the faith as the country continued to grow.

Others, whom Hunter refers to as progressives, see history through their own selective lenses, but they see a country founded on the freedom and rights of the individual, a "secular democratic experiment" (Hunter, 1991, p. 55). Both views demonstrate the diversity of visions and beliefs that are part of our heritage, although they are reflected through the filtering of each individual's perception rather than a wholistic view of truth as each group might assume.

"America has always been a nation given to public idealism" (p. 61), says Hunter (1991) about the assumed special purpose of the nation, not only among evangelicals, but also among Catholics and Jews. This sense of special destiny creates a kind of spiritual myopia that threatens to diminish the influence of the church in the twenty-first century.

However, from the view of an insider who is both an academic and an evangelical, it seems that the fight has been drawn on the wrong battlefield, which is an attempt to preserve a way of life that is already gone. It seems that the motivation behind the goals of many Christian schools is that the trappings of the American way of life are essential to preserve the faith itself. Some of the trappings include

the vestiges of ideologies that champion one group over another, simplifying complex problems into simple answers. Pigeon-holing differences, such as categorizing secular humanism as evil, annihilates the threat presented by the complexities and ambiguities of life.

Issues That Divide

The vast chasm that exists between those who accept a trancendent moral authority and those who accept the spirit of the age to guide their moral and ethical choices is a real one, and I am not attempting to minimize or trivialize the tremendous ideological differences between them. Yet even if reconciliation of beliefs is impossible, recognition of the real issues dividing us is not outside the realm of negotiation. To draw battle lines where mere skirmishes occur results in shadowboxing a perceived enemy and draws our energies away from those events that could be affected.

School Prayer. Perceived by many as the catalyst that began the demise of our educational system, school prayer has been debated by those both for and against for the last two decades. The court's decision to forbid organized prayer in the classroom reflects more than the move toward secularization, according to Carter, who agrees with the court's decision even though he himself is a Christian. Carter states that the decision to restrict prayer was the only choice the courts could make, even in the face of public disapproval. He contends that since it is impossible to

design a noncoercive approach to school prayer, the state had no other choice than to take it out of the schools as part of the agenda.

He reminds his reader that the decision does not say that students cannot pray; nor does it mean that God is banished from the classroom, a phenomena which is a metaphorical impossibility; instead, the ruling decrees that "[t]he classroom's authority figure cannot tell the students whether to believe in God, whether to worship, or how. Organized classroom prayer is forbidden because there is no way to organize it without having the state do those things" (Carter, 1993, p. 186).

To force organized prayer is a form of coercion, undermining all that America represents. Those who find the decision offensive are looking at implications that reflect a changing world—it is true; however, the alternative would be a police state that forced actions upon those who disagreed with the prevailing view. Since it is impossible to design a noncoercive approach to school prayer, the state had no other choice than to take it out of the schools as part of the agenda. However, Carter also cites cases where court rulings against religion were equally undemocratic in their bias against the free practice of religion. He writes: "The separation of church and state should prohibit the use of the apparatus of government to coerce religious belief, but it

must not be made a metaphor for government pressure not to be religious" (Carter, 1993, p. 189).

Cultural Angst. The "hot" issues surrounding religion and education, such as the debate over school prayer and secular humanism, often seem to be smoke screens that shield us from facing the more pertinent and tenuous issues needing our attention, such as the shifting cultural norms of a pluralistic society. More specifically, the reality of pluralism and its effects on the moral choices of our nation is an issue that seems to be dealt with superficially in modern education. Moral issues are at the heart of pluralism, but moral issues need a deeper understanding than an enforcement of external behavior, a technique of control used by both Christian and public schools. Analyzing the effects of pluralism on faith and religion, Peter Berger (1993) says that "pluralism brings with it a relativization of all normative contents of consciousness....Clearly, the person who is blessed with all these choices has a greater measure of freedom; by the same token, however, he has lost his old capacity for certitude" (p. 69). Thus, as the individual feels more alienated from accepted norms, the "free-floating" sense of alienation may result and force a return to certainty. These efforts are often represented in the voices of those who envision a return to the old ways.

One cannot discredit the discomfort and anxiety accompanying the kind of shift in culture that we have

experienced in the last twenty years. Berger (1993) admits his own trouble with the impact of cultural pluralism, but he also believes that a "contestation held by the church and other faiths" (77) could actually engender a greater understanding of one's own faith. He states:

> The pluralizing forces of modernity do indeed relativize all belief systems, but the truth will come out again and again. *Truth resists relativization.* To that extent one might say that the forces of modernity, over time, separate the wheat from the chaff. (Berger, 1993, p. 77).

The Need for Values

The role of education in these matters cannot be underestimated. Although schools appear to have little power in a country whose ethos is characterized more by economics than education, our students today will be the minds that affect change tomorrow, and the race seems to be a losing one from both the public and the private sector. Education is not impacting our young people. It is lagging behind in its influence in comparison to popular culture—its music, its movies, its appeal to the senses are difficult enough to compete against without the added problem of an externalized curriculum that seems meaningless to students today. The public schools are restricted by laws that prevent them from the freedom of uncensored discussion.

In his book The Moral and Spiritual Crisis in Education, David Purpel says that the inability to have meaningful conversations about matters of ultimate significance does not mean that educators fail to see the issues as important and relevant; it reflects the crisis that surrounds the educational dilemma today: "In fact, the major crisis for educators is the same as it is for culture—namely, our inability to make lasting and profound moral commitments that can energize and legitimize our day-to-day lives" (Purpel, 1989, p. 57).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to discover cultural presuppositions and philosophical assumptions that have influenced the written curriculum in Christian schools. Since it would be impossible to study all of the curriculum materials, and the number seems to be growing as fast as the schools themselves, I chose four publishers and policy makers whose membership, sales, and production of materials placed them in the forefront of this industry: ACE, ACSI, A 'Beka, and Bob Jones University Press.

My second objective was to compare philosophical assumptions and educational theories among the publishers in order to determine whether or not they are adequately meeting the needs of this heterogeneous and flourishing industry.

GUIDING STUDY QUESTIONS

1) How have cultural presuppositions influenced the developoment of the material for Christian schools?
2) Who are the major publishers for Christian schools, and what philosophy undergirds their curriculum?
3) What are the guiding educational theories represented in the curriculum materials for Christian schools?
4) How well do the existing Christian school materials adequately meet the growing needs of the Christian school market?

As I wrote to request curricular material from my targeted publishers, many included mission statements. I wondered if these mission statements acted as the guide to their theories and how decisions were made regarding pedagogy and learning styles. As a curriculum theorist, I am interested in the philosophical underpinnings that shape these curricula and the trends in curriculum within the context of Christian publishing.

Further questions that I explore are concerned with the future of these publishing companies, their objectives for the next few years and their philosophy concerning issues pervasive in education such as multiculturalism and gender issues. As curriculum options increase, are the publishers keeping up with the trends? By analyzing the stated goals

and objectives of representational writers of the publishing companies, I compare and contrast their philosophies of education and the changes they were making to keep up with the competition.

Impact of Curriculum on Education

Because curriculum extends beyond the textbooks themselves, I read works discussing the degree of influence the curriculum had on the students, the teachers, and the Christian school movement at large. Elliot Eisner uses the terms "explicit curriculum" and "implicit curriculum" to differentiate between the more observable goals and the less observable, but often more pervasive, goals underlying the educational process (Lewis, 1987). The explicit curriculum pertains to the actual content taught in the classroom (ie: Romantic poetry, parts of speech), and implicit curriculum pertains to that which demonstrates the philosophy behind the content (ie: capitalism is superior to socialism) (Lewis, 1987). Much more than what is being taught (raw subject matter) or how it is taught (technique), the curriculum guides the prevailing ethos of the school.

Unlike the public schools' emphasis on academic achievement, Christian schools have always been viewed by their constituents as both a ministry and an educational enterprise. Just how much energy is spent on the ministry's vision depends on the individual school

Division of the Secular from the Sacred

Because both public and private schools have inherited the same enlightenment assumptions about the division of the secular and the sacred, it is rare for a Christian school's philosophy to equate the value of intellectual life and spiritual life. For example, the comment by Kienel that administrators who are more interested in the academics of Christian schools are putting priorities in the wrong place is an indication that, to some proponents of Christian education, the Christian life is served best in ministry which is carried out by evangelism or service, and that the thought life is separate if not sometimes an obstruction to ministry (Kienel, n.d.-a, p. 1). Also, many of these schools were formed by churches as subsidiaries or auxiliary services to the families in their congregations, making the vision one of a ministry first and an educational enterprise second.

With these origins, Christian schools are guided by mission statements in which less is said about the academic life of the students than the moral or spiritual influence. Additionally, parents who are concerned that secularism will creep into the school apply pressure to create an environment that does not engage students in study or discussion of issues like sex and violence, which are inherent in modern culture.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Despite the prevailing ambivalence toward Christian day schools even within the Christian community, the fact remains that they are not only a present reality, but they are growing more rapidly than my present statistics can verify. Christian schools have the potential to do more to affect and alter education than even they dream possible, yet much of the potential and energy appears to remain untapped.

The Christian school has a potentially powerful voice in the educational community since its growth far outweighs that of any other educational institution. Despite this rapid expansion, many schools have chosen to marginalize themselves by creating their own society and ignoring the one around them. This phenomenon is not new. In the seventeenth century, John Milton warned the church not to separate itself from culture and thus render itself ineffective. In an excerpt from Aeropagetica he writes: "I cannot praise a cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat" (p. 564). To Milton, virtue is found by understanding the world, not by ignoring it.

Yet conscience may forbid some Christians to participate in parts of culture that other Christians frankly enjoy. That is why Christianity is such an enigma to those outside

who wonder why some general rules of conduct do not apply to all. Patricia Beattie Jung (1992) states that "attitudes vary among Christians about what constitutes proper public demeanor because Christians disagree about whether or not the faithful should assume there to be a fundamental tension or a fundamental continuity between the church and the world" (p. 122). It may be that becoming a voice for education in the market place is an anathema to Christian school proponents. In that case, the curriculum will not affect their preferences.

The personal significance of my study is the continuation of a quest I have had since I began working in Christian education. I have always wondered if a curriculum could offer breadth and depth of ideas if it is unrestricted by the agenda to persuade in one direction or another. Can it present the scope of all learning--the mental, the physical, *and* the spiritual? As a student in public education, I noticed that literature with significant religious content was often truncated by an emphasis on external interpretation like personification, metaphors and affective language, ignoring the vast spiritual significance of literary works. This limited presentation inhibits the potential learning experience, making interpretation and genuine evaluation more difficult. Education that is impervious to political or religious censorship (but that also refuses to indoctrinate) could do more to engage

students than any of us deem possible. And someday I may help design it.

Indicting Christians for avoiding the costly effort that is necessary to effectively participate in a public dialogue for the mind, Harry Blamires (1963) writes in his book The Christian Mind:

> The present neglect of the intellectual element in modern life may prove to be a very costly one....The bland assumption that the Church's life will continue to be fruitful so long as we go on praying and cultivating our souls, and irrespective of whether we trouble to think christianly, and therefore theologically, about anything which we or others may do or say, may turn out to have dire results....The suspicion grows apace that our inhibiting slogans are mere postures concealing an arid emptiness, mere expressions of an irrational resistance to progress. (p. 77)

ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

It is important to note here that although I refer to those in my study in the third person, I am a member of the Christian community and an evangelical. I have had, as it were, a front row seat. And even though my study is qualitative and my conclusions more subjective and personal than a quantitative study, the role of researcher forces a detachment that is difficult to maintain since the issues I

am studying are part of my own lived experience. My nineteen-year involvement in Christian education has been on the college level. This experience has provided me with a unique opportunity to observe the grass roots movement of Christian schools as my freshman students from Christian schools have reflected the prevailing ethos of their schools. More recently I have worked with upper classmen and masters level education students who demonstrate a different attitude toward Christian schools from my freshman English students.

Changing Assumptions

Complicating my perspective within the Christian college milieu is my own change in employment (this academic year) from Oral Roberts University, a charismatic university that not only supported the Christian school movement, but was also the "parent university" that organized, hosted, and governed Christian schools all over the world, to Wheaton College, an evangelical college that encourages the training of young people to enter the public arena. The students at Wheaton share the same ambivalence toward Christian schools as the professors, some because they are products of these schools and view them as academically inferior, and others because of the low academic credibility of Christian day schools. As potential teachers who have aspired to a place where 1300 is the average score of entrants, most education majors from Wheaton are uncertain about their involvement with Christian schools.

Because I was a veteran teacher of almost twenty years in an environment that was virtually a feeder college for Christian schools, my assumptions had been set early. I watched these students; in fact, it was their attitudes and fears about literature gave me the incentive to edit an anthology of literature for Christian schools, a textbook that included material some of these students had never been allowed to read. For the most part I found their responses thrilling as they realized Saint Augustine's axiom that had been familiar to me for years but was new to them: "All truth is God's truth." To expand their philosophies beyond the palatable and censored reading in their school experience sparked my fascination for curriculum, or the lack thereof in some cases.

It was only when I changed jobs that I realized that my assumptions may have been prematurely formed, or at least my new experiences in a different Christian environment apprised me of the differing attitudes among Christian educators toward Christian schools.

Limitations of the Study

For a qualitative study, human subjects seem to be the dominant choice for data collection, and for me, an obvious selection would have been interviews, my natural market; students from Christian schools are all over the place. Yet it is in this natural market that I feared I would find the answers that I wanted to find by the questions that I asked.

From my case study research I did discover that surprises are always part of the research process, even when we think we know where we are going, but I have decided that an analysis of documents, hard copy and cold paper will keep me honest, at least in terms of looking for intended outcomes. I did finally interview students from ACE, A 'Beka, and Bob Jones because my material was inconclusive as I found myself too dependent on secondary sources.

When Alan Peshkin immersed himself in the study of a fundamentalist Christian school, he admitted that it was difficult to be an outsider. He says about himself: "I am a Jew...and though I have received numerous invitations to be born again, I remain as I was: I am a Jew" (Peshkin, 1986, p.17). Peshkin (1986) recognizes his own inablilty to be completely objective because it is impossible to be an author with a detached voice, and even though his focus is clearly impartial, he admits the inevitable among all of us who would attempt to study others: "Though I intend that the people and the social situations under study will dominate this book, yet the writer may hover here and there, now unseen, now a shadow, now a lurking presence" (p. 19). Peshkin's integrity as a writer forces him to consider his hidden agendas and biases, despite continuous efforts to avoid them. My immersion in Christian education provides the opposite dilemma: How does one remain objective about a subject that

is anything but objective? How do we keep our assumptions from prematurely forming our conclusions?

As an educator, my own observations force me to question the effectiveness of the Christian day school, but as a Christian, I applaud the efforts of those who are concerned with the state of education in America today. Although complete objectivity is not a prerequisite for a qualitative study, a certain detachment is necessary for anyone who studies a group. When the researcher is a member of the group, even loosely connected by profession, the findings can be extremely risky and potentially isolating. At one point in his study, Peshkin states that he might have been more at ease studying Jews since he would have been one of them; however, I wonder if nonmembership does not insulate the researcher from the pain of rejection if his conclusions are disagreeable to that group. As Thomas Wolfe laments, "You can't go home again." Recognizing his own limitations in objectivity, Peshkin (1986) writes:

> Yet who does not approach a phenomenon with limitations of some sort resulting from their personal life history? Christian, true believer, apostate, nonbeliever, believer in some other doctrine--all are marked by the idiosyncracies of their particular form of profession. (p. 18)

Further limitations were in my study of only four curriculum publishers, which does not represent the corpus of

available material for Christian schools. The publishers that I did study are expanding their markets in technology so heavily that my study was not able to reflect those trends. In fact, Susan Duffy, a homeschool mother whose book evalutated available curriculum among Christian school publishers, praises ACE's extensive and creative move toward technology, and the marketing material I received in the mail reflected the move that all of the publishers were making in this direction as their emphasis toward home school families expand. However,my study of the philosophy *behind* the material should remain constant.

Definition of Terms

Fundamentalist. One who holds "a strict adherence to Christian doctrines based on a literal interpretation of the Bible" (Parsons, 1987, p. 11).

Evangelical. One who advocates a conservative, but not necessarily literal, interpretation of the Bible as the supreme authority.

Charismatic. One whose biblical interpretation may be fundamentalist or evangelical, but who also emphasizes experience as part of revelation, including supernatural healing of disease and speaking in tongues.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Included in the review of the literature are works that discuss the condition of evangelical Christianity in light of modern culture, describe the development of Christian day schools in the last twenty-five years, and determine the conflict between pu blic and Christian school proponents. Some are written from the perspective of fundamentalists or evangelicals, while other works are written from a perspective outside the Christian milieu.

The review begins with the history behind the Christian school movement, including the cultural and societal upheavals that contributed to its growth. The second part of the review discusses qualitative studies of Christian schools from the perspective of several case studies. The third part introduces the essential material used in the data collection of the documents by the Christian school publishers and spokespersons.

Finally, the last part of the review identifies the tools utilized as a scaffolding which erected the theological and educational conceptual framework of the study.

CULTURAL UPHEAVALS AS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

The enigma presented in our post-modern world is not exclusive to one field. Family, religion, education, politics, economics, morality and ethics, are all changing so rapidly that the popular book written twenty some years ago, Culture Shock, could not have predicted the perpetual angst of the modern condition. Because the post-modern influence is ubiquitous, my review of the literature crossed many disciplines, but I have found the following to be the pervading question asked by cultural writers of education and society: What are the causes of the cultural split that has forced an impasse between the secular and the religious orientations in American education?

Several works address the changing perceptions of the two groups and the need for dialogue or cooperation among these groups. David Purpel (1989), in The Moral and Spiritual Crisis in Education, examines the failure of public schools to recognize a divine dimension. As a result, the education they provide is without transcendent meaning. He encourages educators not to avoid religion but rather to act as intermediaries, providing students with the freedom to find relevance and meaning in the classroom. Peter Berger's A Far Glory: The Quest for Faith in an Age of Credulity (1993), presents a convincing case for engaging in culture rather than avoiding it. Berger (1993) recognizes the

difficulty of balancing faith in a pluralistic culture, but he believes that since "truth resists relativization" (p. 77) the believer has nothing to fear if faith is tested against culture's challenges.

In his book Religious Fundamentlism and American Education Eugene Provenzo (1990) underscores the impact of religious education in his statement that "fundamentalism has been a powerful and influential force in American society. In areas such as public education it has, and will continue to have, a critical impact that cannot be ignored" (p. 3). Provenzo cites the influence of Rousas J. Rushdoony and Barbara Morris, lesser known figures in public life, as well as Jerry Falwell, Mel and Norma Gabler, and Tim LaHaye, more identified publicly with fundamentalism, as the major voices in the Christian school movement. Although Provenzo credits the impact of these of these schools, he presents them as mostly reactionary, critical of modern education and its proponents Horace Mann and John Dewey. Provenzo, among other critics, sees the fundamentalist schools as the attempt to recapture the power once held by religion in America's earlier history.

Stephen Carter (1993) examines the damaging results of a society that demoralizes its citizens by trivializing their religious views in The Culture of Unbelief. While Carter criticizes those in politics and government who treat belief in God as mere personal preference, he also faults those who

use "God Talk" or religious rhetoric for their own ends; both result in the trivialization of religion.

Looking at educational theories from a Christian world view, Nicholas Wolterstorff (1980) analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of popular methods in education that emphasize the development of cognitive skills as the only way to learn in his book Educating for Responsible Action. He evaluates current problems with the authoritarian practices of some Christian schools, suggesting pedagogical techniques that foster autonomy and self-awareness. Since Wolterstorff's publisher is represented by Christian Schools International, a Dutch Reformed Organization from the Calvinist tradition, few fundamentalist schools will have the oopportunity to read his literature.

Stanley Hauerwas (1992), a professor of theological ethics at the Divinity School of Duke University, co-edited a book with John H. Westerhoff, professor of theology and Christian nurture at Duke Divinity School, titled Schooling Christians. This book is a compilation of articles discussing how to educate Christians on issues of critical importance like multiculturalism and pluralism. Several articles within the text were specifically helpful;for example, Patricia Jung's (1992) article "A Call for Reform Schools" articulates the difficulties facing a society where the division between the sacred and the secular has disproportionately affected our judgment in formulating

educational policies; Glenn and Glenn's (1992) article "Making Room for Religious Conviction in Democracy's Schools" discusses recent governmental attempts to restrict religious practices in the public schools. These articles discuss ways in which the public and the private sector can reach some kind of compromise, or at least begin to dialogue about the differences among them.

Three authors' works analyze the evangelical mind from an evangelical perspective, James Hunter, Mark Noll, and Henry Blamires. These texts examine the distinctions that prohibited the growth and inhibited the influence of Christianity in modern society, creating many of the problems facing evangelicals today.

In his book Culture Wars, Hunter (1993) divides culture into two ideological camps: the orthodox and the progressive. Those who maintain an impulse toward orthodoxy are committed to an authority transcendent of human experience. These individuals are not restricted to evangelical Christianity, however. They include all of those who embrace a truth beyond human imagination, such as Catholics and Jews. The progressives, on the other hand, maintain an impulse toward a moral authority defined by the spirit of rationalism and subjectivism wherein truth is a process that is always in a state of change.

Hunter recognizes that most Americans occupy a position somewhere in the middle ground, but it is those in the

extreme postions whose voices are projected the loudest in our culture. The irony is that each of these opposing views sees itself as expressing the founding goals of our American heritage. Using selective history, one group emphasizes the religious roots of our nation, while another group emphasizes freedom of individual choice and expression. This has resulted in a cultural war.

C.S. Lewis (1977) predicited the same impasse some forty years ago in The Abolition of Man when he stated that the individual with an absolute value system has more in common with ancient forefathers than with a neighbor next door who disavows a transcendent truth (p. 78).

Noll's Scandal of the Evangelical Mind (1994) indicts the evangelical community in which he claims membership. Refusing to accept the anti-intellectual mindset of most evangelicals as normative, Noll reminds his readers of historical antecedents in the Christian faith who led in culture's intellectual movement. He cites Johnathon Edwards who reflected the antithesis of the kind of thinking that exists today, reminding his reader that thought and belief are not mutually exclusive, despite the example set by some non-thinking believers.

In his book The Christian Mind: How Should a Christian Think?, Henry Blamires (1978) observes that no "Christian mind" that can actively engage in the discourse of reflection with those outside the faith exists (p. 4). In his

continuing observations of the modern dilemma, Blamires (1988) follows up with Recovering the Christian Mind: Meeting the Challenge of Secularism to further explore limitations imposed by a secular mindset.

Among some of the writers who analyze the cultural upheavals contributing to the chasm between public and Christian schools three positions seemed to emerge: the prophetic, the facilitator and the arbitrator. In their works Noll, Blamires and Provenzo assumed a prophetic role, indicting Christians for their refusal to do the necessary work of scholarship and stewardship. Wolterstoff, Hauerwas, and Hunter acted as facilitators, providing suggestions for further comprehension or compromise. Finally Peter Berger and Stephen Carter assumed the role of arbitrator, mediating the disparity among the quarreling groups. These unique perspectives gave a thorough background to the problems posed by the changing culture.

THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOLS

To understand the impact of Christian schools on culture today, it is important to note their tremendous growth in the past few decades. From the surface, this growth appears to be a sleeping giant because, despite its burgeoning enrollment and increasingly diverse curriculum, the general

public virtually ignores the significant growth of this enormous sectarian group.

Three works describe the first-hand experiences of researchers among Christian schools across America: Alan Peshkin's (1986) God's Choice, Susan Rose's (1988) Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan, and Paul Parson's (1987) Inside America's Schools.

Peshkin's God's Choice (1986) is the third in a series which attempts to understand and describe American communities and schools. Peshkin immerses himself in the culture of a small fundamentalist school, Bethany Baptist Academy, in Hartney Illinois. Most of the subjects of his study are members of Bethany Baptist Church, the parenting institution of the academy that protects, subsidizes, and fortifies the school. Peshkin (1986) identifies the unique characteristics of his study: "To date, most scholarly studies of religious schools have emphasized their impact....I intend to identify the most typical characteristics of such a school...further, to establish what it is that makes such schools attractive to many Americans" (p. 14).

Similar to Peshkin's study, Rose's Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan (1988) is the continuation of a series of works studying curriculum in America today. This work extends the emphasis on "critical social thought" and evaluates the curricula of Christian schools, especially

Accelerated Christian Education and its effects on students who are part of this program. Michael Apple states in the introduction: "The growing significance of ACE should not be underestimated. ACE programs are completely prepackaged and are similar to corporate franchises in many ways" (Rose, 1988, p.xii).

The third book, Inside America's Schools (1987) by Parsons is told from the perspective of a journalist rather than an academician. Covering a broad range of what he terms as fundamentalist schools across the country, Parsons divides his text into sections including the mission, the classrooms, the textbooks, and the unique problems indigenous to fundamentalist schools. Parsons claims his purpose is to inform rather than persuade, and he does include both positive and negative examples of the books, rules, and practices, particularly when he discusses interviews with administrators and teachers. His comparison of A 'Beka and Bob Jones curriculum provided the most comprehensive analysis of the editorial slant in the literature, science, and social studies textbooks among the texts.

Although Parsons, Rose, and Peshkin's accounts provided significant information, their views were far from objective. Whereas Peshkin's admission of his natural biases added to his credibility, Rose seemed less aware of her own subjectivity. While her study was only conducted in two schools, one charismatic and one fundamentalist, she

extrapolated her findings to represent schools across America from these two camps. For example, Rose concludes that the fundamentalist school she studied, which was stark, serious, and severe, characterizes fundamentalist schools in general, while the charismatic school she studied, which was lively and spontaneous, represents the ethos of charismatic Christian schools. Yet the opposite may be true given a different sample. For Rose, the part represented the whole, revealing her lack of personal experience with the Christian environment. Parsons went beyond his claim to merely inform, and his evidence indicates that though he strove to remain objective, his opinion did have some effect upon his research.

THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The literature representing the Christian schools includes a combination of material written by major spokespersons within the organizations and the actual textbooks they publish. Since ACSI is an association only beginning to develop curriculum, the available material was written by members of the ACSI staff or members of ACSI schools. These works explicitly discuss the basic philosophy of the organization. Access to Bob Jones texts was difficult, but the various texts written by the faculty define the philisophical basis for their curriculum. A 'Beka

Books had no spokespersons to represent them, which required analysis of the books themselves to infer the philosophy behind them.

Dr. Paul Kienel, executive director of ACSI, seems to be the major voice representing this curriculum. In his book The Philosophy of Christian School Education (1977) Kienel outlines the philosophy of ACSI by introducing its theological basis, discussing the integration of faith and learning, and describing the practical implementation of a Christian philosophy within a school. In a series of pamphlets which he authors, Kienel addresses several questions. In "Christian schools or public schools--which came first?" Kienel claims that Christian schools predate public schools 230 years in an effort to validate their superiority or at least affirm their position in society. After providing a chronology of Puritan Christian schools, he shifts his direction to the liberal influences of Horace Mann, Hegelian philosophy, and the Unitarians on public education.

In another pamphlet, "Why Christian schools are good for America," Kienel makes assertions about American superiority and the importance of Protestantism in the development of a sound education. In the pamphlet by Kienel titled "How Humanism affects children" he defines humanism as a philosophy in which "a humanist believes in himself (not God) and is more concerned with his own preservation than he is

the needs of others." Although many Christians recognize the growing influence of secularism as a result of Enlightenment thinking and the uplifting of human strength over divine, Kienel's definition of humanism is loaded with slanted language and negative connotations, demonstrating the reactive language represented in the largest association for Christian schools in the country.

The philosophy of Bob Jones University Press can best be understood through the books edited by James W. Deuink Ed.D. titled, Some Light on Christian Education (1984) and A Fresh Look at Christian Education (1988). Articulated through the Bob Jones faculty, their philosophy combines ultraconservative and moderately conservative views on issues such as a liberal arts education, secular humanism, and the teaching of values, as well as more specific logistics of running a school like budgeting, licensure and accreditation procedures.

Some of the articles written by Bob Jones faculty defend the need for a library, the value of learning a foreign language, and the virtues of historical studies in a Christian school. Obviously the need to defend the existence of a library in a Christian school means that the belief exists among some constituents that libraries are not necessary. When publishers are forced to explain the need of these basic components of curriculum to their clients, the result is a general impression that their schools are merely

"Christian ghettos" which reinforce their own ideas without providing opportunity for question or discussion.

Although my samples from Bob Jones were limited, I was able to review texts from both Bob Jones and A 'Beka. In the Bob Jones texts that I was able to obtain, I found the language arts texts were more challenging than the texts published by A 'Beka, while the history texts produced by both organizations reflected the strongest biases among the disciplines. The A 'Beka texts ranged from ninth grade to twelfth grade and included literature as well as grammar and composition. The questions were single answer objective, multiple choice, matching, short answer questions which were easy to grade. The teachers' edition gave the answers, but little was provided in terms of discussion questions.

The literature written by Christian school publishers and educators reflected strikingly similar views about the educational process and its direction within the Christian school movement. Interestingly, the two organizations connected to colleges, Bob Jones University Press and A 'Beka, were more pedagogically centered. This leads me to conclude that a publisher connected to an academic institution is more centered on the curriculum as part of an educational enterprise than on curriculum as part of a ministry.

The textbooks reflected their positivistic approach to education with their emphasis on the learning process as

receptive, passive, and absolute. The leading questions discouraged open-ended dicsussions, and the test questions encouraged memorization rather than critical thinking.

My own weakness in the study was my limited access to computerized lessons and the increasing technology being utilized by some of these schools. Since these programs would obviously be more current, some of the techniques might have been updated.

LITERATURE PROVIDING ANALYTICAL TOOLS

To understand the philosophy of fundamentalist schools, the reader needs a conceptual rubrick that defines and delineates the various groups within the history of Christianity. In his comprehensive book, Christ and Culture (1951), Richard Niebuhr identifies and defines five positions that Christians have taken toward culture: Christ Against Culture, Christ and Culture in Paradox, Christ as Transformer of Culture, Christ Above Culture, and Christ of Culture. These classifications define the distinguishing characteristics of each group within the Christian faith, providing a reasonable theory to explain their disagreements.

Several works describe the development of curriculum theories and their ideological bases. In The Handbook of Research on Curriculum two articles traced the progression of curriculum theories from the early part of the century to the

present, "Conceptions of Curriculum and Curriculum Specialists," by Phillip W. Jackson(1992) and "Curriculum Ideologies," by Elliot Eisner (1992). Further historical and theoretical insight into the philisophical shifts in curriculum were provided in Herbert Kliebard's The Struggle for the American Curriculum (1991) and William H. Schubert's Curriculum: Perspective, Paradigm, and Possibility(1986).

These works trace the various movements in curriculum studies, noting the shifts in culture that created a paradigm shift in the philosophy of curriculum. Noting the impact of Tyler during the scientific era in education, Schubert and Kliebard describe how the Tyler Rationale formed the standard for curriculum theory and practice and provided a system of evaluation. Because Tyler's Rationale reflects a positivistic paradigm, it seemed to fit an analysis for a curriculum devoted to an absolute way of educating students.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to analyze the philosophical and educational underpinnings of Christian school curricula. My methodology is a document analyis that includes the study of the textbooks, theories and philosophical statements written by the publishers and their spokepersons, as well as documents written by those who studied Christian school curriculum.

Benefits of a Qualitative Study

The study is a qualitative inquiry of selected documents written by Christian school curriculum policy makers and publishers. According to Elliot Eisner (1989) in The Enlightened Eye, qualitative research covers a broader range of possibilities than one might assume. The field focused nature of qualitative research is "not limited to places humans interact; it also includes the study of inanimate objects: School architecture, textbooks, classroom design, the location of trophy cases in schools, and the design of lunchrooms" (p. 32). Although the school's curriculum includes more than what is printed on a page, research by the

Education Products Information Exchange has shown that more than 90% of classroom time is spent using published materials (EPIE, 1979). This heightened influence is underscored by William Schubert (1987) who writes that "[i]t is, in the final analysis, the publishers who make the curriculum. . ." (p. 220).

A unique feature of qualitative work is the attention to features unattended by those who engage in quantitative studies, giving the researcher the flexibility of participating more actively in the research process. This active engagement allows for the researcher's personal signature to emerge, giving the study a voice. I chose this particular method for my research because I wanted to dig beneath the more general techniques to find the bedrock beliefs of those influencing the curriculum of Christian schools. Through the use of "thick description," characteristic of qualitative research, I hoped to present the findings from the study of documents as well as my own personal experiences in Christian education (Eisner, 1989, p.35).

Emergence of a Methodology

Two years ago I began this study in an effort to understand the perplexing phenomenon of the Christian school movement and its monocultural position in a pluralistic society. I wondered if the curriculum created or only supported the perspectives evident in these schools.

My pilot attempt was a questionnaire I prepared for my freshmen students who had attended Christian schools, which asked them about their literary background, what authors they read, and then how writing was used in the classroom.

The study proved to be inconclusive, however, since the questions were never able to penetrate beyond short, pedestrian responses from the students. I then attempted a study of the textbooks alone, but they failed to communicate a definitive philosophy behind them. A survey of the influences undergirding the curriculum requires an understanding of philosophical underpinnings, hence, an analysis of the documents seemed to be the most appropriate method of study because it yielded information unattainable in other methods of study.

Selection of the Documents

To decide which curriculum to study among the vast number available, I began searching the catalogues of various Christian associations and the materials they recomended. The names of publishers that emerged the most frequently were the same names that had appeared on my survey. As I began writing for information, the statistics presented in the marketing literature revealed that the publishers and policy makers at the forefront of the industry were ACE, Accelerated Christian Education, more recently named "School of Tomorrow,"

A 'Beka, Bob Jones University Press, and ACSI, Accelerated Christian Schools International. From the information obtained in these studies, I chose to research the documents reflecting the philosophy of each organization. These included documents written by major spokespersons from each company and representative educational materials in the form of textbooks and curriculum guides.

I then reviewed the literature written from historical and philosophical perspectives to understand the historical antecedents contributing to the growth of Christian schools. The historical background provided the necessary information about the growth of private schooling and gave me a better understanding of what happened to foster the growth of this burgeoning industry. The philosophical perspectives provided a framework for understanding the cultural upheavals as additional contributing factors.

It was during this time that I was introduced to the ethnographic studies of Susan Rose, Alan Peshkin, and Paul Parsons. Their experiences within the communities of those they studied provided me with a more intimate knowledge of individual experiences unavailable in a document analysis. Susan Rose's Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan, provided an in-depth analysis of the ACE curriculum and the sociological implications of schools that endorse their philosophy. In his text, Inside America's Christian Schools, Paul Parson's perspective as a journalist in his broader

study of various fundamental schools and their curriculum provided an insightful view of textbooks he termed as "bathed in commentary." And finally, Alan Peshkin's sensitive work God's Choice provided an in-depth view of a Christian school from his immersion in their culture for 18 months. Peshkin's personal commentaries regarding his ambivalence toward studying a group as an outsider enabled me to see myself within the context of my study, one who is engaged in ethnographic research as an insider of the community under study, but who is also outside the theological orbit of Christian school publishing.

As I discussed my own problems with detachment in chapter one, I realized both the "boon and the bane" of participant study in that, as Eisner (1989) states, antecedent knowledge creates both utility and liability for the researcher, and this awareness is crucial in the study's ability to remain, if not objective, at least detached.

Educational Connoisseurship

As I continued my study of curriculum, I began to see myself in terms of an "educational connoisseur," one who is concerned with the quality (value) of education that children are receiving (p. 70). Eisner explains that educational connoisseurs attend to everything that is "relevant either for satisfying a specific educational aim or for illuminating the educational state of affairs in general" (p. 71).

Therefore, nothing within the educational process is outside the domain of study for the connoisseur.

Eisner (1989) states:

> For example, textbooks and instructional materials are important candidates for the attention of educational connoisseurs. Since decisions about content inclusion and exclusion are related to what students have an opportunity to learn, the examination of the content and form of instructional materials is important. Texts that pose interesting questions, convey a sense of excitement about the subject matter being taught, are appropriately easy to read, and stimulate imagination are likely to be better than materials that do not have these features. To determine that some materials possess these features while others do not is to call upon educational connoisseurship. (p. 71)

The curricular dimension of education provided the major focus for my study. Eisner further says regarding curriculum:

> One of the most important aspects of connoisseurship focuses upon the quality of the curriculum's content and goals and the activities employed to engage students in it. To make judgments about the significance of content, one must know the content being taught and the alternatives to that content within the field. (p. 75)

It was this consideration of curriculum that validated my concern for a study of the documents representing the philosophy behind the curriculum. To ascertain what the publishers valued as necessary components in their material, involved studying the way they were presented, identifying the type of thinking they invoked or prevented, and demonstrating activities that fostered learning, as an individual or a cooperative enterprise (Eisner, 1989, p. 76).

Educational Criticism

Giving voice to connoisseurship requires an extension to the role of critic, according to Eisner, which is the art of disclosing what the connoisseur understands. This act of criticism requires a reconstruction of the data to an aggregate form, which is done in the form of thematics.

Tools for Analysis

In my search to find a theme, I needed a tool to interpret and evaluate the documents in my study, one that could "draw forth" pertinent information and provide answers to the questions in my study. Soliciting materials that would help me bracket their philosophy, I chose Niebuhr's Christ and Culture as a tool to analyze philosophical positions toward culture, and Tyler's Rationale as a tool to analyze their educational position.

Since the nature of a qualitative study does not aim to "control variables in a lab-like setting" (Eisner, p. 170),

but rather attempts to highlight the complexities of a study, my use of Neibuhr and Tyler as descriptive tools focused and narrowed my study yet helped me avoid the preset conclusions I might have made without an external guide.

As I began shaping my responses I profiled each publisher according to demographics, cultural positions from Niebuhr's Christo-cultural classifications, and educational theory reflected by Tyler's rationale. The profiles comprise the data presented in chapter four.

The profiles framed the interpretation necessary to formulate my theories and conclusions which are found in chapter five. Eisner (1989) states that "it is more reasonable to regard theories as educational guides to perception than as devices that lead to the tight control or precise prediction of events" (p. 95). Therefore, one theory will "seldom satisfy all of the dimensions about which critics may wish to speak or write, hence there will be a certain eclecticism in the application of theory" (p. 95).

For example, I used Tyler's theories as a guide to perception, but I avoided creating my study to fit his theory; therefore, the interpretation fit some more nicely than others.

Niebuhr's Christo-Cultural Classifications as a Tool to Analyze Philosopical and Cultural Presuppositions

To identify the philosophical and theoretical presupppositions behind the curriculum of Christian schools,

one must study the doctrinal statements made by spokespersons for the publishers. To a reader outside the Christian community, these words are no more than fundamentalist jargon with little or no meaning, and often with apparent contradictions. In his book Christ and Culture, Richard Niebuhr (1951) characterizes our inability to resolve different interpretations of Christ's teachings as an enduring problem which continues to divide believers since, as he says, "Christ's answer to the problem of human culture is one thing, Christian answers are another" (p. 2). As a result, the debate about Christ and the example he set for dealing with culture is "carried on among Christians and in the hidden depths of the individual conscience, not as the struggle and accommodation of belief with unbelief, but as the wrestling and the reconciliation of faith with faith" (Niebuhr, 1951, p. 2). Therefore, it is within the Christian community itself that disagreements emerge, not outside the community where Christians are often defined in simple and uncomplicated stereotypes.

In order to better define these differing beliefs among Christians in relation to their role within culture, Niebuhr provides five categories of classification: "Christ Against Culture," "Christ of Culture," "Christ Above Culture," "Christ and Culture in Paradox," and "Christ as Transformer of Culture." These five categories provide the framework for my discussion of the philosophy behind the Christian school

movement. Identification of their attitudes toward culture aided in the definition of their curriculum choice as well.

The two categories which define the extreme positions are Christ Against Culture and Christ of Culture. The first category, Christ Against Culture, is the belief that Christians are to be separated in their politics, philosophy, and religion. This outlook can best be summarized as the radicalization of the verse: "Come out and be ye separate" (II Cor. 6:17). This separateness carries with it the assumption that since culture is inherently corrupt, any association with it contaminates the believer. Therefore, the only alternative is an isolated society that not only ignores culture but also makes a point to recognize its depravity. On the opposite end of the spectrum is Niebuhr's category Christ of Culture, which emphasizes Christ as a hero of culture who is both model and prototype for the ideal citizen: one who was actively engaged in culture. To the proponent of this belief, faith provides a set of morals whereby to live responsibly in the world.

The remaining three categories, Christ Above Culture, Christ and Culture in Paradox, and Christ as Transformer of Culture, provide more moderate views of the Christian's role in culture. They reject the more extreme positions and recognize the need for both grace and law. The position of Christ Above Culture is defined by Niebuhr (1951) as the synthesist, who affirms both Christ and culture, and one who

confesses a Lord who is "both of this world and of the other"(p. 121). Neither rejecting culture nor accepting its worldliness, the synthesist assumes responsibility for social institutions and their development while not forgetting the otherworldly calling of the faith.

For those supporting the position of Christ and Culture in Paradox, reconciliation with culture is impossible; therefore, they recognize society's inevitable presence and the unfortunate necessity of dealing with it. This view, also known as dualism, sees the world of culture and the world of the Christian existing side by side. Like parallel lines that never intersect, the two cultures operate in different realms.

Those with the view of Christ as Transformer of Culture envision the possibility of changing and affecting culture through active participation and involvement. This change is possible because with transformation comes man's inherent potential for good, which has been corrupted.

Niebuhr's classifications provided a system for categorizing or bracketing the enormously differing views held by Christians today, giving me a less obstructed view of the philosophy behind Christian schools. As I bracketed various claims about their purpose and mission, a common thread emerged, revealing a similar sense of how they view their personal role in culture and, resultantly, education. Although the temptation to generalize is always present when

classifying a group, abstracting the thousands of Christian schools' philosophies through their chosen curriculum can reveal a great deal about the schools themselves, if one agrees with Schubert's statement made previously, that published materials *are* the curriculum.

Tyler's Scientific Methodology as a Descriptive Tool to Analyze Christian School Curriculum

Once theory is established, practice should follow the structure of that theory. For example, historical studies of curriculum reveal the methods used to carry out a positivistic theory were positivistic in practice. A world quantitatively made and perceived resulted in schools quantitatively taught. A curriculum wedded to this material cranked out measureable objectives and taught students as externalized objects for observation. However, as the paradigm has shifted to an internalized and process-oriented approach, the curriculum in public schools now emphasizes interactive classrooms and student-centered studies. Christian publishers, on the other hand, continue to organize their material based on the quantitative, scientific paradigm.

During the apex of scientism, Ralph Tyler introduced a system of measurement called "Tyler's Rationale," which created the benchmark for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of school curriculum. Because the curriculum in Christian schools appears to utilize a positivistic

methodology, I chose Tyler's rationale to assess the creation, development, and organization of their curriculum. This rationale can be summed up in four questions:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these objectives?
3. How can learning experiences be organized for effective instruction?
4. How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated? (Schubert, 1986, p. 171)

According to William Schubert (1986), "Tyler's four central topics for curricular analysis—purposes, learning experiences, organization, and evaluation—could serve as a basis for interpretation and analysis of extant curricular practices" (p. 149). My analysis applied these four topics to the documents in an attempt to understand the bases for establishing curriculum practices and procedures.

To apply my descriptive tools to the materials I first began with initial readings, paying attention to immediate responses that might create a biased response. I then began to annotate my second reading, identifying repetition of phrases, and commonalities and differences of stated purposes and goals. From this I was able to extricate patterns that reflected cultural positions as educational theories. As I began shaping my responses I profiled each publisher

according to demographics, cultural positions from Niebuhr's Christo-cultural classifications, and educational theory reflected by Tyler's rationale.

Variability of Sources

My conditions, the artifacts and documents available to me, proved ample in some places and more limited in others. For example, I had copious sources written by BJUP and ACSI publishers and faculty, which made it easier to pin down a philosophy and identify educational theories. The textbook availability, on the other hand, was significantly greater with A 'Beka,and the case studies were more specifically geared to ACE. This use of multiple and uneven sources forced me to make appropriate adjustments and vary my interpretive responses, forcing a less automated response.

Frames for Interpretation

While an analysis of the curriculum can provide an estimate of the degree to which Christian schools apply positivistic and scientific methods, leadership within the administration, pedagogical techniques, and school philosophy also influence educational practice within the school. However, since my research focused on the textbooks and the philosophy behind them, the conclusions were based primarily on the written curriculum.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

In the fall of 1994, the Kraft family was suffering from a continual crisis in their home revolving around their ADD child Eugene, a third grader in the local public schools. This energetic little redhead was making life miserable for the public school and the family, as well as himself. Unable to concentrate on his studies, demonstrate fine motor skills, focus on verbal commands that required filtering out extraneous noise, or sit quietly in a chair for more than five minutes, Eugene's failures were mounting. Despite home and professional tutoring, it seemed that the family and school could not agree on an appropriate way to deal with Eugene's special needs. The school was overwhelmed with other children with special needs, and little Eugene had no choice but to take his place among the other children crying out for attention and help.

Enter the private Christian day school, a school engendering the family's religious beliefs as well as providing smaller classes and closer supervision. For the

Kraft family, the Christian school was a God-send, and they became advocates of Christian education among other parents who felt their children were becoming lost in the cracks of an overwhelmed system.

In the fall of 1995, the Hart family moved from a small Missouri town to a suburb of a large metropolis. Deeply religious and intensely dedicated to their family structure and faith, the Harts sent Frank to the local public school with a Bible in his hand and an eye on the curriculum. The mother, Martha, was constantly at the school, complaining that they were teaching evolution and ungodly literature. Finding a few voices to combine with hers, Martha joined the local PTA and advocated censorship in the school's library. Except for a few sympathetic friends, Frank was an outcast in the public school. Even the Fellowship of Christian Athletes group avoided him because he seemed to use his Bible to bludgeon the thinking of even his more religious friends. Nobody seemed to be able to measure up to Frank's standards or his family's.

Enter the local Christian school, a school that agreed with the censorship Martha so vehemently demanded. Their library boasted of works only by select Christian authors. Shakespeare was not taught in the English class because his spiritual condition was unknown. The writings of C.S. Lewis, a well-known Christian author, were held under suspicion because his stories contained fairies, elves, and magic and

could be found on the shelves of New Age bookstores. The school's policy was: "If it is not Christian, don't touch it." The Hart family was thrilled to find this school. Frank was safe. He would no longer be threatened with the dangerous thinking in the public schools, and his mind would be protected from anything outside of his beliefs. It was the best of all possible worlds.

For each student enrolled in a Christian school, a unique story surrounds the reasons for making that decision. For some, the choice seems appropriate, but for others, the choice is a result of motives and intentions that leave many confused, even within the Christian community. Since 15,000 Christian schools exist in the United States today (and these statistics are 8 years old), it would be impossible to do an extensive or even a superficial study of each of these schools. The task to understand more about the Christian school movement is not unique to my study. Alan Peshkin attempted to study a representative group as he lived among the members of a fundamentalist school in his excellent case study, God's Choice. In another study, Susan Rose observed the practices of two schools and their curriculum in her book Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan. Painting with a broader stroke, Paul Parsons interviewed many fundamentalist schools all across the country from the perspective of a journalist rather than an educator providing a unique perspective calling himself a "historian-in-a-hurry" in his

book Inside America's Christian Schools. My claim to uniqueness is my role within the Christian community rather than outside it, and my analysis will in some way be affected by that role.

ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL

My report begins with ACSI, Association of Christian Schools International because, even though they do not offer a definitive line of textbooks, their influence in the realm of Christian education is undeniable.

Demographics Located in the new "Mecca" of Christian Organizations, Colorado Springs, Colorado, ACSI serves all fifty states, all ten Canadian provinces, and sixty-three other nations. ACSI provides an accreditation program that claims to be the most comprehensive evaluation model ever developed for Christian schools. Additionally, they provide certification programs for teachers and administrators as well as legal assistance with an office in Washington D.C. to "monitor the legal and legislative issues which affect Christian schools" (Association of Christian Schools International, 1995, p. 1). They currently publish three journals and promote conventions and conferences across the U.S., attended by over 40,000 ACSI members in the 1995-96 school year. With its own credit union, insurance programs, and a 35,000-member teachers' organization, International

Fellowshop of Christian School Teachers (IFCST), ACSI is the patriarch of Christian School organizations.

Philosophies, Policies and Procedures

Headed by Dr. Paul A. Kienel, founder and executive director, ACSI's prodigious influence among Christian school educators cannot be underestimated. Included in all of their publications and marketing efforts is a mission statement that in which Keinel clearly articulates their biblical perspective: "The spiritual mission becomes the principal goal of the school and everybody knows about it" (n.d.-a, p. 1). Kienel continually underscores the importance of the spiritual over the academic, making a distinction in the reader's mind that the spiritual and the mental are in conflict. Regarding administrators who stress academics, he admonishes, "Some Christian school educators appear to be more concerned about achievement test results and the academic reputation of their schools than the spiritual maturity of their students" (Kienel, n.d.-a, p. 1). Again, Kienel seems to ask his constituents to choose sides, revealing the "modern" belief that the spiritual and mental are compartmentalized and that God resides in only the spiritual domain.

In a brochure titled "Common Characteristics of Christian Schools Which Are Successful in Their Mission," Kienel identifies an admission policy which admits students

who will enhance the fulfillment of the school's spiritual mission. He quotes one director who stated:

> The so-called evangelistic school that opens its door to the world is soon overcome by the world. Many students are saved in Christian schools, but usually it is a controlled school atmosphere backed up by a Christian home, supportive parents, and a strong church. (n.d.-a, p. 2)

ACSI's Cultural Position. Ensuring protection from those who would negatively influence the schools reflects their isolationist position and gives them an elitist reputation to those outside their community. However, this insistence on separatism demonstrates their adherence to the Biblical injunction, "Do not love the world or the things in the world" (I John 2:15). Apart from their "faith" they see a world of corruption, in which avoidance is the only solution. Under Niebuhr's system of classification, ACSI falls into the category "Christ Against Culture." Even though this view can be offensive even to many within the Christian community, Niebuhr defends its value: "[I]ntelligent Christians who cannot conscientiously take this position themselves will recognize the sincerity of most of its exponents, and its importance in history and the need for it in the total encounter of church and world" (p. 65).

Inherent Weaknesses.

The significance of the Christ Against Culture stance lies in the single-minded tenacity dedicated to purging the culture of corruption. One Christian school principal writes:

> I am convinced that it is easier for a teacher to add the academic excellence to a textbook, if necessary, than to add God's eternal perspective. I'd rather risk academic excellence than lose the opportunity to use subject matter to make a student aware of the spiritual significance of his studies. (Schindler & Pyle, 1979, p. 57)

From my perspective as a teacher, choosing an inferior textbook is an anathema to educational common sense, but this administrator's decision is made responsibly from his perspective.

The literature published by ACSI continually urges separation of young Christians from society. In a pamphlet titled "Should Christians Send Their Children to be 'Salt and Light' in the Public Schools?," Kienel (n.d.-c) poses a hypothetical argument with a pastor who asks if children should not be left in public schools to understand the world more fully. He contends:

> I have yet to hear even one of them, however, advocate such an arrangement on Sunday in church facilities. If their arrangement holds true, why would it not be

> appropriate for a pastor or Sunday school superintendent to invite a non-Christian junior high teacher from the local public school to teach a month-long series on evolution versus creation to the junior high boys, or invite a non-Christian high school health teacher to the church for a lecture on value-free sex education, the virtues of "safe sex," and a nonjugmental review of alternate lifestyles, including homosexuality, lesbianism, and open marriages? (p. 2)

To an outsider, this logic is a "slippery slope" fallacy, deriving incorrect conclusions from falsely connected events, but to one who espouses an anticultural stance it makes perfect sense. The protection of the young was also Plato's solution for bringing up children. Even though he did not endorse a particular religious position, Plato believed that children needed to be given only the good part of the world until they reached maturity. However, for the anticultural Christian, this separation continues throughout life, except for moments of evangelism or when confrontation is necessary.

Explicit Objectives versus Implicit Curriculum

Despite what may appear to be avoidance of theoretical issues outside the faith, some of the articles published by ACSI reflect an awareness of educational theories and methodologies. In The Philosophy of Christian School Education, edited by Kienel (1978), James Braley makes the

distinction between positivism, which he calls the "pouring in" approach, and constructivism, which he calls the "drawing out" approach, although he avoids using the terms themselves (pp. 97-99). In another chapter in the same book, Gene Garrick reflects on the spiritual distinctives of Christian education, listing the following objectives for the academic life of the school:

1. To promote high academic standards within the potential of the individual as uniquely created by God and to help the student realize his full potential.
2. To help each student gain a thorough comprehension and command of the fundamental processes used in communicating and dealing with others, such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics.
3. To teach and encourage the use of good study habits.
4. To teach the student how to do independent research and to reason logically.
5. To motivate the student to pursue independent study in areas of personal interest.
6. To develop creative and critical thinking and proper use of Biblical criteria for evaluation.
7. To promote good citizenship through developing the understanding and appreciation of our Christian and

American heritages of responsible freedom, human dignity, and acceptance of authority.

8. To discuss current affairs in all fields and relate them to God's plan for man.
9. To produce an understanding and appreciation for God's world, an awareness of man's role in his environment, and his God-given responsibilities to use and preserve it properly.
10. To engender an appreciation of the fine arts through the development of the student's understanding and personal experience. (p. 87)

Tyler's Rationale Applied to ACSI.

These objectives clearly define ACSI's educational *purpose*. Achieving these aims is part and parcel of the whole schooling experience, from the overt, explicit, and open curriculum to the covert, implicit, and hidden curriculum. Hidden among the lines of the purpose one can see implicit assumptions about gender roles and divine sanction of our national heritage. Omitted from the purpose statements are references to cultural diversity, revealing either an oversight resulting from its dated origins or an overt attempt to ignore the reality of our nation's growing cultural pluralism.

The *organization* of ACSI's newly developed texts also demonstrates interesting components of the hidden curriculum. In a series of spelling workbooks, grades one through six

titled ACSI /Life Design: Spelling, all of the professionals, doctors, lawyers, ministers, judges, and computer specialists, are men, while the women are mothers, teachers, and nurses. In the fourth grade workbook a logic problem is posed with drawings of four men, a captain, an engineer, a dentist, and a president; in the fifth grade series super heroes is the theme, and a female shares the role with a male super hero. One wonders if in fantasy, a woman can enter in, but in "real life" the roles are fixed according to the traditional gender stereotype (ACSI, 1991).

Regarding Tyler's second question, "How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these objectives?" Robert Miller (1980) writes, "good or bad, right or wrong, the textbook itself structures much of the content of our formal curriculum in the average classroom. It influences the *sequence of experiences*, content emphasis, teaching methods, and classroom evaluation" (p. 134) [emphasis mine]. Outlining the task of an administrator in the selection of a textbook, Miller describes methods similar to any public school committee assigned to selecting a text: re-evaluating the current program, assessing state-adopted textbooks, and consulting curriculum guides (Miller, 1980, p. 137). Since ACSI publishes a limited number of textbooks, the final choice is not provided. Rather, ACSI makes suggestions to the schools who in turn select from the curricula provided by Bob Jones, A 'Beka, or ACE.

Conclusion

ACSI endorses a male-dominated, autocratic learning environment over a democratic or laissez faire system. Producing a relatively small amount of curriculum itself, ACSI's role in the Christian school environment is primarily one of an umbrella organization. It advises and protects the thousands of Christian school educators within its membership, and its influence is evidenced by its large and growing membership.

ACCELERATED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sitting at my window I see a school bus stop, drop small children off, and lumber away. Probably every American could identify that familiar "rumble-hiss" without even seeing the big, yellow-orange monolith with its black lettering printed on the side. American schools are predictable in many ways, and Christian schools, for the most part, resemble the classroom setting of any public school. Unless, however, it is an ACE school. If the school endorses the whole ACE plan, everything including the furniture, the walls, the desks, and the clothing is ACE designed.

Demographics

Envisioned by Donald R. Howard, Ph.D., as a curriculum to meet the learning needs of individual children,

Accelerated Christian Education is a self-paced program designed to facilitate independent motivation and learning. With twelve levels of achievement called PACEs (Packets of Accelerated Christian Education), the program is designed to meet the needs of each student at his her own rate. It is essentially a self-guided program in which students read their lessons, answer questions, check their work, and advance to the next phase after satisfactorily completing assignments. Only if the students have questions do they raise a small flag on their desks, signaling that they need assistance from a supervisor.

Dubbed by Newsweek as the school-in-a-kit company that has grown to a fifteen-million-dollar-a-year industry with outlets in fifty countries, ACE is based on Howard's radical belief that "teachers are not important" (Parsons, 1987, p. 66). Rather than hiring certified teachers, the schools are overseen by supervisors and monitors who circulate within the classroom to assist students with questions. This enables the schools to not only operate with paraprofessional staff, but also to hire fewer numbers, as ACE only dictates that one supervisor and two monitors is needed for every fifty students (Parsons, 1987).

In a description of his visit to the ACE plant, Parsons (1987) writes:

> In the distribution area, boxes rolls down an assembly line on their way to schools from coast to coast. At

> the time I visited, seven boxes containing 1,242 PACES were being prepared for delivery to Groton Christian Academy. ACE tries to keep as backlog of some sixteen million PACEs in storage. Another room contains uniforms and supplies, ranging from staplers to softballs to the six-inch Christian and American flag sets selling for $1.30. One long shelf is crammed with ties of all shapes and sizes. There are big ones for adults and little ones for children. There are straight ties and bow ties. There are kerchiefs for women and girls. They all have one common characteristic: they are red, white, and blue with tiny American flags on them. (p. 75)

Classroom Structure and Curriculum

In her book, Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan, Susan Rose (1988) observes that the arrangement of students sitting in cubicles prevents interaction or eye contact with others. She compares this uniformity and structure to a factory or office, exemplified by its use of terminology like "supervisors" and "monitors" rather than teachers, student "offices" instead of desks, and "testing stations" that teach "quality control" (p. 117). Her description indeed paints a picture of a sterile, highly structured, and mature setting:

> Unlike the traditional classroom where the teacher's desk defines the front of the classroom and is the center of attention, here the scoring table serves as

> the focal point. A long table, designed for students to stand at and correct their work, occupies the center of the room. The various subjects and levels are represented by booklets that sit upright in the middle of the table. Under the ACE program, the ablility of the students to *learn* rather than the ability of the teacher to *instruct* is central. (Rose, 1988, p. 118).

ACE's curriculum consists primarily of workbooks which are organized in "colorful cartoons featuring clean-cut, happy children with such names as Ace Virtueson and Christi Lovejoy. Unlike newspaper cartoons where characters stay the same for years, Ace and Christi and the rest of the gang mature into responsible soul-winning teenagers in the advanced workbooks" (Parsons, 1988, p. 63). Each workbook provides text, short answer exercises and objective tests.

Nationwide the ACE schools follow the same daily schedule:

8:30 a.m.	Opening exercises (prayer concerns, pledges to American and Christian flags,etc.)
8:45 - 9:50	PACE workbook time
9:50 - 9:55	Five minute break
9:55 - 10:55	PACE workbook time
10:55 - 11:00	Five minute break
11:00 - 12:00	PACE workbook time
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch

12:30 - 1:30	PACE workbook time
1:30 - 1:40	Break
1:40 - 2:50	Devotionals, PE, and activities
2:20 - 3:00	Cleanup
3:00	End of school (Parsons, 1988, pp. 67-71)

Positivistic Implications

Because ACE relies on independent work to complete the PACE programs, some common facets of the classroom are undeveloped, such as the use of discussion and interaction related to subject matter. With its reliance on self-testing, little time is given for answers that cannot be objectively scored; therefore, the answers must be either right or wrong, leaving no opportunity to ask questions about issues where the answers are not so readily available. In a monograph titled "Curriculum: Implementation in Three Christian Schools" Harro Van Brummelen (1989) describes the imbalanced, de-personalized PACE programs that involve "no composition, no listening or speaking activities, no research projects, and no opportunities to develop social skills or creative abilities....[and where] blind acceptance was more important than interpretation, synthesis, analysis and evaluation" (p. 11).

The ACE system does reward highly motivated students who can pass the PACE exams quickly; in fact, I had several ACE students in college who were sixteen because they could

graduate whenever they finished; however, they were often not as socially mature as their peers, not only because they were younger, but because they had experienced little contact with their peers in a classroom setting.

Autonomy versus Conformity

While ACE's individualized focus at first appears to offer a great deal of flexibility within education, a closer analysis reveals that the ACE school is actually rigidly structured. Rose (1988) identified the irony of this unique system:

> The question of how much control and conformity versus how much autonomy and self-direction characterizes school life is complex. While a high degree of supervision and routinization characterize [these schools' lives], the question of autonomy is an interesting one. The degree of autonomy is regulated, but within those limits students set their own curricular goals. (p. 138)

In independent research studies, Susan Rose and Paul Parsons interviewed ACE schools, students, and administrators, Rose from an academic perspective and Parsons from a journalistic perspective. It is interesting to note that their responses to the ACE schools were very similar. Their studies were very thorough, and as I read their studies I wondered what new information could be added to their research. I felt their responses, though guarded with an

effort toward objectivity, were similar to mine: incredulity that an educational system could survive, even thrive, while promoting antipathy toward the teacher, an essential component of education. I had to sublimate my "teacher ire" at the audacity of creating a system in which the teacher is actually written out of the curriculum. Yet I had to admit that some of the theories about students taking control of their own educuation were as progressive as the work of John Dewey.

Among those interviewed by Rose and Parsons, reactions to ACE were mixed. Some felt it was as good as the old-time schoolhouse run in a church by a preacher, while others had doubts as to the reliability of its seemingly outdated methods. For those who not only want a return to the "old time religion" but also the old time education, ACE fits the agenda. Some of the positive responses to ACE were that students accepted responsibility for their own learning and they weren't forced to wait for others to catch up if they were able to master concepts quickly. A negative comment was that the system makes it easy to cheat. One principal stated, "It's easy to look at the answer book and memorize the answers. The goal then becomes passing the tests, and not learning" (Parsons, 1987, p. 72). Another administrator added that the push for conformity appeared to be creating automatons (Parsons, 1987).

Philosophical Theories Applied to ACE

In Niebuhr's Christo-Cultural framework, ACE, or School of Tomorrow as it is now called, fits within the Christ Against Culture category. However, there are some contradictions within this classification. In some ways the fusion of a systematic and mandated approach with flexible and individualistic methods resembles the dualists. Niebuhr's description of dualists as cultural conservatives certainly defines ACE as well. However, unlike ACE proponents, the dualists see no hope for progress even within the Christian community. They "make do" the best they can in a fallen world, but consider the real life as the life to come. The kind of nationalism fostered within the ACE community is an "us versus them" attitude in which the evils of the world can only be overcome by complete separation and renunciation of culture.

Educational Theories Applied to ACE

Tyler's first question "What educational purposes should the school seek?" applied to ACE, requires a multi-faceted answer. According to Rose (1988), the schools both resist and reinforce the values of the secular world, making identification of their primary purpose difficult.

In a Christian society that upholds the Christ Against Culture view, exclusion from the public square is not a bad thing; in fact, it is based on the biblical injunction not to

"be conformed to the world." However, despite their separation from society, ACE schools promote a strong nationalistic ideal. Parsons (1987) writes that in the ACE curriculum, "The short-term purpose of these rapidly multiplying schools is to give the youth a moral as well as an academic education. The long-term purpose is ultimately to change the state and health of the Republic"(p. 6). ACE, then, has a two-fold purpose: explicitly, to provide a Christian education, and implicitly, to sanction nationalism as a virtue.

Tyler's second and third questions, "How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these objectives?" and "How can learning experiences be organized for effective instruction?," can be answered collectively. To design a curriculum completely independent of instruction, the subject matter must be closed-ended rather than open-ended. For example, only material that has a right or wrong answer can be selected; otherwise, an outside party would need to participate in the process. With a regimented independent study system, ACE anticipates the students' responses and avoids the intrusion of a second party. In addition to the isolation that engenders control, the rigidity of the daily schedule (one hour of work, five minutes of break) precludes much of the socializing that is usually part of an adolescent's school day.

The insistence on a curriculum that offers so little autonomy seems to contradict the initial purpose of Christian education, which was to give students from Christian families the freedom of religious expression. To disavow students the right to engage in free discussion, open-ended learning, and creative ways to interpret material confuses the standard of the absolute value system of Christianity with an absolutist method of teaching, which has no legitimate Christian basis. This confusion appears to be ubiquitous in Christian school publishing.

Conclusion

ACE focuses on an individual, self-guided education in which a student highly motivated and goal oriented may be able to thrive. The classroom and coursework themselves are highly structured, but the student does experience freedom in choosing his rate of study and to some degree his course of study. The program offers little opportunity for interaction among peers or with an instructor. However, it does provide an alternative to public education for those who do not have access to a larger, more conventionaly structured classroom.

A 'BEKA BOOKS

The largest distributer of Christian school material in the United States, A 'Beka Book Company functions like the publishers who provide textbooks for public schools. Their writers and editors maintain a low profile and primarily publish without discussing their philosophy in any additional publications. Like Harper & Row or Prentice Hall, A 'Beka provides the textbooks, and the consumers buy them. Their merit is dependent on their clientele's satisfaction and the sale of books; they do not seem to operate in a multifarious market where their philosophy of education is scrutinized by others or explained by themselves.

Although both A 'Beka and Bob Jones are subsidiaries of colleges, A 'Beka's relationship with Pensacola Christian College appears to be more independent from the relationship of BJU Press to its parent college. This low profile has made it extremely difficult to find books *by* A 'Beka *about* A 'Beka, in terms of a guiding philosophy or rationale for their curriculum. As a result I have had to rely primarily on interpretation of the texts to discern their philosophical position and educational theories. I have also used the case studies of Rose and Parsons, and these have their natural biases that are left undefended by A 'Beka's writers. I will do the best I can to present a fair assessment of the textbooks, but as I stated in my first chapter, textbooks are

the end product of the thinking behind them, and I had hoped to extend my study to the defined rationale of their editorial staff in order to understand the curricular objectives in the books themselves.

I was fortunate to have obtained the entire high school grammar, composition, and literature series from A 'Beka, including the teacher's guides and correspondence lessons for homeschoolers or missionary children. Since my latest copyright date of correspondence material, A 'Beka, as well as the other publishers, have updated and escalated their material for the homeschool market; however, the textbooks designed for classrooms that I reviewed are still being used and their material seems quite dated. The photographs of the authors are often archaic, depicting poets in their younger days instead of in their maturity. Even the photograph of John Updike, who is still living, was probably taken in his thirties, which makes the material appear outdated even if it is current. Since their copyright dates are from the eighties, multicultural studies and gender issues, which reflect the current direction of the language arts curriculum, are not addressed.

Analysis of Curriculum

In the American Literature text, the selections include a combination of the traditional canon: Robert Frost, T.S. Eliot, E.A. Robinson, James Weldon Johnson, John Updike, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Eudora Welty and Ernest Hemmingway, along

with more overtly Christian writers like Billy Sunday, William Jennings Bryan, and Elisabeth Elliot. The study questions following the text apply to the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy for the cognitive domains, knowledge, comprehension, and some application, while the development of the higher levels, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are scarce.

For example, the questions over Robert Frost's poem "Birches" asks for examples of imagery, metaphor, and simile. Further questions include the use of description and explanation, but they are applied to concrete images, such as the tree itself or the meaning of certain lines. One study question reads: "Explain lines 52-53" (Anderson & Hicks, 1983, p. 337). Yet no question precedes it to stimulate an understanding within the student beyond mere summarization, reflecting the dearth of necessary background for an adequate understanding of the poem. In another study question, the editors identify lines 5-20 as a "digression." While this is a valid observation, no explanation is given as to what the lines are a digression *from;* as a result, the point of the digression could be missed. Lines 21-22 read: "But I was going to say when Truth broke in / With all her matter of fact about the icestorm" (Anderson & Hicks, 1983, p. 337). For any student, and especially a Christian student, the capitalization of the word Truth offers possibilities for interpretation. Students are given only a directive,

however, with little or no help in exploring possibile meanings.

I consulted the teacher's guide, Themes in Literature (1991), to see if further explanation of the depth of poetry was provided, but the only help given to the teacher was the "answers" to the questions, and only one answer was given per question, disallowing multiple interpretations and observations.

The text's introduction to "Birches" reads: "The description of birch trees is used to remind us of our dominion over nature" (Anderson & Hicks, 1983, p. 336). This conclusion avoids the depth of this dark poem resulting in an oversimplified, linear and truncated interpretation. My point, however, is more the missed opportunity than the inferiority of interpretation. "Birches" offers a wealth of possible interpretations about adolescence, isolation, disappointment, aging, God, and heaven. These themes are certainly themes relevant to a Christian curriculum, and a cursory coverage of literature reflects a lack of precision and depth on the editors' part more than a deliberate attempt to avoid sensitive issues.

Beyond mere lack of precision, the text editors often evaluate the beliefs of non-Christian writers. For example, in the section over Transcendentalism, they write a brief disclaimer, justifying their inclusion of Emerson in the text:

> Although many of his poems express his Transcendental views, the very observations that aid the pantheist in the worship of nature can often cause the Christian to worship God, The Author of nature. As the Protestant reformer John Calvin stated long ago: "Since all truth is from God, if anything has been said aptly and truly even by impious men, it ought not be rejected, because it proceeded from God. And since all things are of God, why is it not lawful to turn to his glory whatever may be aptly applied to this use?" (Anderson & Hicks, 1983, p. 95).

The editors then take Emerson to task, criticizing his disregard for convention, conformity, and religion as a whole. The questions following Emerson's essays use Scripture to refute his points. One question following Emerson's "Self-Reliance" asks, "According to Emerson, what is the only thing that can bring peace? Why is he mistaken? (Anderson & Hicks, 1983, p. 94). Addressing the issue of "finding peace" from a secular and a Christian perspective is a valid comparison; however, the second part of the question, "Why is he mistaken?" directs the student's own responses to a prescribed answer, once again missing an opportunity for a discussion of varying interpretations. To avoid telling students what to think, another question might have been to ask the readers what they would say to Emerson. This would

have given them a freedom of response and provided an atmosphere for students to synthesize literature and faith.

The teacher's guide, Themes in Literature (1991), does include two sections for each work geared toward developing students' higher level thinking skills, "Think it Through" and "Write About It." In the "Think it Through" section the editors claim that it provides "questions to stimulate thoughtful consideration of each selection and to build Christian character," and the writing section asks for written responses to the readings An additional book for teachers provides tests consisting of short answer, matching, and multiple choice questions, as well as an answer key. In a section of the teacher's guide, a suggested schedule is provided, and the editors advise teachers to spend less time on literature and save one half of the year for grammar and composition, but from the appearance of the text, the emphasis is more on grammar than composition. The editors write:

> The following schedule lists other subjects and the suggested amount of time that should be given to each:
>
> Checking the homework daily
> (to see that everyone has it): 2 - 4 minutes
>
> Reciting the poem daily: 3 minutes
>
> Reviewing old vocabulary, and introducing
> new vocabulary (twice weekly): 5-7 minutes

Discussing literature (3 or 4 times weekly):	6 minutes
Giving and grading a weekly spelling, vocabulary or grammar quiz:	15 minutes
Giving and grading the poetry quiz (once every 3 weeks):	15 minutes
Introducing the new spelling list (once each week):	5 minutes
Writing a composition in class (when mentioned in curriculum):	15-20 minutes
Giving and grading a weekly reading speed and comprehension quiz:	10-20 minutes

(ABP, 1991, p. 21)

In the above schedule, only six minutes is suggested for discussion, and that is only for three or four times a week. The rest of the time is teacher directed activities of checking, quizzing, reciting, and grading. Although fifteen minutes is allotted for writing a composition, this writing occurs only when it is mentioned in the curriculum. With a schedule so regimented, students, again, are dehumanized. Van Brummelen (1989) cites a teacher from a Christian school whose exasperation with A 'Beka underscores some of its inherent weaknesses:

> The A 'Beka program is drill, drill, memory, memory, line upon line, precept upon precept. The children are treated like machines. There is no room for individual response. Early on it's purely phonetic, with meaningless words and nonsense syllables. Later readers...misapply Scripture; a lot of the "Christian" stuff is not very good quality. Children do need to see the Christian perspective on any issue of the day. We do need Christian textbooks but it's difficult to find good ones. (p. 19)

The life sciences textbook, Biology, God's Living Creation, seems to be more creatively designed with caricatures of famous scientists, though the controversial ones are lampooned, and the questions apply higher cognitive skills with terms like describe, define, and apply. In the text, A 'Beka devotes two chapters to an argument against evolution, one titled "Evolution: A Retreat from Science," and the other titled "Why I Accept the Genesis Record." The latter chapter is a reprint of a speech given in 1959 by Dr. John Raymond Hand, a physics teacher in Indiana. The explicit purpose is to convince students that evolution is a hoax; the implicit purpose is to impugn science through a one-sided argument and a cursory explanation of the theory of evolution.

In an effort to refute Darwin, the chapter reads: "Darwin's idea of the survival of the fittest makes very

obvious his inability to reason clearly" (ABP, 1986, p. 347). It goes on to say that Darwin is typical of men throughout history who have "not chosen to keep God in their thoughts" (ABP, 1986, p. 347) and then continues to discredit him throughout the chapter. Although I am not a "Darwinist" in the sense that I too accept a God-originated universe, the tactics in this text are unnecessary for two reasons: 1) if the writers believe the creation account is true, the truth speaks for itself and needs no personal indictment against detractors, and 2) discounting a theory that *is* the normative belief in society fails to adequately prepare their students to recognize the pervasive acceptance of evolution outside of the Christian culture. Summarizing the presentation against evolution the editors dismiss any notion of its credibility, making it appear to be no more than the silly notions of a few rebellious scientists:

> In review, the acceptance or rejection of evolution was not dependent upon one's scientific knowledge or aptitude, but upon one's readiness to find a materialistic explanation for life; in other words, on one's faith. Most thinking men recognized this at first and did not waste their time trying to support it. Others simply ignored it, thinking that, like a bad cold, it would go away. But it did not go away. More like a dreaded disease, evolution sank into sinful men's

hearts to poison generations and today is threatening to destroy science itself. (ABP, 1986, p.348)

In his assessment of A 'Beka's treatment of evolution Parsons (1987) discusses the authors refutation of evolution through "comparative anatomy, embryology, parasitology, taxonomy, paleontology, and genetics" (p. 91). He questions the sensibilities of those who would use science to refute science:

> The irony is that fundamentalists appear to have capitulated to the same agenda that the secularists have--namely, they both accept the concept of empirical science as an arbiter of truth. This emphasis on acquiring scientific support for creationism seems strangely out of place among people who seek to live by faith based on absolute truth. (Parsons, 1987, p. 91)

Ideology

In her observation of the essential tension between public and private school ideologies, Susan Rose (1988) outlines the somewhat sarcastic claims that A.A. Baker, vice-president of Pensacola Christian Schools and A 'Beka Books Publications, makes against what he calls a "God-denying progressive, pragmatic education":

1. Express yourself.
2. Do your own thing.
3. Get rid of your inhibitions.

4. The individual is no longer important; it is the group that counts.
5. Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is useless.
6. You learn only by experience.
7. Competition in any form is taboo.
8. Nationalism is a dirty word.
9. The American way is not the best way.
10. If it satisfies a want, it must be right. (p. 40)

Rose points out the dichotomy in Baker's thinking, where 1 - 3 reject an individualistic focus, and 4 - 10 reject a collective focus. His inconsistency is a reflection of the paradoxical dualism in American society between "the values of individualism and egalitarianism, and liberty and equality" (Rose, 1988, p. 40). Ironically, the Christian school movement is a strong statement against a collective society since their purpose is, at its core, separation from the mainstream; yet their curriculum discourages individuality and instills a collective mentality that requires allegiance to their own group.

According to Rose (1988), "Christian schools are proposing holistic, authoritative, disciplined, and God-centered education that emphasizes character development and spiritual training. Affective and moral domains are considered at least as important as cognitive domains" (p. 40). To many of us, the affective and moral domains should be an important component of a curriculum, and the

inclusion of them does not automatically indicate an academically inferior program; in fact, much of the recent studies in curriculum would encourage educators to appeal to the whole person, of which the affective and moral domains are an integral part. The real dilemma is not whether "nonacademic" aspects should be included, but rather how to emphasize these feelings and values without manipulation or control.

A 'Beka curriculum promotes a sense of nationalism which equates America with Christianity. Baker's characterization of a "God-denying, progressive" education includes an indictment against those who do not "rally around the flag" as the most God-ordained and chosen nation on the earth. In my first chapter I identified one of the reasons for Christian schools' inability to see beyond its own interpretations of the American way as the fact that it is rooted in a vision that leans backward instead of pushing forward. One example of this romanticism of the past can be seen in one of A 'Beka's U.S. history books that presents an image of the good old days:

> The American home in 1900 was a place where children learned to honor their father and mother, to be courteous and honest in their dealings, to be obedient and submissive to authority, and to distinguish right from wrong in all matters. The father was the head of the house, and the mother was his honored companion and

> helper. Children were lovingly taught what was expected of them and lovingly punished when they disobeyed. (Parsons, 1987, p.48)

Nationalism is itself a collective response. Even though one can be patriotic with or without a group, the uplifting of a nation over other nations engenders a kind of "group-think," where those outside the favored nation are excluded and those within are part of the elite. To identify A 'Beka within Neibuhr's Christ Against Culture category seems to contradict the necessary "culture" germane to nationalistic thinking; however, the sense of superiority of one group over another group creates antagonism toward those who do not belong, and for A 'Beka, the emphasis seems to be "taking care of our own" over evangelizing those outside, at least in terms of curriculum.

Educational Theory Applied to A 'Beka

Tyler's first question "What educational purposes should the school seek?", can be answered by attending to both the explicit and implicit curriculum defined by Eisner. The explicit curriculum is to fashion a program that, as Rose identifies, is holistic, authoritative, disciplined, and God-centered. Implicit in the curriculum is a resistance to change, even when that change may be positive, and a prescription for a behaviorally oriented religion. A 'Beka achieves its implicit purposes by selecting material in the literature that underscores Christian belief or moralizing

around material that does not. In the science texts, the material is selected in favor of Christian belief and the other side is maligned. One might think that this practice is a terrible injustice, but in their behalf, it is a passionate attempt to restore what the public schools have denied. In terms of evolution, neither side plays fair.

Behavioristic Methods. Envisioning a curriculum that can enhance the students' obedience to authority and acceptance of discipline, A 'Beka has utilized a traditional program for its organization and evaluation, one that "encourages rote learning and drill, (Rose, 1988, p. 41). In his book When Right Is Wrong, Richard Manatt (1995), Professor of Education at Iowa State University, states that the fundamentalists' reaction against Outcome Based Education (OBE) and their urgency for a return to basics characterizes a misunderstanding of the nature of cognitive competence, which no longer follows a behavioristic model. He says research in cognitive psychology reveals that a student's manner of organizing his knowledge is an indication of how well he will be able to retain it. Manatt (1995) states that "the spokespeople for the Fundamentalists who rail against the whole language approach to reading and insist upon drills in phonics are clearly following behaviorist views from the past" (p. 77-78).

BOB JONES UNIVERSITY PRESS

Bob Jones University Press is the second largest book distributer for Christian schools and has shown a significant growth in the industry since they began publishing curriculum for day schools in 1974.A spokesman for the university and press, James Deunink writes:

> Bob Jones University, matriculating over 6,000 students annually to its elementary, junior high school, academy, undergraduate, and graduate programs, is the oldest fundamental Christian education institution in America. The University has long been recognized as the leader in the production of superior Christian educational programs and materials. As an institution, we are committed to helping prepare teachers, principals and others who have dedicated their lives to the service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. (Deunink, 1984, p. vi)

For those of us in the Christian community, the name Bob Jones University conjures up a formidable mental picture of a straight-laced campus with a "watchdog" administration measuring (with a ruler, no less) the distance between male and female students. "The school Billy Graham was kicked out of" is what one often hears when mentioning their name in Christian circles (which is only a rumor as the archives will attest; Graham left on his own accord). Yet when asking home

school or Christian school parents about Bob Jones curriculum, consumers of their publications often say it is the best on the market. One administrator from a Christian school in California states, "On the West Coast, Bob Jones has a reputation of being a hard-nosed, legalistic, dogmatic school. But that dogma doesn't show through in their books" (Parsons, 1987, p. 42).

Textbook Analysis

By appearances, I felt the BJU text had immediate appeal; the text Writing and Grammar 9 is a colorful, thorough workbook that is interactive and conversant with the reader. The skills build from the more simple to the complex. For example, the students are introduced to sentence patterns, then learn ways to write various types of letters, create anecdotes, and apply the techniques of paraphrasing. All of these are taught imaginatively, with exercises pertaining to adolescent stories or biblical figures. Interspersed throughout the text are sections called "Signal & Symbol," which demonstrate, often with a brief biographical narrative, the use of symbols in communications to create a new language, as in Braille or the Morse Code. Included among worksheet exercises are lengthier writing assignments appealing to the higher cognitive skills.

In her review of BJUP's 1994 edition of World History, Duffy (1995) writes, "This is one of BJUP's best books. Suggested for tenth grade, this book studies world history

from Christian and patriotic perspectives. It cautions against placing our faith in governmental solutions, although, in my opinion, it sometimes treats some of the evils of government too benignly" (p. 191). Duffy frequentlly praises the quality and thoroughness of BJUP and often goes into more detail when comparing their textbooks to other textbooks.

From another perspective, Frank Parsons (1987) would strongly disagree with her; rather than seeing the tone as benign toward government, Parsons indicts the editors of BJU texts for their zealous opinions, creating curriculum that is "bathed in commentary" (p. 39). The flagrant use of evaluative comments in the textbooks (not just in the BJUP texts but in A 'Beka and ACE as well) are especially evident in the social studies material.

Characterized by a nationalistic ethos, BJUP uses the texts as a podium to preach American idealism,equating patriotism with spiritual virtues. Included in the emphasis on nationalism is a resistence to divergent cultures and religious practices that in the context of their presentation will diminish the Christian way of life.

Translated from BJU's philosophy to their texts is an anti-Catholic position that questions whether Catholicism is a legitimate Christian faith. In an excerpt from a social studies text, Columbus' credibility is put on the line, not as the revisionists would do it, but because Columbus was a

Catholic: "Whether he was a true Christian or a devout Catholic,...Columbus believed that his decision to sail west resulted from God's leading" (Bob Jones University Press, 1982, p.26). Using an either/or injunction implies that Catholics and Christians are mutually exclusive choices rather than dimensions of each other.

The following two excerpts from BJUP texts further reveal the biases inherent in the philosophy of BJUP, including oversimplifying history's past and sanctioning America's efforts as divinely inspired.

> Those who founded the American colonies were, for the most part, deeply religious. Not all of them were Christians in the biblical sense of the term, but they all recognized God as the creator and ruler of the earth. It is no accident that this nation eventually became the strongest and most prosperous on earth. (BJUP, 1982, p. 86).

> Their treatment of women BJUP inadvertantly blameswomen for voting in a corrupt government in their choice of a candidate's looks over his credentials.
>
> Many reformers believed that women could use their vote to abolish corrupt insitutions and practices.
>
> Ironically, however, the first national election held under the provisions of the Nineteenth Amendment brought to the White House the handsome Warren G. Harding, whose

> administration was one of the most corrupt in the nation's history. (BJUP, 1982, p. 436)

Reputation and Influence

The textbook analysis reveals much of the philosophical underpinnings of Bob Jones University Press, and although the opinions reflected above are an anathema to most of us in the modern world, Bob Jones University is held in highest esteem by fundamentalist families and educators. In God's Choice (1986), Peshkin interviews students, parents, and teachers, and among these interviews, Bob Jones is seen as the premier option among Christian colleges. In his section "Four Portraits," one student confides in Peshkin:

> Everyone is always pushing B.J. My parents don't push it; they don't push any college. But the teachers say, "B.J. is the best school academically, it's going to help you, you can go there and be something," and stuff like that, you know. "Well, hey, I want to go to Maranatha and be something there." "Well, that's fine, but you know B.J. is the best school." Therefore, it makes me want to say, "Take your B.J., I don't want to go there." (p. 213)

Another student tells Peshkin, "My major consideration for picking B.J. is how good their qualifications are under that major, what kind of courses they offer, what kind of reputation they have..." (Peshkin, 1986, p. 203).

Many fundamentalist schools see themselves as preparatory schools for Bob Jones University, much like other families might prepare their children for the Ivy Leagues. These schools are even referred to as "Bob Jones" schools because they replicate their policies in dress codes, behavior, and educational theories. Whereas A 'Beka operates solely as a publisher for those that buy their texts, Bob Jones operates as a mentor and advisor to the schools that uniformly adopt their programs. The schools that use an occasional BJUP series are not Bob Jones schools and may be fairly autonomous from the school, but the ones who are "Bob Jones Schools" have its indelible stamp on their pervading philosophy.

Faculty on Philosophy

In a collection of articles edited by James W. Deuink titled Some Light on Christian Education written by members of their faculty, I found an interesting juxtaposition of emotional, reactionary, language and genial attitudes toward academics, which made me wonder how such differing perspectives work side by side. In one of the articles, "Secular Humanism in Christian Schools?" Elmer Rumminger (1984), chairman of the Department of Radio and Television at the University, vehemently writes: "The 'official religion' of the public school system—secular humanism—is being taught in many Christian schools. It may not be the intent, but unfortunately many of the textbooks now being used in

Christian schools are laced through with this satanic philosophy" (p. 13). He goes on to accuse humanists of murder, free sex, hedonism, and rebellion of every kind.

Another article found in Some Light on Christian Education, "The Value of a Christian Liberal Arts Education," by Guenter E. Salter (1984), Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, reflects on the necessity of a liberal arts education in which the individual learns to be at home in the world of the mind and ideas (p. 45). He refutes the belief among what he terms the "far right" that a liberal arts education compromises faith and morals: "Such intellectual myopia demonstrated by the critics implies an inverse relationship between a person's academic attainments and his commitments to scriptural truth; it suggests, in fact, that higher education may be detrimental to a person's spiritual health" (Salter, 1984, p. 44). Salter then points to biblical figures who had been recipients of a liberal arts education and used that advantage to serve God. He warns against the direction that society is taking: a mindless descent into emotionalism in which answers are sought out of feeling rather than deliberation and reason. He defends the educated Christian "who has learned to examine the issues rationally, judge their merits critically, and weigh alternatives critically in order to reach intelligent decisions" (Salter, 1984, p. 46).

In another compilation of articles by the faculty at Bob Jones University entitled A Fresh Look at Christian Education (1988), Ronald Horton, Chairman of the English Department, discusses the issue of censorship in the Christian setting. Recognizing the complexity of censorship, he delineates the opposing positions among two groups of Christians whose views conflict, one he terms permissivist and the other exclusivist. Classifying Christianity Today as a prototype of the permissivist view because it recognizes aesthetic value and the presentation of an honest view at the risk of not "standing on absolute moral principles," he aligns the Bob Jones University's policies with the exclusivist view. The exclusivists claim that "since evil is evil any exposure to it is wrong for even the most praiseworthy of purposes" (Horton, 1988, p. 109). Horton (1988) concludes, "If eschewing evil requires foregoing a liberal arts education even in a Christian education environment, then so be it" (p. 109).

In an article "No Other Foundation," Guenter Salter (1984) recognizes the necessity of the school to abide by the rules of the state:

> The subjection of the Christian school to the control of the state would be, in effect, the subjection of the church and home to secular domination. Nevertheless, while zealously guarding his God-imposed responsibility, the Christian educator acknowledges that he is also a

> citizen of a secular state and a community member. He will, therefore, cooperate with secular powers where just and reasonable requests do not violate biblical principles, such as adherence to building and fire codes. In doing so, he dutifully renders to Caeser the things that are Caesar's. (p. 12)

One can see that among the faculty at Bob Jones attitudes appear to vary significantly. Their vast experience with Christian schools has made them a bit more realistic about the limitations and weaknesses in the movement compared to the policy makers at ACSI. James Deuink, editor and registrar for the University, seems to be a reflective and reasonable writer who looks squarely at the vicissitudes of the Christian schools' phases in the past few years. He recognizes that even though a good portion of Christian schools are thriving, others have "shortcomings so pronounced as to have a negative impact" on the others (Deuink, 1988, p. 3). He urges schools to require of teachers more than a "pure heart and a willingness to work for sacrificial wages;" he states, "Teachers must be knowledgeable in the subject matter and skills they are charged to teach" (Deuink, 1988, p. 5).

Philosophical Theory Applied to Bob Jones

After reading the philosophies of the curriculum writers, I initially concluded that Neibuhr's description of the dualist, Christ and Culture in Paradox, best

characterizes the position of Bob Jones University. Whereas the anti-cultural views of ACSI reveal some similarities to Bob Jones in terms of their emphatically negative view of culture, Bob Jones faculty's writing communicates an awareness of society's inevitable presence and the unfortunate necessity of dealing with it. Neibuhr (1951) states that when the dualist "deals with the problems of culture, he cannot forget that the dark sides of human social life, such as vices, crimes, wars, and punishments, are weapons in the hands of a wrathful God of mercy, as well as assertions of human wrath and man's godlessness" (p. 159). To the dualist, the agents of a Christian society are more to prevent destruction rather than to further the attainment of a positive good (Neibuhr, 1951, p. 165). Neibuhr concludes that the logical consequence of viewing social forces as necessary constraints for prevention of evil is cultural conservatism, which was evident in Horton's description of permissivists and exclusivists, and Rumminger's accusation of satanism in secular textbooks.

However, it is the anti-culturalists' jaded eye toward culture that Bob Jones University Press (BJUP) has prepared a Christian Student Dictionary because they feel regular student dictionaries present a biased view toward religion. Parsons (1987) quotes John L. Cross, marketing director for BJU Press:

> Some people wonder about the need for a Christian Dictionary...But our current dictionaries are written by liberals. It shows up in word selections and in role reversals given in the examples, like the woman going off to work and the man staying home with the children. (p. 44)

The extreme isolationist views and the radicalization of moral imperatives are more characterized by a Christ Against Culture position. Parson's excerpts further convinced me. It seems that the publisher is more moderate than the school and those that are under its umbrella are far to the right of the publisher.

Educational Theory Applied to Bob Jones

To ascertain "the educational purposes...the school seek[s] to attain" (Schubert, 1986, p. 171), I referred to the article, "Bob Jones Sr.'s Educational Philosophy," by Bob Jones III (1984) who writes that discipline and "right thinking" are at the core of a sound educational philosophy. A curriculum demonstrating these as priorities would center on purposes that present material from a positivistic perspective. In presentation and organization, the material is chosen so that answers are clear and the students have an authority behind the answers. Discussion and interaction are kept at a minimum (pp. 1-5). In Leigh's experience at a Bob

Jones school, her day was organized by those in authority. Her need to be told what to do was so ingrained that she felt more secure with those extremes intact. In his book Language in Thought and Action, S.I. Hayakawa (1972) calls those who need strong external controls "lost children" because they are always looking outward rather than within for their boundaries (p. 268). For Leigh, external dependence was broken when she changed environments. Others choose to remain within that cocoon, and for them, Bob Jones is the right place.

Conclusion

Bob Jones University Press remains a vanguard in Christian school publishing as providers of curriculum materials and promulgators of their university. Since their position remains inextricably bound to the principles of the founder, Bob Jones Press is not as concerned with the market as they are their mission. It is unlikely that their theories will change, even at the risk of losing constituents. The new vision will have to come from somewhere else.

CHAPTER V

INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

"It is through good education that all the good in the world arises"

- Kant

The choice to privately or publicly educate one's children is a privilege provided by a democratic system, and the reasons behind each decision are as unique and personal as the thumbprints of the children for whom these decisions are made. As our nation changes its philosophical complexion to inclusiveness through the celebration of human diversity, groups that previously enjoyed dominant positions are feeling squeezed out of the mainstream. Some are choosing to fight the system through activist groups, while others are quietly protesting as they form separate communities of like mind. Yet it is the diversity of a pluralistic society that contributes to the survival of private schools.

To put it more simply, the eradication of either group, public or private, would create a society that no longer welcomed freedom of expression, but instead required a homogeneous and controlled system. The dilemma does not lie within the differing opinions, but in the inability to

communicate these differences: one group turning a deaf ear to the other prevents the necessary communication that could create understanding.

As I take my place among the researchers who have studied Christian schools, I must admit I have stood on their shoulders: With their ethnographic studies, Alan Peshkin, Susan Rose, and Paul Parsons performed much of the preliminary legwork for me by visiting the schools or living in the communities they studied. Because of their thorough research I could in some ways only emulate their living, qualitative studies by following behind them with documents and artifacts that added to the conversation.

However, I do feel that my position within the Christian community has added a dimension that I have not seen in any of the previous research on the problems within Christian schools. I have read insightful works by Christian scholars like Nicholas Wolterstorff, Henry Blamires, Mark Noll, Stanley Hauerwas, Stephen Carter, and C.S. Lewis who have analyzed the state of education in the modern world and the Christian's role in it; I have studied Christian philosophers who have provided a standard whereby to evaluate what constitutes a Christian perspective; and I have read classic pieces by Christians whose vision for education challenges the modern standard. Yet the fundamentalist Christian day schools seem to be the object of study more for those outside the Christian milieu than from within.

I have attempted to understand the reason behind the dearth of information regarding Christian schools among Christian scholars, and I have concluded that their reasons for avoiding this subject may be similar to the hesitation that I have felt throughout my study: the meaning behind the Biblical injunction, "Judge not, lest you too be judged." To study members of our own group, and more specifically to openly disagree with them in a secular context, feels something like betrayal. I am reminded of Nietzsche's warning: "We must be careful that in fighting monsters we do not become monsters ourselves" (Schubert, 1986, p. 341).

My purpose was not to fight the Christian day school, nor to present them and their publishers as monsters, but rather to understand their perspective of faith in light of a larger context of faith that seems so different from theirs. To sift through the confusion, Neibuhr's classic definitions helped clarify and classify the distinctions and the reasons behind them, providing me with an answer to my first guiding question of the study: What philosophy guides the curriculum?

As I analyzed the data, I discovered that, despite some nuances among them that precluded a "clean" classification, a similar philosophy guided ACE, A 'Beka, Bob Jones, and ACSI, which I discussed in my narrative report as the Christ Against Culture position. As I read statements by spokespersons from the publishing companies I found the

following similarities: a call for separateness, a general rejection (or at most tolerance) of culture, a linear perception of society, tradition and roles, and a certainty about the past and the future.

The Call For Separateness

The call for separateness is, as I stated in my first chapter, a radicalization of the scriptural injunction to "come out from among them and be ye separate." Inherent in the separation, however, is the belief that separation alone will result in cleansing, that culture, rather than the human heart, is the contaminant. This assumption breeds a kind of hubris, or pride, in the isolated community to which one belongs and a disdain for those outside that culture. To cling to the presuppostion that a separate culture will purify is itself a kind of apostacy, because at the heart of Christian orthodoxy is the admission that grace is outside the possibility of human effort.

A General Rejection of Culture

The rejection of society that is part and parcel of the Christian school movement parallels the former injunction for separateness, and it makes sense on some levels. The images of popular culture are seductive for young and old alike, and like the wistful persona in the Wordsworth poem, "The World Is Too Much With Us," we long for peace from the cacaphony of distractions that pull on our imaginations (Epperson, Givens,

Gray & Hall, 1994, p. 274). Hoping for a brief stay against the inevitable realities that will face their children, parents are looking for a safe place and the public schools can no longer offer it. Parents learn quickly, however, that Christian schools are not able to offer complete separation because children exist among televisions, cinemas, radios, magazines and books. Even families who censor these often learn that their children find ways to engage the culture outside the home.

A Linear Perception of Society, Tradition and Roles

Still lingering in the minds of many people today is the American Dream: a traditional family consisting of a father, mother, and a few kids; a nice job with Mom in the kitchen and Dad at the office; kids secure and warm in their house where Mom is a shout away. It is a nice image, and it may be a reality for a few, but the complexities of modern life have changed the course of our destinies. Our pluralistic society has turned roles, relationships, education, neighborhoods, economics, and tradition upside down, and to fight against the changing culture is to howl at the moon. One cannot disclaim a dream, but when the dream is equated with the will of God, it becomes an elitist and absolute belief that has to go.

The presentation of America as a nation exclusively blessed by God is so ubiquitous in Christian school curriculum that ACE's entire motif is red, white, and blue.

The social studies texts by A 'Beka, BJUP, and ACE proudly proclaim American superiority and God's favor as they discuss events in history from their patriotic perspectives. In The Political Meaning of Christianity Glen Tinder (1994) warns against the pride inherent in nationalism and states that for Christianity to be wedded to any political idea is "idolatrous and thus subversive of Christian faith" (p. 546) because society is a "mere wordly order and a mere human creation and can never do justice to the glory of the human beings within it" (p. 546). To uplift America, or any country, at the cost of subjugating other countries, is not patriotism; it is pride.

A Certainty About the Past, Present and Future

To extend Paul Parsons' metaphor that Christian school literature is "bathed in commentary," one could also say it is "soaked in certainty." The absolute language of certainty can be found in the writings of Kienel, Bob Jones III, and Donald Howard, the major spokespersons for the publishers. Whereas some absolutes do exist within the Christian faith, absolutism does not. In fact, Tinder (1994) quotes Tocqueville's observations of Americans, stating "that Christianity tends to make a people 'circumspect and undecided' with 'its impulses...checked and its works unfinished'" (p. 550). Tinder states that Tocqueville's approving description recognizes that Christian faith "suggests that hesitation should have a part of our most

conscientious deeds," because, Tinder adds, "it is a mark of respect--for God and for the creatures with whom we share the earth" (p.550).

It is at this point of certainty that many Christians fight their greatest battles among themselves, and perhaps at the root of it our natural proclivities toward optimism, realism, and pessimism divide us, not the difference between faith and doubt. Nevertheless, when Christian schools dismiss life's complexities with a brush of the hand and a cliche' they are not preparing students for reality; worse still, when the difficulties are described in simplistic terms like "secular humanism," time will be spent shadowboxing rather than dealing realistically with life.

Current Publishing's Narrow Niche

Determining in my study that the publishers endorse the Christ Against Culture position, I have concluded that their views represent a narrow niche within the spectrum of differing beliefs among Christians. This leaves a large gap in available material for those Christians with less radical views. Unless the curriculum outside my study maintains a radically divergent view that has not been represented, it would seem that the market is flooded with basically the same products. Some might argue that only those families who want to withdraw from culture would want a Christian school. However, my two hypothetical families in the narrative review represent two out of thousands of reasons why families choose

private education, and not all are from an anti-cultural position.

Guiding Theories and Practices

My second guiding question was concerned with the way the Christian schools carry out their philosophy through the theories and practices. Among the available literature discussing their rationales, the four publishers in my study never volunteered a theory to describe the philosophical moorings that cemented their curriculum. No references to Dewey, Piaget, Bruner, or Tyler provided clues to theoretical positions. However, it wasn't difficult to identify their theories and the applications to them as I studied their books.

In terms of their emphases on right answers, control and certainty, objectified subject matter, and reinforcement of skills, the evident paradigm was positivistic (Schubert, 1986, p. 181). Using behavioristic methodology, the curriculum consisted of "operationally designed skills and knowledge" that emphasized traditional subjects like mathematics, social and natural sciences, and a "solid grounding in reading and writing" (Schubert, 1986, p. 16).

With behavioristic theories guiding the curriculum, children are controlled by rewards and punishments, and they learn early what behavior guides both rewards and punishment. Probably the most extreme example of behaviorism can be seen in the ACE curriculum where everything from the physical

surroundings to the hourly schedule is planned and controlled so strictly that at any given moment students in ACE schools are doing the same thing in Deluth, Minnesota that they are in Dothan, Alabama.

Confusing Absolutes with Absolutism

Tying biblical principles to their theories of positivism and behaviorism is difficult. In fact, the very principles of positivism were borne out of the elevation and deification of science, a phenomenon that served as Christianity's greatest enemy in the earlier part of the century. The application of such a rigid and objectified structure to education is the subject of C.S. Lewis' attack on education's application of scientism to nonscientific subject matter in his book The Abolition of Man. How ironic it is that fifty years later Christian schools are applying that same scientism that Lewis attacked from a Christian position.

It is true that obedience to authority is an important Christian virtue; however, social behaviorism diminishes human dignity by emphasizing observable behavior as the criteria for reward or punishment. In a Bob Jones article explaining the philosophy of the college, Bob Jones III lists four major points; two of them have to do with the necessity of administrating punishment even at the risk of public exposure and betrayal of confidence. Oftentimes these

techniques teach children to play a game of obedience rather than act as arbiters of their abilities to grow in character.

The Need for a New Vision

In my interpretation of the data, it appears that I might be suggesting that Christian schools jettison the struggle and return to the public schools. Yet despite my ambivalence toward the existing state of curriculum, I do believe that the potential to revive Christian education rests with a vision that has multiple dimensions, from which both the public and the private schools could benefit.

In her 1994 essay "Toward A Christian Aesthetic" Dorothy L. Sayers discusses the difficult state of the arts in an effort to, as she says, find the means "by which their mutilated limbs and withering branches may be restored by re-grafting into the main trunk of Christian tradition" (p. 218). Recognizing that the "arts are in a bad way," Sayers (1994) goes on to identify how things can be restored (p. 230).

Like the arts, everyone would agree that education is also "in a bad way" in terms of the battle for the curriculum, indicated by the use of war metaphors to describe the conflicting ideologies between the Christian and public schools. One technique exascerbating the conflict is the tendency for Christian school curriculum publishers to slant language and even evidence in their favor, but the same slanting happens in the secular textbooks. In art terms,

Sayers calls this phenomenon "spell-binding art" or the attempt to create the kind of emotions that spur people to action. She writes:

> It [spell-binding art] is directed to putting the behavior of the audience beneath the will of the spell-binder...In its vulgarest form it becomes pure propaganda. It can actually succeed in making its audience into the thing it desires to have them--it can really in the end corrupt the consciousness and destroy experience until the inner selves of its victims are wholly externalized and made the puppets and instruments of their own spurious passions. (p. 229)

Attempts to regain power (as in the Christian school), or to maintain power (as in the public school), have created a kind of "spell-binding curriculum" that seeks to control the responses of the readers by spurring them into some kind of feeling or action (like patriotism or environmentalism), making readers see things a certain way (like conservative or liberal politics), or corrupting the consciousness and externalizing readers into puppets whose sentiments are controlled by the outside rather than from within. Like spell-binding art , spell-binding curriculum seeks to produce the *behavior* without the *experience*. The curriculum tells the student what to do and feel and believe, and the rest is up to the multiple choice test.

Spell-binding curriculum does not really communicate power to the reader; it merely exerts power over the reader (Sayers, 1994, p. 230). Because it attempts to exert this kind of control, readers are robbed of the opportunity to let learning happen naturally, experientially, and autonomously.

Automatons or Anarchists?

What effects will the current spellbinding curriculum have on these children in the future? Since the schools in my study are roughly twenty to twenty-five years old, the results would make an interesting additional study; the escalation of the private and public debate in the last five years may create an unexpected response. If the spell-binding curriculum has the effects Sayers predicts, the recipients could become puppets who have so long depended upon externalized stimuli that they are mere automatons who wait to be told what to think. In this case we might see something like what Lewis (1947) describes in The Abolition of Man where the "Conditioners" decide the destiny of the "Conditioned" as the Conditioned continually give over their power to them (78).

However, more insidious might be another possibility. Rather than becoming automatons, externalized by the curriculum, students who have grown weary of the spell-binding techniques could become anarchists, who aggressively reclaim the independence that was taken from them in their educational experience (be it religious or secular). Feeling

betrayed by a system that filtered the information through censorious lenses, even with the best of intentions,the anarchists will create out of a void rather than ascribe to any ideology that was part of the controlling past.

For education to achieve the end for which it was meant, the highest and noblest accomplishment of the curriculum, whether the means are religious or secular, would be to foster a love for learning, independence in thought, and appreciation for beauty. These goals are worthy ends for both groups to strive to attain. A curriculum fostering these goals might differ in means among the religious and the secular, but the outcome might be different from what we see among the differing groups today.

For the religious, part of the solution might be for publishers to begin recognizing the limited vision within the industry and attempt to present material that is proactive rather than reactive in its presentation. Henry Blamires (1988) observes that in an attempt to disinfect the mind of its secular orientation, Christians are not prepared to converse in matters of public concern. As a result they resort to either antagonism or "pious platitudes" rather than genuine conversation (p. 49). Christian education that engages the culture proactively can influence its students to live a productive life of the mind.

The Significance of the Research

My particular contribution to the conversation about the state of the art in Christian school publishing was from the perspective of an insider, one that works within Christian education and yet views this particular type of Christian education from the outside. Some voices that emerged within my study were those of the teachers and administrators within these Christian schools who shared my concerns about the existing curriculum. Many of these families, administrators, and teachers are working within the fledgling institutions to augment the curriculum, thereby serving as catalysts for change. Still, they often find themselves swimming upstream against the prevailing curriculum and looking for options beyond what they have been given.

My conclusions resembled some of the conclusions made by others before me. For example, Using Niebuhr to define her earlier conclusions, Rose (1988) also declares that the schools in her study display a Christ Against Culture position (p. 4). Rose, however, oversimplifies her position, revealing the stereotyping characteristic of an outside perspective. Nevertheless, her statements confirmed my choice of Niebuhr to provide categories of beliefs and attitudes toward culture.

My study of four publishers limited the depth of my research and prohibited an intimate understanding of one group. Had I studied one group, however, I would not have

been able to assess whether the one publisher reflected a typical or atypical perspective among the publishers competing for buyers. By using the publishers in the forefront I was more able to get an idea about the overall state of curriculum in Christian schools.

Limiting my study to the printed curriculum, I am aware that I often had to generalize about Christian schools. In reality, each school possesses its own ethos reflected by the leadership, the particular church that supports it, and the students and families who are part of this school. It is not against them but for them that I write. If these schools endorse Christ Against Culture, then the curriculum is supplying what they demand. If other views exist, and I have found that they do, then my study verifies that the need for a curriculum of a new type exists.

Because of its relatively short life, the Christian day school could still be experiencing the growing pains characteristic of young institutions. If this is so and the publishers are willing to evaluate their successes and failures, we may see the curriculum change in more ways than variety of offered text and updated technology. To expand a vision, it often has to contract first; to look outward, we must also look inward. Such may be the future of the Christian day schools if they are willing to listen.

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