EDITORIAL

While some of us this summer were teaching or attending school, others traveling or vacationing, and still others at different job post, a conference of administrators and teachers was quietly being held in Birmingham, AL, on June 22-24. The conference, sponsored by the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, was the National Conference on Integrating Personal Faith and Professional Discipline. It brought together teachers and administrators from almost all the Southern Baptist colleges to focus on issues facing us at this time, both as a collective body of Baptists and as individuals in the classrooms. (Pat Pinson's article “Called to Excellence” published in this issue was presented at that conference.) This fall at the Faculty workshop in August, we were addressed by Arthur Walker, Executive Director of the SBC Education Commission, and we in turn will address some of those same issues. The topic itself is an issue—can an individual’s personal faith and professional discipline be integrated without a freezing or erosion of integrity? Does one's allegiance to his faith demand a dilution of his chosen discipline? Is the pursuit of Christianity and the pursuit of knowledge antithetical? Is the cherished doctrine of academic freedom not so cherished in Southern Baptist schools? How does one mesh matter with methodology in a Christian context? Or to be more specific, how do I justify teaching atheistic writers to Christian students? Can I say objectively (as I dare) that Christian drama today is in dire need of good writers? Can other faculty members be secure when introducing Freud, Darwin, Marx, Nietzsche, Sartre, or some controversial issue such as Christian Humanism? Does the fact that a 1980 survey found one third of American psychologists denied the existence of God and only a third saw themselves even moderately religious affect the texts, theory and pedagogy of Christian psychology teachers? These are tough questions, and they deserve profound and sincere consideration.

It is, therefore, rather coincidental (or else Providential) that 6 of the 9 items published in this journal deal with issues of teaching and learning. Walt Padelford and Louise Bentley speak of learning lessons in foreign lands. Lytle Givens and Marilyn Smothers write of reading and writing in the USA, Randall Bush and Pat Pinson tell of seagulls, rats, and dog-mas that teach us humans. Add to that a jewel of a poem by Pat Laffoon and an interview with Gary Carter and you have the contents of this 12th edition of the Faculty Forum Journal. Good Reading!
There is a woman of grey hair known to many of us down through the years as a tireless cheerleader for Union University. You may still catch her, upon occasion, sitting at the collator in College Services, likely talking to someone (or to herself), called in to help momentarily with a particular crisis in printing or mailouts. I speak of retiree Mae Scott. Mae has been one of the landmarks of this institution. She was the original motivator, architect, and Commanding General of College Services and her service to the college became synonymous with that title.

She was known for her spirited reply as well as for loving embrace. Once when I ambled down to College Services with some class notes dug up from the grave of my college days, thinking to have them reproduced for my weary students, I was greeted with “Ernie Pinson, what a mess, why we can’t run off something looking like this! Now you take this back and retype it or give it to us and we’ll be happy to make it presentable.” And so effectively chastised, I’d hand it over to Mae for “presentableness” or meekly sneak to the old hand-turn mimeograph machine and do it myself in the icky purple ink of that age.

To Mae Scott
This 1992-93 issue of JUFF is dedicated.
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First Lesson in Bolivia

by Walton Padelford

The end of the cold snap brought hope for better days,
But I found tension and heaviness.
The little boy had died,
He was learning to sing they said.

The mother and father sought medical help in town, but too late,
There was neither enough medicine or enough help,
And now the little boy was dead,
His body lying two doors away from my room.
I found my mind wonderfully concentrated by this prospect.

It's all over now on burial day
The last struggle of the little boy,
The wake,
The flimsy casket covered with poster board,
The pile of red earth and sand rapidly refilling
The spot from which they came.

The father is doing his best to make a neat job,
Packing down the earth,
Placing cut flowers on the grave,
Preparing for the long, rattling ride home,

I am absorbed in this scene,
Even as the local soccer teams engage each other
Next to the small grave site,
Then I see—that he could be me.
Called to Excellence
A Devotional on Faith and Discipline

by Patricia Pinson

Philippians 1:9-10. And I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent —

Jonathan Seagull joined the Flock on the beach, it was full night. Dizzy and terribly tired, he was exhilarated with the Breakthrough—afer many weeks Of experiment and risk he had learned to fly faster than any gull had ever flown. He had worked to perfect his skill of flight—the very essence of being a bird. He understood now what flying was all about. When they heard of it, they thought, they'll be wild with joy! For a thousand years we have scabbled after fish heads; now we have a reason to live. Instead of our drab slogging forth and back to the fishing boats, we can really learn to fly. We can be free!

If you know this story, you remember that rather than being “wild with joy,” the Flock shunned Jonathan. They thought his dreams too grand and impractical. Yet, he continued to perfect his skill and eventually returned to teach the others.

Jonathan Livingston Seagull is a story of the journey toward excellence. Jonathan sought to overcome the physical and mental barriers to flight. He worked consistently without relying on the Flock for motivation. And he was successful. His flight took him higher and higher into the unknown, and into the cold, clear air beyond the changeable weather beneath. His vision went farther, his speed became greater, and his understanding increased. But, bound by his sense of values and responsibility he returned to the flock to share the truth. The task of the Christian educator is to seek and convey truth, to see it in its myriad manifestations as part of God, and to facilitate the exploration of others. To achieve such a goal is to achieve excellence.

Excellence—when used as an adjective or adverb in the New Testament, refers to attributes of Christ himself. We read that Christ’s name is “more excellent” than the angels, his ministry was “more excellent” than the Old Testament prophets. He came to show us a more excellent way. Paul’s letter to the Philippians includes the prayer “that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ.” The epitome of excellence in the physical and spiritual world are those things and ideas of the highest order. The epitome of excellence in our faith is the person of Christ.

Excellence literally means that we are called apart from insidious mediocrity. Jonathan represents this break with conformity, of refusing to live on the fish heads of the status quo which his flock called the dignity of tradition. Jonathan sought the freedom to soar above the mundane and to explore the unknown. But sheer brilliance is cold and selfserving when not directed by ethical values and moral responsibility. At some risk to himself, Jonathan returns to the Flock eventually to teach those who would listen. Plato makes a similar statement in his “Allegory of the Cave.” And Christ himself exemplified a vision far beyond the grasp of his own Flock.
What is it which is at the very heart of Christian education—of faith and discipline? What am I responsible for when I step into a classroom or into a committee meeting? I firmly believe that the interface of professional discipline and Christian life is at the point of excellence. I as a Christian educator am called to exemplify the caring discipline of excellence at that point of interface.

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A friend once gave me a small plaque which has often given me pause for thought since then. It says

"Excellence can be attained if you
CARE more than others think is WISE,
RISK more than others think is safe,
DREAM more than others think is PRACTICAL,
EXPECT more than others think is POSSIBLE."

As a Christian educator I have a responsibility which is somewhat unique—I am required to seek excellence. I must care more than others think is wise. I must care enough for my students that I jar them out of superficial learning and accompany them into deeper experience. Sometimes, I try to cajole them away from a casual possession of facts into a causal life-changing understanding. You know this is work! They complain that you are too hard and that you demand too much. But Christian faith is the sworn enemy of intellectual dishonesty and shoddiness. Our students must see this in the education that we foster and they must see this in me. I must care about the people with whom I work enough to see beyond their status and accept them as fellow human beings, about my discipline enough to keep exploring beyond what I've learned before, about my profession as educator enough to modify and change my approach and to support innovation. I must exemplify excellence through caring more than others think is wise.

I must risk more than others think is safe. Risk in Christian education often comes when the questions begin to arise about the deeper and bigger issues of life. One must think carefully about how to answer such questions. It is easier to give students a placebo, but this is neither honest nor excellent. The college is a place for questioning and exploring, not indoctrination. It can provide a safe arena in which students can risk seeking answers to deep questions on their own—trying out ideas that may be unorthodox, unwieldy, and unusual. Unless I risk thinking and exploring out loud, they will not learn the process of standing or flying alone—apart from the conforming group—and risk becoming educated.

In the perceptive work, The Idea of a Christian College, author Arthur Holmes reiterates that all truth is God's truth, wherever it is found. Once we grasp that principle, then the worlds of literature, philosophy, history, science, and art become the Christian's rightful domain. If faith is to grow we must keep an open mind to discover new approaches to God — some find God through mystical experience, some through the mystery of the rational, physical world. Too often we create God through the narrowness of our perception — through our fear and insecurity. The parameters are tightly drawn by what we exclude rather than what we include. Conformity of the spirit puts the soul and mind in
shackles. Although conformity is often efficient in our social behavior, the spirit must remain free to seek God in all truth. Christian education should be a liberating experience that enlarges horizons, deepens insights, sharpens the mind, exposes new areas of inquiry, and sensitizes our ability to appreciate the good and the beautiful. To attain excellence, Christian education must risk more than others think is safe to establish and protect such an environment.

To attain excellence, I must dream more that others think is practical. In learning to look at a painting, one starts with reality—a reproduction of what the eye sees—a copy of the concrete world. As one learns to interpret the lines and colors, the copy becomes less important, and the creative impulse quickens. In that shift from the copy to the creative, from the realistic to the abstract, the vision occurs. Whether we talk of paintings or literature, anthropology or chemistry, we must recognize the vital importance of this shift. Vision brings with it the dream, the potential, the impulse from which new reality springs. Growth occurs only where there is vision and willingness to cut one’s moorings to the practical, safe, and conforming world. Our task is both to dream, and to encourage our students’ dreams. For above all else, dreams and visions are the gift of the spirit which at once secures us and thrusts us into the unknown.

To attain excellence, I must expect more than others think is possible. Christian education is obliged to produce more than narrow specialists. Our approach divides education into narrow compartments and perpetuates a fragmented world view. We are unacquainted with one another—we work for years to attain a PhD in one field and have little more than an 8th grade education in other fields. Yet, all knowledge and truth are interrelated. Sometimes we retreat into specificity because it is safe, and much easier to teach than addressing the big questions about value, and judgement, and meaning. To effect a change in someone’s life, we must deal with interrelationships—with relatedness—with responsibility. We are not isolated personally, or nationally, and can not remain provincial. A Christian must look at the whole and become conversant with as much of God’s creation as possible. Increased specialization loses its relation to life if it has no general underlying foundation and no purpose other than itself. Integrated study and teaching is a difficult task, but one which must be addressed.

An exemplary Christian educator is the 17th century Czechoslovakian reformer, Jan Amos Komensky, better known by his Latinized name, Comenius. This year marks the 400th anniversary of his birth, which is being celebrated in a series of meetings and exhibits in Prague. For most of his life, Comenius was leader of the evangelical protestant Community of Brethren in Moravia.

Two aspects of his prodigious output are noteworthy for us here—his breadth of perspective of human knowledge irrevocably bound to a deep Christian faith, and his position as the foremost educator of the early 17th century. He argued with Descartes for unity and interrelationship between the natural world and the scripture—and indeed, he planned to organize human knowledge into two vast volumes, the Theatre of the Universe dealing with the universe, nature and human history, and the Theatre of the Divine dealing with the spiritual world, ethical behavior and Biblical history. Comenius believed that every human being should be educated regardless of his societal standing. With the disappearance of Latin as a standard means of communication, he felt that a new, easily
learned universal language should be created. He pioneered a new type of instruction based on texts with pictures, with lively explanations and interpretations on virtually every subject. His revolutionary method of language instruction was so successful that it was published by his ideological opponents—the Jesuits in Prague—for their own schools. Surviving the Thirty Years War, losing his family, his library and his life’s work, he stressed that there must be a universal reform. Comenius reminded the intellectuals and also those in power of their responsibility for improving the way things were. Looking back on his life’s work for a common denominator, he discovered that the coherent force was love—love which must show in the Christian spirit in one’s relationship to other human beings and to God.

Faith and Discipline — We are not the first to wrestle with this interdisciplinary idea. For centuries our predecessors in Christian education have faced the same issue. Comenius fought against mediocrity by daring to care deeply, by risking his own well being in pursuing universal reform, by dreaming that all should be educated and communicate in perfect harmony, and by expecting to accomplish these tasks himself. To attain excellence, I must expect more than others think is possible.

Jonathan Seagull did not stop with the dream, or mastering the skill of his profession—flying—he faced the responsibility of universal reform. He returned to the flock and began to teach—one gull at a time. The more he taught, the greater the understanding he gained about the wonders of the universe and the spirit of God which he strove to be like.

Excellence? “Excellence can be attained if you
CARE more than others think is WISE,
RISK more than others think is SAFE,
DREAM more than others think is PRACTICAL,
EXPECT more than others think is POSSIBLE.”

Christ did all of these. Can I dare not try to be excellent?

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ.

Sources


When the Ordinary Becomes Extraordinary  
(Teaching in China)

by Louise Bentley

American teachers attend workshops, listen to lectures, read books, and search for ways to motivate their students. Innumerable tactics all have one aim—to get students eager, enticed, challenged. I have a new one to add to the list—go to China and see motivation at its peak!

The ordinary ability of speaking English is a most coveted skill in the Peoples Republic of China. Although most students study the English language for years in Chinese schools and listen to some English-speaking radio programs, they seldom see or hear a native American speak English. Many of the English teachers in China have great difficulty speaking correctly because they do not know and cannot discern how to say many words. In the four tones of Chinese, one character may mean four different things, according to the tone used; English has many sounds (th, v, j) that they cannot imagine. Students are willing, therefore, to do almost anything to hear English spoken.

As volunteers for seven weeks my husband and I were assigned to Luizhou in South China in the summer of 1991 as teachers of Conversational English on the campus of Guangxi Institute of Technology. The 65 students who enrolled in this concentrated course were a diverse group: a few college students, many English teachers, doctors, professional businessmen, and foreign affairs officers. Although some traveled from all over Guangxi province and lived on the campus for that time, others rode bicycles in the extremely high temperatures (even in the rain) for 45 minutes each way. For three days which included night sessions, this meant six round trips—or 4 1/2 hours pedalling a bike to hear/talk English! No wonder such motivation was a shock to this professor who usually thinks in terms of my work to "get the students interested."

Each school chooses its own texts, usually two 16-chapter paperbacks. These volumes were jointly written by an American and a Chinese author to teach contemporary American English in various situations. Modern American English by Naomi Woronov and Chi Yun Fang included such things as greetings, social customs, money, travel, shopping, finding housing, avoiding crime, writing letters, filling out forms, etc. The other text, Present-day American English: Surviving in the West by Chi Yun Fang and Gerry Poppen, dealt primarily with choosing a college in America and then what to do when one arrived. These included registration, campus idioms, mail, research papers, examinations, summer jobs, holidays, travel, sports, and saying goodbye to return to China. This book was our responsibility. Lessons included some explanatory help, with a number of practice dialogues on the given subject which the teacher and students could read out loud. Each chapter closed with a list of words, terms, explanations, sample forms, etc. Considering how few young people the Peoples Republic of China allows to leave the country, this book seemed to be an ironic dream to place before them. I took a Union University view book with pictures and explanations to show them a private, Christian college and passed it around day after day. The examples in the books we used were from Rutgers University, a large state-supported school. The typical examples related to that university, including their types of campus
slang and what to do at a “beer bust.” What a glorious opportunity we had to explain that all colleges are not like those in their book! One of the English teachers asked in her clipped British-like accent, “Do you believe in Christ?” Since Chinese do not use the long i, it sounded like “Chreest.” She had understood about a Christian college. Incidentally, these books we used were very poorly written with innumerable mistakes of grammar, punctuation, and printing. Produced by the Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, they surely lacked good guidance by someone at the editing stage.

The school’s director divided the students into two large groups for the morning sessions from 8:30 to 12:00. After teaching the lesson for the day to one group, we switched with the other teaching couple and taught the second group. The afternoon sessions from 3:30-5:30 were divided into six small groups in which we did a variety of things for special, individual help in speaking. They were constantly perplexed about how English uses prepositions and the difference between “on the table” and “at the table.” Most useful was the Oxford Picture Dictionary and its excellent coverage of almost all aspects of American life. We took folders of pictures from magazines to show, study, and read aloud. We took state maps and taught them significant cities, rivers, etc. of those states. They had never seen typical grocery ads with their colorful pictures of foods and big price numbering. The all-time hit in every group seemed to be a Shoney’s menu which had all kinds of words they had never heard; they had no idea of how to act or what to do in a restaurant, or especially what items went with what. Trying to explain a “salad bar” to people who do not have salads required some creativity. Indeed, dozens of English words that have multiple meanings created frustration; the word odd which means “strange” but also is used in relation to odd numbers is not “strange” then! My husband taught a great deal of history, state government, national government—which greatly interested them, since theirs is so different. I used a July Reader’s Digest to read to them each day while they listened and wrote down what they heard. We could do about five sentences a day, for many of them had no idea what to write down even though they seemed to understand. I taught many things more than words and the repetition to see if they had heard the sentences correctly. For example, one article stressed the importance of praising people who may never know they did well in a job if someone does not tell them. This idea was very strange to them.

Three evenings a week we met from 8:30 to 10:30 to play games, sing, etc. All the games were with English words that required and complemented their learning. Chinese love to sing, so the typical school, camp, fun songs we grew up with were new and exciting to them. One of their favorites—as well as most difficult—was “We’ll weather the weather whatever the weather, whether we like it or not!” The informal atmosphere offered a congenial time for conversation, having skits, and celebrating American holidays. We taught them how to play baseball, followed by a watermelon cutting; we had a birthday party and served them tiny pieces of cake; and we conducted a Christian church wedding ceremony in which the students took all the parts, including that of the minister. The most unforgettable one was a Christmas celebration on a 100° night in August with a scrawny, mishappen tree in a bucket, decorated with assorted Chinese items!

At the end of the school, which amounted to 33 and 1/2 hours of work in the classroom weekly, we had to give examinations to all the students. This was entirely oral in
three different areas for the students to complete. One was to converse privately with two teachers who asked a series of questions and graded the students on the response given and how well they had understood and could explain. Another was in a private room to view a picture, then explain what was happening and add anything they could about the item they saw. In our area, the third testing center, students were handed an open page of the Reader's Digest to an article on Chinese bears (in English, of course) and were asked to read out loud the paragraph they had never seen or heard. We listened for enunciation, pronunciation, speed, and general level of understanding of the sentences they were reading. All these group grades were compiled for each student, and the school awarded them certificates with grades of Excellent, Very Good, or Good in a special graduation ceremony conducted by the Vice-President of the Institute and appropriately recorded on video to show and "prove" to many others that this achievement was significant!

The college officials, as well as the city's mayor and Foreign Affairs Deputy were most gracious in entertaining us with dinners, visits to many parks, caves, plants, factories, etc. to see their handiwork. Five weeks gave us experiences for many lifetimes—an incredible journey to a gracious, eager people whom we came to know and love dearly. The opportunity to share ourselves, our teaching of the simplest things—the very ordinary things, of an American's life—were accepted and most appreciated by these eager, curious, desperate young adults who long for a better life, a better education, a better country. They never ceased to be amazed that we showed such concern for them by coming so far and enduring so much heat and discomfort to teach in classrooms without air conditioning or even fans in temperatures hovering at or above 100 degrees nearly every day. We could easily explain God's love as the foundation and genesis of our motivation. Serving as teachers under Cooperative Services International of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, we were not allowed to serve in any typical missionary activities in this Communist country. We tried to reverse the "ugly American" stereotype and show them that some Americans who speak English are happy to give away the most ordinary thing we have by speaking and conversing with them. They, in turn, gave us the joy of such intense eagerness and motivation that we will never be the same. There are students who will do almost anything to learn. Doctors gave up hospital rounds and calls to come to class; a shipyard builder left his job, and others from factories came to learn more English. Many teachers are now teaching English more carefully because they have actually heard the words and seen them in action. Many businessmen are reading mail from America to their companies and translating the sentences better because they had concentrated practice and help. It has been our unique privilege to acquire about 70 new friends with whom we correspond frequently. We are hoping to go back to China and repeat this teaching experience because the rewards are so overwhelming. They gave us far more than we could have ever given. What is ordinary to us is to them—beautifully extraordinary!
A Victorian Sampler: Using the Computer in Teaching Literature

by Marilyn Smothers

"Excellence dwells among rocks hardly accessible, and a man must almost wear his heart out before he can reach her."—An Unknown Greek Poet.

Have you ever wished that students in a class would vie for an opportunity to respond to your stimulating, challenging questions? Have you wished that they would challenge the responses of their classmates and that they would ask you to explain or support your position? Or have you simply wished for more time for a class of eager students to continue a discussion, knowing that when class resumes day after tomorrow, the climate will have changed, something will have been lost?

Realizing that the open-ended class is not likely to become a part of our teaching process, I decided to employ the computer to create a more flexible classroom where discussions could continue beyond the scheduled class time. I purchased a computer disk for a class journal and labeled it "Victorian Poetry." I informed the students in my Victorian Poetry class that a letter from me would be entered on the disk immediately after the first class session each week, and the disk would remain on reserve in a designated computer lab. They would follow a few simple guidelines for writing in the class journal:

1) Each student would enter a letter to the class sometime during the week after reading my letter.

2) Each student would print his or her letters and hand them in to me.

3) Each student would save his or her letters in the class file labeled "Victoria."

4) Each student would read letters entered after his or her last letter before writing a letter for the current week's file.

5) Each student would identify himself "biblically" at the beginning of his letter and date the letter.

Written instructions were provided for accessing the current week's file so that the letters of each week constituted a self-contained part of the file.

It was made clear to the students that these letters would not receive a grade but would be required. The content could be whatever they chose. They could respond to any comment made by other students or by me. They could continue a discussion cut short in class. They could simply express their thoughts or feelings about selections assigned. (They surprised me by commenting on selections not assigned that they had read and appreciated!)

I even allowed them to communicate to their classmates their thoughts on anything they felt strongly about and that they believed would be of interest to classmates.

I was not prepared for the students' response to this epistolary journal. Students conscientiously made their way to the computer lab each week. Sitting at a computer terminal with time to think and to edit, they produced comments that were both insightful
and effectively expressed. Two of the sixteen students did not know how to use the computer; but with help from lab assistants and with extra time spent in the lab they became quite proficient by the end of the term.

The record that this project has preserved makes me wish that I had such a record of other classes I have taught. I believe that this project could be adapted to larger classes with group letter files replacing class files.

Early in the semester the letters reminded me of some important things about students. In every class there is a wide range of attitudes toward the course. Some entered with feelings of insecurity: “I was very nervous about taking Victorian Poetry. I had read very little of it on my own, and I have always found it difficult.” And then there was the student who did not like poetry and who expressed the hope that there were kindred spirits in the class: “Unlike some of you and hopefully likes others of you, I have never been very fond of poetry.”

Insecurity was sometimes mixed with a positive response: “I enjoyed class discussions, although I have to admit sometimes I feel a little bit lost.” And “...after our second class period my fears were somewhat relieved about my limited understanding of Victorian poetry.” One even expressed his insecurity in poetic imagery: “When I made up my mind to take this course, I was worried that I would not be able to handle the work. But on the first day of class you made me feel as if I were preparing to go on a fantastic voyage.” I am sorry to say the voyage proved to be rough sailing for this student. In fact, he never really found his sea legs! On the other hand, there were students who from the beginning were confident: “I have always enjoyed poetry. I have high expectations for this class.” This comment served to remind me that teachers are not the only ones who expect good work to be done. In a completely different tone of voice one neophyte declared, “At first this poetry looked like it was going to be way over my head. But hey, it makes tons of sense now.” And then there was the student who insisted that each new poet studied was the best: “I have found my poet! I loved Tennyson, but Arnold has captured my spirit. Bravo, Arnold!

Comments ranged far. Students quoted both short and long passages they particularly liked. They offered both positive and negative comments about assignments. They asked for changes to be made in the course. They related personal experiences to their reading. One student wrote an essay defining the word “poet”; one wrote a poem in tribute to Matthew Arnold.

Near the end of the term some apologized for having senioritis and for not doing their best work; and they encouraged each other: “Take heart, Amy! You are not alone in the mastery of this subject. With persistence we will stumble upon the truth!” But perhaps the most satisfying thing for me was that over and over in continuing class discussions on the computer, they produced literary analysis in an amount far beyond what they would have written for the required papers alone.

In reviewing the class journal, I have concluded that the comment that finally assured me that all the effort was worthwhile came from Melanie: “Thanks, Mrs. Smothers, for allowing us to try new and different ways of learning.”
One Day Sale

by Pat Laffoon

Am I the only one that sees them?
Creator, creation and self—
An isolated moment in my life.
Flying back and forth,
Busy at their task
To build within the lines
Of the letters.
A deadline perhaps?
Persistence? Constraints?
Do they parallel my life?
I see nature—a thing of beauty.
His eye is on the sparrow!
An Examination of Literacy: Assumptions and Reality

by Lytle Givens

A fundamental difficulty in resolving the problem of illiteracy in the United States is discovering its extent. How many persons in the U.S. are illiterate? Is this number increasing or decreasing? Exactly what is illiteracy? In order to answer these and other questions, there should be a clearer conceptualization of literacy (National Advisory Council on Adult Education Literacy Committee, 1986). One acceptable definition of literacy is “using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential” (Kirsch, 1986). Assertions by different individuals on illiteracy in the U.S. range from twenty-three million to sixty million persons (Harmon, 1987; Hunter and Harmon, 1979; Kozol, 1985).

The largest number of illiterate adults seem to be white native-born Americans. However, in proportion to population blacks and Hispanics have higher percentages. Sixteen percent of white adults, forty-four percent of blacks, and fifty-six percent of Hispanics are classified as functional or marginal illiterates (Kozol, 1985).

Adults who read below the ninth grade level are at a distinct disadvantage in today’s world. For example, interpreting federal income tax returns requires at least a tenth grade reading level, while life insurance forms and public housing leases demands even higher levels (Kozol, 1986). Therefore, the “functional” stage of literacy seems to be beyond the ninth grade level.

Typically, literacy is evaluated by equating grade level completed with certain literacy levels. However, these statistics are merely rough indicators of literacy and actually may show little more than school attendance (Hunter and Harmon, 1979). One report estimates fifteen percent of recent urban high school graduates read below the sixth grade level (Kozol, 1985). A substantial portion of statistics on literacy comes form the U.S. census which classifies persons who have completed the sixth grade as literate (the Advisory Council on Adult Education, 1986). Actually, empirical data on bonofide literacy levels is meager or nonexistent. This exploratory research attempts to provide an improved study of literacy levels by utilizing an actual evaluation of reading levels.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Data for this research was compiled in 1988 using a stratified random sample of 512 adults in Madison County, Tennessee, which has a population of approximately 80,000 persons. The interviewers used a structured format questionnaire schedule. One section of the interview requested the respondents to read and interpret several paragraphs which had been evaluated to be at fifth-, seventh-, and ninth-grade reading levels respectively. Additional elements of the schedule contained items about current and previous values and behaviors in relation to education.
FINDINGS

The following statistics is a summary of some basic sociological characteristics of the survey participants:

In relation to age, 13 percent were between 18-25 years, 21 percent between 26-35 years, 19 percent between 36-45, 12 percent between 46-55, 14 percent between 56-65, and 21 percent were over 65. Forty-one percent were male and fifty-nine percent were over 65. Thirty-seven percent were black with sixty-three percent being white (five persons were of Asian ancestry). For marital status, the percentages were as follows: single, 15; married, 54; separated, 3; divorced, 12; and widowed, 15 percent. In conjunction with formal education, the following percentages were found: (a) no education, 1 percent; (b) 1-3 years, 2 percent; (c) 4-8 years, 8 percent; (d) 9-11 years, 10; (e) 12 years, 39; (f) 13-15 years, 21; (g) 16 years, 11; and Masters/Doctorate, 6 percent.

Specific hypotheses tested include the following: (a) persons over 65 years old are less likely to read at a ninth-grade level than persons under 65, (b) persons whose parents read numerous books to them as children are more likely to read at a ninth-grade level than persons whose parents did not read to them, (c) blacks are less likely to read at a ninth-grade level than whites, and (d) persons growing up in rural areas or in small towns (less than 25,000 population) are less likely to read at a ninth-grade level than persons growing up in urban environments.

The first hypothesis was confirmed. The calculated chi-square value of 33.55 was significant at the .05, .01 and .001 levels of significance. Older persons are more likely to have reading problems at the ninth grade level since their formal schooling ended sooner than the formal schooling of younger persons. In relation to persons over sixty-five, 34.9 percent had less than a ninth-grade education, while 41.5 percent had completed between nine and twelve years of education. For persons between ages eighteen and thirty-five, .03 percent had finished their education with less that nine years of formal schooling and 56.9 percent had stopped after completing between nine and twelve years of education.

As may have been foreseen, the second hypothesis was confirmed. Persons whose parents habitually read to them were more likely to be literate at the ninth-grade reading level that persons whose parents did not regularly read to them. The calculated chi-square value of 10.20 with one degree of freedom was significant at the .05 level. Basically, parents who devote attention to their young children's education by reading to them are rewarded by positive long-term effects on their children's reading skills.

In relation to hypothesis three, it was found that blacks were less likely to read at a ninth-grade level than whites. The calculated chi-square value of 66.86 with one degree of freedom was significant at the .001 level.

In order to test hypothesis four the sample was divided into two categories, rural and urban. The hypothesis was accepted since the calculated value was 13.96 with one degree of freedom. Persons growing up in rural environments appeared more likely to experience reading difficulties at the ninth-grade level. In the past, it seems rural persons undoubtedly
were handicapped in their educational progress in relation to urban persons. In all likelihood, there will be little present difference because of the increased similarity in lifestyles of urban and rural persons.

While this research is certainly not definitive, it does indicate possibilities for future research. What, if any, parallels exist between this region and others in relation to literacy levels? Are literacy levels increasing, decreasing, staying constant? What are some possible strategies which could be fruitfully applied to alleviate literacy problems? Before solutions can be accomplished there must be an overall knowledge of the problem. Therefore, it is imperative that research at the national, regional, and local levels be undertaken.

Bibliography


THE CAT-ERBURY TAILS

by R. B. Bush

No doubt you have heard about the Canterbury Tales.
But have you ever heard about the Cat-erbury Tails?
Now almost without exception, most tales are tall.
But mine tells of long tails that hung upon a wall.
Not nine tails, not eighty-one, but seven twenty-nine,
All arranged in perfect squares, with tails used for the lines,
And these upon the walls of the Cathedral church were hung,
Right above the choir where the morning prayers were sung.
And on this hangs a tale of woe which I will now tell
Of how the Cat-erbury cats all lost their tails.
Our story begins one October, many years ago,
When old Dean Eliot resided in Cat-hedral.
Of course, it wasn’t called Cat-hedral then, at least not until November,
when the cats had grown into an exceedingly large number.

Now the Dean was given a cat, whose name was Algernon,
A curious cat at that, but through and through a Tom.
It was given him as a kitten on the eve of All Hallows
By a woman in the diocese, Marusha Marshmallow.
Now almost everyone believed Marusha was a prize.
So they never noticed she was wearing a disguise.
She really was a wicked witch who hated the Cathedral,
And she went about pricking the parishioners with needles.
But she never was caught, and no one ever dreamed
That Felicity Felinity was her real name.

Well Felicity, or Marusha, as she liked to be known,
Made dinners for the Dean of roast duck and plums.
She made him many pies, both mincemeat and cherry,
And this made the old Dean very, very merry.
So much he liked her cooking that he asked her to stay,
Although he couldn’t promise her very good pay.
But she didn’t seem to mind, for what she wanted more than that
Was to introduce into the church a multitude of CATS.

From the day she first came, she began to work her evil.
She brewed all kinds of potions in the crypt of the Cathedral.
Spider legs and snake skins, she simmered in her cauldron
And put them in the Dean’s dinner very, very often.
But the Dean didn’t notice, and he ate his dinners well,
Even though he’d started feeling very, very ill.
In spite of this, on all Marusha's sumptuous meals he fed
Until the day arrived when he could not get out of bed.

It was on that day Marusha met a man with seven wives,
Each with seven bags. No doubt they'd just come from St. Ives.
"What is in the bags," Marusha asked a couple.
"Cats," answered one of them. "And they're a lot of trouble."
"Are they?" asked Marusha. "Could you then perhaps spare eight?"
"Gladly," said the woman. "That will help reduce the weight."
"Wonderful," Marusha said. "I'll take them off your hands,
But give me bad ones, please. Good cats I cannot stand."
With pleasure," smiled the woman. "Are you sure you won't take more?"
"Perhaps another," said Marusha. "More might be a chore.
Yes, nine will do me, thank you. They'll be more than I can manage.
And I will have enough, I think, to cause a lot of damage."
"As you wish," the woman said, "but should you need some others,
You needn't bother asking us. Those cats may soon be mothers."
"Splendid," smiled Marusha. "Thank you very, very much."
"Don't mention it," the woman said. "I hope they bring you luck."

So from that day forward when the nine cats came,
The cathedral at Cat-erbury went by another name.
It was called "Cat-hedral" by Algernon their prince,
and there the cats of Cat-erbury cat-erwaule and danced.
They danced all night and they danced all day.
In the nave of Cat-hedral, they pranced and they played.
They called the Dean "Old Possum," and they slept in his bed,
But he was too far gone to notice. He was out of his head.
Then they tore out the stuffing of the Bishop's favorite chair.
On the floor of Cat-hedral, they left great balls of hair.
And when the kittens came, there was much more fun,
For now the cats of Cat-erbury numbered EIGHTY ONE.

Well, when the Bishop saw what they had done unto his chair,
His eyes popped open, and he shouted, "Who would dare?
Who would dare do this to my best cathedral stool?
When I find out who did this, I will reprimand the fool!"
Just then, Algernon came soaring through the air,
And landed in the middle of the torn and tattered chair.
"So!" exclaimed the Bishop. "There's a CAT within these walls!
Scat, you crazy cat. You have a lot of gall!"
But Algernon sank his claws into the velvet cushion.
With arched back and bristling hair, he dared the man to touch him.
"Well, I never," huffed the Bishop. "You shall be reported.
I'll tell the Dean what you have done. Then you shall be deported."
But as the Bishop turned around and started 'cross the floor,
The cat growled and pounced at him and chased him to the door. 
“You have the nerve!” the Bishop yelled. “I’ll tell the Dean at once. 
When he finds outs what you have done, He’ll have cat soup for lunch.”

But when the Bishop found the Dean, the Dean was indisposed, 
And forsooth! Miss Marshmallow poked needles in his toes! 
“Why Bishop,” smiled Marusha, “Good Day. And how are you?
As you can see, the Dean is ill. I’m nursing him, you know.”
It’s what the doctor ordered, though gruesome it may seem.
But as you see these needles haven’t caused him too much pain.
“Indeed,” replied the Bishop, “but that’s beside the point.
Does the Dean not know that there are CATS within the joint?”
“He does,” replied Marusha, thinking quickly on her toes.
“The cats control the rats, and the rats are worse than cats, you know.”
“Agreed,” replied the Bishop, “but don’t you think it odd
That cats should ruin the furniture within the house of God?
They should be arduous servants, having great humility,
Not growl and pounce at bishops and dance about with glee.”
“Of course, you’re right,” Marusha said, “They must be more religious.
They must be prim and proper cats, devoted and judicious.”
“I thank you, then,” the Bishop said. “I’m sure all will be well.”
“I’m sure it will,” Marusha gleamed, “The rats the cats will quell.”
“Good,” replied the Bishop. “Then we’ll need the cats no more.”
And with those words the Bishop exited the door.

As soon as he had gone away, Marusha searched and searched
Till she discovered Algernon upon the altar perched,
Fast asleep and purring, with a faint, peculiar smile,
With eyes and whiskers twitching every once in a while.
The Bishop is unhappy. He’s suffered an offense.”
Algernon jerked up his head with a defiant stare
And lowered it again, as if Marusha were not there.
“Come, my dear,” Marusha said, and grabbed him by the collar.
“You and I must talk. It’s time to get our plans in order.”

So down into the crypt went Algernon with Marusha
And brewed a potion that could cause a great deal of confusion.
“A thin layer,” Marusha said, “on the communion cups,
And the Bishop never will again our little schemes disrupt.
Just a bit will make the congregation lose their reason,
Will make the faithful saints of God accuse the fool of treason.”
But as Marusha brushed the cups with poison from a pan,
To Algernon the cat occurred a cat-astrophic plan.
Into the pan he dipped his tail just when she was not looking,
And later brushed her cup with it while she was away cooking.
So when Marusha drank her tea and soon had lost her senses,  
Then Algernon convened the cats to find out their consensus.  
From far and wide the cats did come to cause terrific turmoil.  
They leapt from the reredos, from the organ pipes and gargoyles.  
They lounged upon the alter and the Bishop’s favorite chair.  
They did whate’er they pleased, for now Marusha would not care.  
Whatever they requested would be giv’n in the Dean’s name,  
For Marusha’d forged his signature so he would get the blame.  
But poor “Old Possum” would not know, for he had lost his mind.  
And now the cats of Cat-erbury could be merry all the time.  
And Marusha’d see for certain that the cats would have their way,  
Would dine on pheasant, grouse, and duck, and fancy fish filets,  
Delicious meals she’d cook them, while “Old Possum” she’d deprive,  
Feeding him with table scraps to keep him just alive.

So Algernon summoned the court to see what they should do  
To guarantee the place would be Cat-hedral through and through.  
“The Cat-echism will say,” he said to those who were there listening.  
“We’ll teach the feline way unto the children from their christening.  
As for the dog-mas? They must go! We cannot risk the danger  
Of people spouting their beliefs in front of total strangers.  
In place of dog-mas, I suggest, that cat-mas be brought in.  
They then will learn to pussy-foot on subjects such as “sin.”  
Like the Cheshire Cat, a smile we’ll teach them all to wear,  
But when they’re asked to do some work, to quickly disappear.  
Like Puss ’n Boots, we’ll teach them to be crafty and obtrusive,  
To practice grave deception on whomever seems abusive.”

And when the speech was over, all the cats mewed forth their pleasure.  
With dice they gambled in the choir for the Cathedral treasure,  
Then from the saints’ sarcophaguses, scratched off all the noses,  
Drew whiskers on the faces of Saints Peter, Paul, and Moses.  
And then on Sunday morning when the people took a sip  
Of the wine from the cups Marusha poisoned in the crypt,  
A cat-astrophic, cat-acylysmic, cat-aleptic trance,  
Fell upon the congregation as they meowed one of the chants.

But the unsuspecting Bishop did surmise they were a-praying.  
He did not know Marusha’s spell their reason was waylaying.  
But about a fortnight later there were whiskers on their faces,  
And when they sang the hymns, they caterwauled in various places.  
’Twas then the Bishop knew that something dreadful was afoot.  
He promptly went to find the Dean and ask him what was up.  
Instead, he found Marusha, entertaining all her felines.  
But by this time, they numbered SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY NINE.
The Bishop was outraged. He screamed, "I'll write to the Prime Minister! The Queen and Parliament must know what's happening here is sinister! As for the Dean, it's past the time he realize his impairment. I'll recommend another Dean who won't endure this merriment. As for the cats," the Bishop said, "the rats they now outnumber. So now they've nothing more to do than lie around and slumber. And as for you Miss Marshmallow, it's time that you resigned, Because I do suspect you might have spiked the eucharist wine."

And with these words the angry Bishop exited the room.
'Twas then Marusha Marshmallow did plan the Bishop's doom.
"Listen my cat," she said to them, "we must put on a show. We've pussy-footed quite enough. This Bishop's got to go. You cats are indispensable to every enterprise. We've got to demonstrate your worth before the people's eyes. I think the time has come for you to be much more religious. You must be prim and proper cats, devoted and judicious."
"Of course," said Algernon with pride, "leave everything to me. 'Well plan next Sunday's worship. Then we'll make the Bishop see."

So on that very night, the cats of Cat-erbury met.
In the Cathedral nave their plans were organized and set.
While a cat named Conzuela, and alley-opera contralto
Practiced with a cat choir in organ pipe row.
Algernon and the rat kind signed a pact below
And planned just how they would secure the Bishop's overthrow.
Meanwhile, all the gargoyles came a crashing to the floor,
For the cats decided they would not be needed anymore.
No longer would the saints have to endure such ugly faces.
Instead they could behold angelic cats in all the spaces.

So early Sunday morning when the organist touched the keys,
From the pipes a most peculiar purring sound was wheezed.
The sound of caterwauling from Conzuela's choir of cats
echoed through Cat-hedral sounding very, very flat.
And the tails of all the gargoyles sung in rhythm to the hymns,
Their harps and halos glistening as the Bishop entered in.
Then as the Bishop saw them and was just about to falter,
Algernon pursued a rat from underneath the altar.
The rat ran down and hid himself beneath the Bishop's cloak,
But when it climbed the Bishop's leg, the Bishop had a stroke.

Thus all the congregations was thrown into confusion.
Old women scream on tiptoes in the pews in great profusion.
But when the cat at last emerged from out the Bishop's garments,
The congregants were most relieved the cat had caught the varmint.
They sang his praise because they thought that he had rendered service,
 Though little did they know the rat was faking rigor mortis.
The fact of the matter was they never dreamt it was a plot
 To liberate Cat-hedral from the things the Bishop taught.
And when to heav'n the Bishop passed, helped by Marusha's needles,
 no suspected there had been a "MURDER IN CAT-HEDRAL."

But then events transpired that brought about the cats' demise.
A new Dean was appointed who was vigilant and wise.
It was then the cats discovered to their utter, utter horror
 That this Dean possessed a DOG, who would be there on the morrow.

Now it just so happened that the night was Halloween,
The date on which Marusha'd giv'n the kitten to the Dean.
And when Marusha learned her plans might possibly be thwarted,
 She summoned all Cat-hedral to the tombs of the departed.
"Something must be done," she raved, "or things will not be well.
This new Dean and his dog may come to try to break our spell.
One thing is very certain cats. You must be practical.
You must assist me with a plan, foolproof and tactical.
I've heard, my cats, the dog that comes is extraordinary,
And he may do to you what you would do to a canary!"

Then sudden terror struck the cats. They trembled, and they shivered.
This time they knew they'd have to think of something very clever.
"I've got it," Algernon exclaimed, "We'll make a giant trap.
We'll ask the rats to help us. They're good at things like that.
We'll make it from the organ pipes and from the clockwork cogs.
Then we'll use our awful instrument to capture that old dog."
"Splendid," said Marusha. "I'll concentrate upon the Dean.
By the time that I am finished, he will wish he never came."

And so they went to work, the cats consulted with the rodents,
While Marusha brewed a potion that was very, very potent.
From the Cathedral bells, all the ropes the rats chewed off
And used them to let down the clockwork from the tower loft,
While below the cats nearly had the organ disassembled
And from the pew racks had removed the prayer books and the hymnals.
Down into the crypt, they then transported all the parts
And experimented with ideas and plans of various sorts.
The rats and cats together then assembled their machine,
Using pipes from off the organ and the clock's mainspring.
And with a little effort they reversed the organ motor,
So a vacuum was produced where there once had been a blower.
And then onto the vacuum they connected all the pipes,
So the dog would be sucked in it when he ventured into sight.
But the gears of the clock, they made into a grinder.
They used the rope from off the bells to make the mainspring winder.

Then they wound the rope around their tails in many rings,
So that they could heave together when winding up the spring.
As for the rats, their duty was to make an awful clatter,
So the dog would come down to the crypt to see what was the matter.
Then what would happen to the dog would be most “cat-acylsmal,”
For they would cat-apult at him the prayer books and the hymnals.
They’d use the organ pipes to suck him into the contraption,
Then they’d dump him in the grinder, and switch on the action.
Marusha’d then make sausage from the poor canine’s remains,
And on buns with poisoned mustard, she would feed them to the Dean.

Now these were their plans, till something happened unexpected.
The new Dean and his dog arrived at midnight undetected.
He at once surprised Marusha, who was poisoning her needles,
And confronted her with planning the demise of the Cathedral.
“Why Sir,” Marusha said to him, “I’d never do such as that.”
“Then tell me,” asked the Dean. “Why’d you bring in all those cats?
I hear they’ve been a nuisance. I’ve heard all the complaints,
How they ripped the cushions of the chairs and scratched off all the paint.”
“True,” Marusha said, “But there is something you must know.
The cats control the rats. This means they simply must not go.”

Just then, down in the crypt, a horrid racket did resound,
As the rodents practiced how they planned to lure the canine down.
Suddenly, they heard the felines caterwaul “heave ho!”
And with that, Dominic the dog went running down below.
Now Dominic was none other than the “Dog of the Lord,”
And all the cats could hear him coming, barking forth the word.
Of course, this threw the cats and rats into an awful panic,
But things got even worse once they had caught a glimpse of Dominic.
To behold the sight, it seemed the Judgment Day had come.
As Dominic, with holy wrath, cleared out the cat-acoms.
The cats all tried to run away as Dominic started down.
But they could not escape from him, because their tails were bound.
Then as Algernon tried to get the organ motor whirling,
Into the mainspring Dominic jumped and made it start untwirling.

Well tongue cannot recite the scene that went on after that,
Of how the odd contraption cut the tails off all the cats.
The sound of caterwauling was enough to chill the flesh
As the cats in the contraption accidentally got enmeshed.
As for the dog named Dominic, he never again was seen.
It was most people’s opinion he’d got caught in the machine.
But no one ever figured out how someone could at all
Have hung the tails in perfect squares on the Cathedral wall.
This odd event caused some to think the dog named Dominic
Could possibly have been the one who'd really done this trick.
But there was more convincing proof that he was still around.
Faith in all the Dog-mas once again was very sound.
Although the cats are bobtails now, they are much more religious.
And their humility is real, not crafty and malicious.
No longer do they run about and damage the Cathedral.
They do their best to keep the rats from hurting all the people.
As for Marusha Marshmallow, when her true name was discovered,
They sent her to a place where it was hoped she would recover.
And Cat-erbury Cathedral fares very, very well
After Dominic, on All Saints Day, broke Marusha’s spell.
INTERVIEW WITH VICE PRESIDENT GARY CARTER

by JUFF Editor

This is another in a series of interviews of Union's administration officers. JUFF has made a practice in each issue of trying to foster a dialogue between the faculty/staff/administration by providing information in an area vital to our interest. In the past we have interviewed Dr. Craig, Dr. Barefoot, Mr. Stewart, Dr. Brewer, and Dr. Newell. This year due to the new building programs and to the newness of his appointment JUFF is interviewing Gary Carter, Union's Vice President of Business Affairs. Gary has been at his duties exactly one year at the time of this interview. He came to Union from the firm of Steele, Carter and Martin, CPAs. He is a 1975 graduate of Union University.

JUFF: Could we get a few details first—your family and your training for this office?

Carter: My wife Regina and I were married in November of 1977 and will be celebrating our fifteenth anniversary this fall. We have two children, Charity Elizabeth who is six, and India, three. We are members and actively involved at Englewood Baptist Church.

As far as my training for this office, I must confess that I'm not sure I had any. My whole background has been public accounting. I was employed at a local CPA firm while a student at Union and after graduation continued full time as a staff accountant with the same firm until October 1980. At that time another CPA and I opened our own practice. We had a third partner join the firm in June 1982 and continued as such until my leaving the firm in April 1991.

As a partner I was involved in all aspects of the practice, and I guess it was this experience that most prepared me for this office. I must admit that in a lot of areas I had to start almost at zero and work from there. My co-workers in the Business office, especially Robert Simpson, have been a great help in this process.

JUFF: You have become popular with the faculty for several changes in budget procedures and for streamlining the student list sent to the faculty at the end of each semester for late fees. But the question still remains as to why this method is necessary since we seem to be the only school in the state that does collections this way. Would you explain the "why" of this procedure?

Carter: I'm not sure about the other schools in the state, but we do it this way because it forces the students to address their unpaid balance. One of the things that most amazed me was the attitude of some of the students regarding their accounts and the lack of responsibility in payment. The students are advised of payment procedures on the front end, and then they receive interim billings. We also notify the students again toward the end of the semester that their account has to be paid in full before finals can be taken, but if it were not for the process we have, some still would not come to discuss their account with us. Once they are out for the semester, it is difficult to follow up with them until the next semester. This process does seem to be cumbersome, time consuming, and frustrating to all parties involved, but at the present it seems to be the most effective. We are continuing to look for ways to streamline and yet remain effective in the collection process.
and would welcome any suggestions your readers might have. We appreciate the support of the faculty in this area, because it does take a team effort to be effective.

**JUFF:** What percent of students' bills are uncollected?

**Carter:** As of the end of our current fiscal year, May 31, 1992, accounts receivable from student accounts was 6.3% of total students' revenues. In student revenues I am including tuition and fees, student housing and dining hall.

**JUFF:** I happen to know that by and large the department chairs find you extremely pleasant to work with and sympathetic even when you can't accommodate their request. Even after one year the "honeymoon" is still not over. How do you account for that?

**Carter:** I have no idea, but I do appreciate the compliment. The first year here has been even better than I had anticipated, the main reason being the good working relationship with the members of the faculty and staff. I would like to think of my position as that of a facilitator, helping to accomplish the goals of Union University within the constraints of time and budget. This requires a healthy give and take between all parties involved. I certainly don't have all the answers, and I hope I will always be willing to listen to suggestions and be open to change when necessary.

**JUFF:** How is Union’s budget formulated, that is, would you walk us through its birthing process? Who does what first? Who has input? How is it finalized?

**Carter:** The formulation of Union's budget takes place over a five month period. The process begins in mid-October with a meeting to discuss enrollment projections, college needs, and proposed increases in tuition and fees. From this our office begins a first draft of the revenue side of the budget.

At the first of November, budget request forms are sent to all budget unit heads. On these forms budget unit heads list their requests for the next fiscal year. These are requests for all budget items with the exception of salaries and benefits. These budget requests are returned to the President's office around the first of December. After we receive these requests, our office prepares a first draft of the expense budget, which includes everything but salaries and benefits.

Around the middle of December we receive salary recommendations from the Vice Presidents to be reviewed and approved by the President. After the salary recommendations have been approved this information is "plugged" into the expense budget for a second draft, usually completed around the first of January. At this time, the budget is fairly complete in rough form, and we are able to determine if there needs to be any adjustment in the requested amounts.

If we do find it necessary to make budget revisions, this is negotiated through the Vice Presidents of the respective areas. After this is accomplished, a completed draft of the entire budget is submitted to the President for study. After the President has studied and approved the budget, it is presented to the Business Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees for their review and approval around the first of February. In the middle of February the budget is presented to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees for their approval. Finally, it is presented to the full Board of Trustees at their meeting the last week of February.
JUFF: How much did recycling cost us last year to get it started and maintained?

Carter: Union began its recycling effort in the fall of 1991 with an initial investment of approximately $18,000. This included expenditures for a baler for cardboard, the large metal compartmentalized bins behind the bookstore, and all collection receptacles in the interior of all our buildings. As far as maintenance costs, this is nominal. The night clean-up crew empties the recyclables into the outside containers instead of the regular waste dumpsters. The revenue generated from the sale of the materials to be recycled is minimal, but we have cut the fees paid to Waste Management for the disposal of waste from $3,140 a month to $1,525 per month. This is a savings in excess of $19,000 per year and the administration strongly encourages everyone to do their part in this effort.

JUFF: Many keep asking for comparative figures between Union, Lane, Lambuth, Belmont. Can you provide a yearly two-semester student cost for each?

Carter: I have in my office a comparison of costs of twenty-one Southern Baptist Colleges which includes Union, in addition to the information I am presenting below. The comparisons reflect costs for the 1991-92 school year. I am including Bethel, Freed-Hardeman, David Lipscomb, and Carson-Newman as well as the four you requested.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
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<td>9,410</td>
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</table>

JUFF: What is the current indebtedness of Union? the current endowment?

Carter: The only outstanding debt that Union currently has is an internal loan from the Endowment Fund in the amount of $565,000. This is being paid back on a monthly basis and has an interest rate of 8%. It is scheduled to be fully amortized in May, 1995.

The Endowment Fund [as of May 31, 1992] had a fund balance of $10,965,000.

JUFF: What is the sequence of upcoming building projects? Are any funded now?

Carter: Up until this month I probably would have answered this differently. The difference is because it appears we are going to have another record enrollment and 100% occupancy in housing.

The construction of our new maintenance building at the back of the forty acres across Walker Road was completed in late July. The new entrance off Country Club was begun in June and will probably be completed in October. We are scheduled to begin construction on the new student union building in April or May of 1993 with completion expected by July, 1994. This building will include a new kitchen and dining hall, bookstore, small auditorium, and administrative offices for student affairs and religious affairs. With the moving of these areas from the Penick building, there will be approximately 25,000 square feet that will be available for conversion to academic use. In reference to my
original statement, we are currently exploring the possibility of building additional housing units in the McAfee complex and expanding the Blasingame Academic Center for academic space needs. If the decision is made to do these projects, construction would begin in September or October in order to be ready for the fall of 1993.

In response to the question concerning funding, Mr. Stewart and the Development Department are working diligently to obtain commitments to pay for the student union building. We have paid for the maintenance building and already had have funds available to pay for the new entrance. We would have to go to outside sources to finance the new housing and Blasingame expansion which is projected to cost between $1,250,000 and $1,500,000.

JUFF: There seems to be some controversy over the budget practices of the bookstore. For example, the 25% markup turns out to be something like 32% in real figures, and a 15% discount turns out to be more like a 11.4% discount in real figures again. It seems the bookstore charges its customers a hidden fee for mailing and handling that doesn't amount to truth-in-advertising. Would you clear this up or explain the billing method for us?

Carter: First let me state that there is not an across the board markup percentage. This changes with the type of item sold. Generally, the bookstore receives a suggested retail selling price from the vendor so the markup is usually preset. The 15% discount available to the faculty and staff is from the retail selling price. As with other retail stores, the retail selling prices is set so that the store can make a profit and our store is no exception. The retail price includes our wholesale cost, shipping and handling, overhead, and salaries and benefits. We feel the bookstore must stand on its own and pay its own way.

JUFF: What percent of administration/faculty/staff salaries to the total budget?

Carter: The total of all faculty salaries, including deans, is $3,204,000 for the 1992-93 year. This is 21.6% of total budget. The total salaries of all administration and staff, including maintenance, is $2,764,900. This is 18.7% of total budget. In addition to salaries, Union has other personnel costs (retirement, social security, and insurance) which amounted to $709,800 and $663,570, respectively, for faculty and administration and staff. When you total these together it amounts to $3,913,800 for faculty, or 26.4% of total budget, and $3,433,470 for administration and staff, or 23.1% of total budget. The total of all salaries and benefits for all departments is $7,347,270, which represents 49.5% of total budget.

JUFF: What do most dislike about your job?

Carter: Believe it or not, there is very little I dislike about this job. I firmly believe this where God wants me at this time in my life, and I count it a joy and privilege to be employed here. I can truly say that I look forward to coming to work. If I had to identify a difficult area it would have to be in relation to the students. We try very hard to work with the students in the payment of their accounts, but there have been times when I have had to tell a few students they could not come back because they were already behind on their account and didn't have the ability to pay that, much less additional costs. That seems almost contrary to the reason we are here, but we can't provide our services free of charge.
In closing, let me thank JUFF for the opportunity to share these answers and thoughts with you. I think we have a great team here at Union and I look forward to working with the faculty this next year. My door is open and I invite suggestions and constructive criticism that can make Union an even greater place to serve.
CONTRIBUTORS

Louise Bentley, Professor of English, arrived to teach at Union in 1981. She has a B.A. degree from Bob Jones University, M.A. from University of Southern California, and Doctor of Arts from Middle Tennessee State. She has presented several papers to Christianity and Literature conferences and the Tennessee Philological Association of which she is the current President.

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be his queen. She accepts his proposal, but before departing her father’s palace, the dutiful daughter tells her sisters that she knows “what [they] are” (I.i.269), and implores them to “love well [their] father” (I.i. 271).

Although Cordelia, as has been pointed out by Professor A. C. Bradley, “speaks scarcely more than a hundred lines . . . , no character in Shakespeare is more absolutely individual or more ineffaceably stamped on the memory of his readers” (26). Cordelia has given the wrong answer for all the right reasons to her father’s “Which of you shall we say doth love us most?” (I.i.51). Lear, eager to hand over to his three daughters the reins of power, nonetheless desires to maintain some hold over them. Like other unenlightened parents of yesterday and today, instead of earning his children’s love or asking for their love, Lear demands it. His emotional rape is spurned by the daughter who loves him the most, but it is overlooked by Regan and Goneril, neither of whom values integrity.

Every woman who experiences the tug at her heart when she leaves her parents and her childhood home for a new life with a man who compared to her family seems a stranger identifies with Cordelia’s plight. To her family, and perhaps to herself, her husband-to-be seems a rival for her affection formerly reserved for “family.” Janet Adelman, editor of Twentieth Century Interpretations of King Lear, sees a Cordelia “fighting for the right to a love separate from her love for her father” (7).

Depth of feeling rather than dearth of feeling prevents’s Cordelia’s offering a glib response to Lear’s question, for she says, “Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave / My heart into my mouth” (I.i.91-92). When Cordelia leaves Britain, goodness accompanies her, and evil in the form of her two sisters, Regan and Goneril, remains behind to torment Lear. Soon these monstrous daughters renounce their father. Once Lear relinquishes his throne, he strips himself of any further power, and like the mythological emperor who found he was wearing no clothes, Lear discovers that divested of his royal robes and crown he stands exposed to the elements, naked and forced to brave the storm alone.

Hearing of her father’s plight and unwilling for him to brave the storm alone, Cordelia returns to Britain; when Lear sees her, he says:

Be your tears wet? yet, faith. I pray, weep not;
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have (as I do remember) done me wrong;
You have some cause, they have not. (IV.vii.69-72)

Cordelia magnanimously replies, “No cause, no cause” (73). Lear has turned his back on this daughter, he has disinherited her, and he has robbed her husband of a promised dowry, but the generous Cordelia feels “no cause” to do her father “wrong.” Lear, buffeted by the winds of misfortune and assailed by the ingratitude of two of his daughters, now stands on the precipice of the unknown, expecting the daughter he has wronged to shove him into the abyss. Instead she embraces him, absolving him of any offense, and helps him shoulder his misfortunes.

Family rivalry destroys another family in King Lear. The Earl of Gloucester, deceived by his bastard son Edmund, believes that his legitimate son Edgar stands ready to betray him. Gloucester has loved Edgar as much as Lear has loved Cordelia, and his is a similar sorrow when he is duped into believing that Edgar is false.
Shortly after Edmund shows him a letter which he claims that Edgar wrote, Gloucester says:

These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us...love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinees; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father...there's son against father: the King falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorder, follow us disquietly to our graves. (I.ii.103-14)

Gloucester's assessment of his environment differs dramatically from Charles Dickens' assessment of the tumultuous setting of his A Tale Of Two Cities, even though they share some similarities. Both works involve Britain and France, but in King Lear the revolution occurs not in France but in Britain. Gloucester's "We have seen the best of our time" closely resembles Dickens' "It was the best of times," but Dickens' scope is much more expansive. Gloucester limits his statement to "the best of our [italics mine] time," which he says is over; his account is dismal indeed because he does not envision better days before he dies. Betrayed by his son Edmund, Gloucester has turned on Edgar, his true son who loves him and wishes him no harm. Booth mentions the irony in Gloucester's recognizing "Lear's blindness about Cordelia" but failing to comprehend his own blindness towards "Edmund's wickedness and Edgar's virtue" (109-110).

Gloucester's baseborn son, Edmund the Machiavellian, adroitly manipulates him into believing that Edgar, the legitimate son, is base. Professor John F. Danby points out that "bastard" is "the Elizabethan equivalent of 'outsider,'" and that Edmund is "outside society,...outside Nature,...outside Reason" (53). Edmund wants it all and is willing to go to any lengths, including committing patricide and fratricide, to get it. Compulsively competitive, Edmund lunges toward what is not rightfully his: Edgar's inheritance, the love of two married women, and a kingdom. This man who simultaneously repels and entices bears considerable resemblance to Milton's Satan. Perhaps this ambivalence evolves from what Danby calls Edmund's "tremendous gusto," and his "energy, emancipation, a right-minded scorn of humbug." Danby compares Edmund's courage to that of a "lissome...tiger" (55). In contemplating this tiger, one recalls William Blake's rhetorical question: "Tyger, Tyger! burning bright / In the forest of the night, / What immortal hand or eye / Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?" The speaker in Blake's "The Tyger" asks: "Did he who made the lamb make thee?" (lines 21-24). Paraphrasing one might ask himself, "Did he [Gloucester] who made Edgar make Edmund too?" "Did he [Lear] who made Cordelia make Goneril and Regan too?" In Shakespeare's King Lear both the lamb and the tyger go to their deaths.

Although Edmund [Shakespeare's tyger] has considered his actions self-initiated, he has in fact relinquished control to the Ring Master of "competition, diffidence, glory," Thomas Hobbes' three principal causes of quarrel in human nature: the impulse to acquire, to provide for one's security, to extend one's prestige" (cited in Danby 52-53). Edmund the tyger discovers that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave" (Gray 559).
Professor G. Wilson Knight refers to "the fantastic incongruity of parent and child opposed." Regan and Goneril unite to defeat their father, but Edmund severs their fidelity to each other when the married sisters vie for the love of that villain. The ensuing rivalry leads to their deaths. Goneril poisons Regan before stabbing herself to death. Edgar kills his wicked half-brother, but before Edmund dies, he revokes the death sentences he has passed against Lear and Cordelia; however, this bit of charity from the bastard comes too late for Cordelia who has already been killed. Yale University's Professor Maynard Mack says that "man's tragic fate, as King Lear presents it, comes into being with his entry into relatedness, which is his entry into humanity" ("The World of King Lear" 65). Mack's "When we come crying hither, we bring with us the badge of all our misery; but it is also the badge of the vulnerabilities that give us access to whatever grandeur we achieve" (69) echoes Innocent III's De Contemptu Mundi's "We came crying hither. . . . When we are born, we cry that we are come to this great stage of fools" (114), and Lear's rendering of those words in Act IV, vi., 183-84. Elated that Cordelia loves him, Lear displays grace under pressure when he extends this lighthearted invitation to her:

Come let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage;
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
As gilded butterflies. . . . (V.iii.8-13)

The tragic figure of Lear is the embodiment of everyone who has lost someone dearer to him than life itself; whether that loss occurs as the result of rivalry over a kingdom, or an inheritance, or simply the inevitable consequence of having lived. Kirsch speaks of "the universality of this experience [death] and of its immeasurable pain" (170). The pain proves to be too much for Lear who follows his daughter in death as she had endeavored to follow him in life. In his provocative article "On the Greatness of King Lear," Booth refers to Lear's entrance with Cordelia in his arms as "the most terrifying five minutes in literature...for the audience" (101). Rife with rivalries, King Lear's rivals litter the stage with bodies in the closing scenes. Death claims all three sisters, as well as the evil half-brother. Too late Lear learns that love is far more precious than kingdoms; too late Gloucester learns to differentiate between true and counterfeit love; and too soon Edgar, the survivor, experiences the emptiness that so often accompanies victory.

Although Shakespeare's Hamlet, Prince Of Denmark, is a revenge play, the revenge flows from intra/inter-family rivalries. Rivalry sets in motion the domino effect that ends in the fall of the play's most important characters as well as the fall of Denmark to Norway.

Family rivalry causes Claudius to murder his brother Hamlet. This Cain-like action accomplishes several objectives: Claudius wins the crown he covets, he satisfies his ambition, and he marries the lovely Gertrude, his brother's widow. Briefly it appears that Claudius has murdered with impunity, but then his brother's ghost appears and poisons the air of Denmark with his tale of murder most foul. Mack says, "The juice he [Claudius] pours into the ear of the elder Hamlet is a combined poison and disease. . . . From this fatal center, unwholesomeness spreads
out till there is something rotten in all Denmark” (“The World of Hamlet,” 58). Sickness and disease metaphors abound throughout the play. Poison begets poison and that poison begets death. The original murder [Claudius’ murder of King Hamlet], which occurs in a garden and leads to more deaths, resembles Satan’s miasmic intrusion into the Garden of Eden and man’s subsequent fall. Whereas the Edenic fall was symbolic or figurative, in Hamlet the fall is literal, with bodies falling all over the stage.

Although Hamlet is distressed when his mother, Gertrude, marries Claudius so soon after King Hamlet’s death, it is not until Hamlet speaks with his father’s ghost that he views his Uncle Claudius as an intended murder victim. However, once the older Hamlet reveals Claudius’ role in his death, Hamlet begins to consider ridding the world of his and his father’s rival for Gertrude’s love. Now he has a stronger reason for despising his uncle. Now his actions will be justified by his commission to murder that “smiling, damned villain!” (I.v.106). This despicable villain, according to Professor Fredson Bowers, has “killed [Hamlet’s] father, whored his mother, popped in between the election and his hopes” (90), and if that were not enough, the villainous uncle plots the young Hamlet’s assassination.

Professor Ernest Jones speaks of Hamlet’s “long, repressed” desire to take his father’s place in his mother’s affection,” which Jones says is “stimulated to unconscious activity by the sight of someone usurping this place exactly as he himself had once longed to do. . . . This someone was a member of the same family, so that the actual usurpation further resembled the imaginary one in being incestuous. Without his being in the least aware of it these ancient desires are ringing in his mind...” (108). Consumed by jealousy and righteous indignation, Hamlet watches his mother and uncle enjoy each other’s company. Unable and unwilling to stem his grief over the loss of his father as readily as have Gertrude and Claudius, Hamlet stands silhouetted in sorrow and muses:

But two months dead, nay, not so much...
So excellent a king... so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly....
Frailty, thy name is woman! (I.i.138-42)

A few months earlier Claudius had berated Hamlet for continuing to grieve for his father: “How is it that the clouds still hang on you?...to persevere / In obstinate condolence is a course / of impious stubbornness, tis unmanly grief” (I.ii.66; 92-94). And Gertrude in turn had reminded her son: “Thou know’st ’tis common, all that lives must die, / Passing through nature to eternity” (I.ii.72-73).

As Marcellus says in Act I, “Something is rotten in the state of Denmark” (iv. 89). The ghost of the murdered king walks abroad, frightening a few former subjects and alarming his son by describing his assassination and commissioning young Hamlet to avenge his father’s death. Thus a rival rises from the grave to demand revenge. He pours into his son’s ear a poison quite as deadly as Claudius had poured into his brother’s kingly ear. The newly-commissioned son, already deeply saddened by his father’s death and by the unseemly haste in which his mother had remarried, must now set aside his grief, forsake his scholarly pursuits, alienate his
beloved Ophelia, and devise a scheme that will end in the appeasement of his father's ghost: regicide! The ghost recreates the murder scene:

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd,
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin...
No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head. (I.v.74-76; 77-78)

Earlier in that scene, the ghost has told Hamlet, "My hour is almost come / When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames / Must render up myself" (I.v.5-7). The elder Hamlet has lost his heavenly paradise as well as his earthly kingdom. Bereft of hope and obsessed by his monomaniacal desire to be avenged, this man reposes back from the grave to destroy his survivors—loved ones as well as enemies.

Instead of assuring Hamlet that Gertrude played no role in his murder, the elder Hamlet just says, "Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive / Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven..." (I.v.85-86). Thus Hamlet must act while believing that his own mother had conspired against his father. No wonder he begins to think of Denmark as a prison and to marvel "that one may smile, and smile, and be a villain!" (I.v.108). In accepting his father's commission Hamlet forfeits his own freedom, never to regain it. He feigns insanity to accomplish his deadly purpose, but the many tragedies that occur almost shove him over the brink into insanity. When he leaps into Ophelia's grave, he never really emerges alive. He goes through the motions of living, but he no longer prizes life: "I lov'd Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers / Could not with all their quantity of love / Make up my sum" (V.i.269-70). Mack sees this scene as pivotal, noting that following the grave scene, Hamlet is "ready for the final contest of mighty opposites." He states that Hamlet now "accepts the world as it is, the world as a duel, in which whether we know it or not, evil holds the poisoned rapier and the poisoned chalice waits; and...if we win at all, it costs not less than everything" ("The World of Hamlet" 63). This writer feels, however, that an earlier scene, the "To Be, Or Not to Be" soliloquy, determines Hamlet's course. Indeed, William Butler Yeats' "Why should we honor those who die on the field of battle? A man may show as reckless a courage in entering into the abyss of himself" seems especially applicable to Hamlet, for in his famous soliloquy he explores the abyss of self and rises from his search with renewed determination to destroy his father's and his rival.

Although Hamlet welcomes an opportunity to kill Claudius, murderer of his father and thief of his mother, he feels overwhelmed by the ghost's command and he wishes that circumstances were different: "The time is out of joint—O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!" (I.v.188-89). David Kestan observes that Hamlet reluctantly finds that revenge is a "desperate mode of imitation, avenging wrongs with wrongs. The revenger is prevented from originating an action. He is allowed only to re-act to—and to re-enact—the original crime" (113). When Hamlet holds up before Gertrude and Claudius the mirror [the play within the play], he sees himself reflected therein. He and Claudius are both murderers or would-be murderers. Shortly after this unsettling scene, Hamlet hears a sound behind the curtains of his mother's bedchamber and thinking it is Claudius lurking there, he stabs at the curtain and kills the unfortunate Polonius, guilty only of nosiness, pomposity, and
loquaciousness—all irritating traits but hardly sufficient cause to be murdered. Now Hamlet’s hands, like Claudius’ hands, are stained with blood.

Boris Pasternak, Russian translator of Hamlet, views the Play not as “a drama of weakness...but of duty and self-denial” (cited in Levin, 80). In order to kill his father’s rival, Hamlet must lose everything, including the love and life of his beloved Ophelia and his own life. Rivalry between two brothers results in a rottenness in Denmark. Each brother precipitates the deaths of several people. Each brother has tunnel vision and each little cares that his actions will incur misery and death. Hamlet the avenger—son and nephew—is swept along by the tide of events as he moves toward the final reckoning. Poison—the poison of rivalry at its most despicable level—leaves yet another stage strewn with bodies. Sounding like an echo of his father’s ghost, the young Hamlet, as he is dying, speaks to Horatio and asks to be remembered:

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story. (V.ii.346-49)

Hamlet implores his friend not to join him in death but to live and tell his story. Referring specifically to King Lear, but applying equally as well to Hamlet, Mack says that King Lear “begs us to seek the meaning of our human fate not in what becomes of us, but in what we become. Death...is miscellaneous and commonplace; it is life whose quality may be made noble and distinctive. Suffering we all recoil from; but we know it is a greater thing to suffer than to lack the feelings and virtues that make it possible to suffer” (“The World of King Lear,” 69).

No one can see the tragic figures of Lear, Gloucester, and Hamlet on the stage without being very much aware that these figures’ feelings ran deep and that their “virtues...[made] it possible to suffer,” even to suffer the angst of familial rivalry. According to Mack, “tragedy never tells us what to think; it shows us what we are and may be” (69). Therein lies the palpable poignancy one experiences when he perceives the unrealized heights these characters could have reached had they not fallen while poised on the precipice. Lear’s words regarding Cordelia say it all:

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life
And thou no breath at all? Thou’lt come no more
Never, never, never, never, never. (V.iii.307-09)
Works Cited


Bible, The.


Yeats, William Butler.
Photographs by Frank Lower
Contributors

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