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Ministry Of Teaching

EDITORIAL

Lana Hibbard

“Yipee! It’s nearly Easter. Then Jesus will come and die for us again.” I was quick to correct my 5-year-old’s misconception but on later reflection, I wish I had taken time to share in her excitement about Jesus’ death. Where has my excitement gone? It seems all too easy to become busy, focused, or tired but these are simply ‘excuses’ that allow us to ‘just make it through the day’ rather than find delight in the day. “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Psalm 118:24).

Delight is a feeling of pleasure, excitement and extreme satisfaction. An experience that brings delight is not only enjoyed at the time but leaves positive memories that are recalled and shared in the future. A child finds delight in so many things: a pretty flower, a puddle, a broken butterfly wing, a spider web, the way a slater curls into a ball, ice cream cones, giving handcrafted cards, and so much more. Children are adept at noticing things that don’t even register on the radar of an adult. We tend to have agendas, outcomes and schedules that place blinkers on our daily experience. The problem with this is that a typical classroom has at least twenty students who need to experience a little excitement, wonder and delight in their day.

Is it possible to create delightful classrooms? There is a lot we can learn from market research into what creates a delightful experience for customers; this ten-step recipe for delightful customer service can easily be applied to the classroom experience.

1. In advance, find out who your end customers [students] are, and find out what they want and expect.
2. Understand what you have to offer them that matches their wants.
3. Provide the goods and / or services to the customers [students] in a manner that is enjoyable.
4. Be sure that the customer [student] perceives value from the experience.
5. During the process, make sure that the customer [student] feels important and cared for.
6. Study their actions, facial expressions, tone of voice, hand gestures and analyse what your interaction should be.
7. Ask them if they would like some more of this or another product or service [activity or approach].
8. When completed, ask them how they enjoyed the experience.

9. Analyse their answer and “brainstorm” how to make it better the next time. Everything can be made better. Think hard!

10. Be ready for the next experience.¹

Jesus cared about those around Him. Jesus made people His priority. He wasn’t too busy for children. He wasn’t too focused to pass by Zaccheaus in the tree. He wasn’t too constrained by social rules to talk to the woman at the well. He wasn’t too involved with the crowd to be aware of ten lepers needing His attention. Jesus took the time to notice people and care for their needs. Jesus found delight in loving people and in caring for their needs.

A large percentage of teachers say they chose the profession because they want to make a difference. Jesus is the perfect example of how to make a difference. He knew how to care for individuals in a crowd. John Goodman, vice chairperson of TARP Worldwide, a leading customer experience research consultancy, says that one of the primary ways to create delight in a customer is to reinforce the feeling that he or she is unique.² In today’s world of mass production, information overload and time scarcity, your students want to know that you think they are special, that you notice them and that you care.

An ethic of caring is pivotal to fostering delight in others. When we care, we elevate the needs and desires of others to a level where they affect our decision-making. When we care, we are in a position to more naturally foster delight, wonder and excitement, and convey the knowledge, skills and values we seek to share. **TEACH**

“An ethic of caring is pivotal to fostering delight in others”

Endnotes

¹ Johnson, M. A. (2002). *What makes a good recipe for delightful customer service?* Retrieved from <http://www.customerdelight.com/recipe/>

² Alexander Communications Group. (2008). *Delight customers and increase first call resolution by empowering reps to be adaptable when solving problems.* Retrieved from <http://www.customerservicegroup.com/pdf/CSN0408docs.pdf>



[Photography: Ann Stafford]

The friendship factor

Andre Afamasaga

Chaplain, Macarthur Adventist College, Macquarie Fields, NSW

The true teacher can impart to his pupils few things so valuable as the gift of his own companionship.¹

As chaplains we employ many tools to effect life transformation through the working of the Holy Spirit: prayer, Bible study, Weeks of Prayer, Friday night youth, inspiring chapel services, excursions, camps, student involvement, service projects, overseas trips, awesome music, funny and memorable preaching, good DVDs, authentic role modelling and more. Combined these elements make up an environment where a young person can give their life to Christ Jesus; however, I believe there is a powerful tool that we neglect, overlook and even avoid—friendship, friendship between the teacher and the student, between adult and young person. I believe friendship with our students is one of the most effective tools for guiding young people toward making a lifelong commitment to Jesus.

“Young people are so used to being ignored by us that it is no wonder they, in turn, ignore our spirituality”

I admit the idea is uncomfortable and scary. It's contentious ground. We raise our eyebrows, grit our teeth and assume there has to be another way. Our apprehension seems legitimate, friendship between a teacher and a student doesn't seem natural or right, and it has gone wrong too many times.

We are governed by legal and professional standards and must work within the boundaries of the child safety protection acts that govern us. Adherence to the law, however, does not automatically preclude a friendship with our students. To deem friendship a practise belonging to another era is tantamount to throwing out the baby with the bathwater and is essentially denying our humanity, not to mention our Christian mission.

The importance of adult friendship

Research confirms what we have always sensed.

The most frequently encountered positive role model in the lives of children, outside of the family circle, was a favourite teacher. For the resilient youngster, a special teacher was not just an instructor for academic skills, but also a confidante and positive model for personal identification... when schools focus on what really matters in life, the cognitive ends we now pursue so painfully and artificially will be achieved somewhat more naturally...It is obvious that children will work

harder and do things—even odd things like adding fractions—for people they love and trust...The number of student references to wanting caring teachers is so great that we believe it speaks to the quiet desperation and loneliness of many adolescents in today's society.²

A study of resilient young people revealed, “[They] all had at least one person in their lives who accepted them unconditionally, regardless of temperamental idiosyncrasies, physical attractiveness, or intelligence.”³ Young people are so used to being ignored by us that it is no wonder they, in turn, ignore our spirituality. We are failing to connect. Leading students toward a relationship with Jesus is our ‘core business’. Our primary function is academic education and character development but our underpinning purpose is to lead children and their families into faith in Jesus. At our school, we achieve this through making connections.

Teachers at our school have made a determined effort to connect with students, usually just a few at a time. Our teachers are involved in building friendships by playing OzTag one night a week, shopping, visiting the Easter show for the first time, going to a concert, visiting church members, watching movies, and listening to music, among other things. Our bus coordinator has an ongoing banter about the NRL and rugby union with a now baptised Year 10 student. It was during one of these discussions that he learnt that the student stopped watching the NRL games on Friday night, “Because it's the Sabbath sir!”

Friendships like these have led to new levels of commitment in a number of our students, often in those we would have least expected to accept Jesus. Some of the most spiritual discussions are not in my period five Bible study on a Tuesday but in my car on the way home from school or an event. I am often reminded of what a colleague once said to me, “Relationship is more important than content.”

A few weeks ago, one of the students I mentor came to me flustered, “Andre I have something to tell you. You're going to get so angry at me. I'm really sorry.” Then she blurted out, “I just smoked! I just had a cigarette. I'm so sorry Andre.” I realised her confession was actually a fruit of the friendship and subsequent trust we had developed over the years. It is the trust that comes from an environment of

friendship and allowing a margin for the student to make choices and indeed make mistakes that leads students toward growth and maturity.

Am I a suitable mentor / friend?

Some may wonder whether a flawed role model is desirable. What will our young people aspire to? We may avoid spiritual mentoring because we assume we are not able to live up to a standard that is holy enough to meet student expectations. In reality, students are not looking for perfection. Young people are quietly observing how the adults they respect navigate the tenuous terrain of the Christian life.

Your young people want to see how you deal with stress, temptation, crisis, disappointment, success and the challenges of life. Scary? That is where real growth and change occurs. Remember your young people do not expect you to be perfect. [They want to know that] you are real and honest about your struggles and mistakes. They want to know that you are giving it your best, and like them, you face challenges too.⁴

The effort to establish friendships is not to be the solo effort of the chaplain. It must be environmental. This organic approach is akin to the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child".

In my interactions with young people and their parents, I point out that even as a minister I am not immune to struggles. I share my mistakes, my victories, my happiness and my temptations. I try to convey that a relationship with Jesus is relevant to their every life choice and that the Christian walk is not a pristine, static or boring journey.

Because our school is located in a marginalised and deprived area, I tell many stories about growing up in a family where we didn't have it all. I talk about being a reject and a 'try hard'; being bullied; and of trying to form my own identity out of being an angry and confused New Zealand-born Samoan teenager who hated school and most times erred on the wrong side of life. The students have memorised the testimony of my rebellious young adult years and my battle with substances and even now my battle with all things worldly. I am not proud of these aspects of my life but I have to share them because I need to model for them that the love of Jesus is real and that his grace forgives me, and them!

Central to postmodern youth ministry is the idea that we are on a journey together, it is not a conversation between an expert and a novice but rather two humans (albeit of varying experiences, wisdom and ages) doing life together.

Authentic engagement is never condescending. It's not 'top down'...If we are to truly incarnate the gospel of this new world, we as Christ-followers would do well to learn the spiritual rhythms of non-Christians and a dance that is, first of all, truly

human. As we seek humble engagement instead of power, we will earn the right to draw others into the subtle rhythms of grace.⁵

Sadly, many teachers value control of their classroom over a warm relationship with their students. Ellen White, one of the founders of Seventh-day Adventism, cautions against this. She says teachers who are strict and proud of having students under their subjection "are not the most successful teachers". She says they fail because they do not cultivate friendliness with their students.

They often hold themselves too much reserved, and exercise their authority in a cold, unsympathising manner which cannot win the hearts of their children and pupils.⁶

Instead, she encourages teachers to befriend students.

Show [students that you] love them, and [take] an interest in all their efforts, and even in their sports, sometimes even being a child among children, [it] would make the children very happy, and would gain their love and win their confidence.⁷

A word of warning

Friendships with students can become unhealthy or even abusive. The public view of chaplains, teachers or pastors abusing or taking advantage of a vulnerable, young student exists because it can, and sadly does, happen. Some adults fail to exercise "healthy boundaries"⁸ and end up in sexual, or less sinister but equally damaging, co-dependent relationships with teenagers.

If our emotional needs are not met by God and the appropriate adults in our lives, we may inadvertently project these needs onto our students under the guise of Christian discipleship. The desire must be that young people can have healthy relationships with us and see Jesus reflected in us.

Let go and let God love them

Being a friend, I used to become so invested in the lives of these students that when they fell off the rails and indulged in excessive swearing, smoking, drinking, sexual relationships, parties, lies, hate, or gossip, I would get discouraged. I felt like I had somehow failed.

One Friday night after dropping off a group of students, I found out a student I was mentoring, one I thought had been making excellent progress in his Christian journey, had relapsed into some at-risk behaviours and was trying to get a girl to follow him. I remember being confused and discouraged. I complained to God as I drove home. I couldn't understand how the friendship, the talks, the modelling, and the praying had 'failed'. Philippians 1:6 came to mind, reminding me that the student

I try to convey that a relationship with Jesus is relevant to their every life choice and that the Christian walk is not a pristine, static or boring journey

Teaching & Professional Practice

belonged to God and not me.

God impressed upon me the reason I was angry, it was because my human love is conditional. I enjoy being a friend to the students when they show promise but I am stressed when they fall because I can't help feeling I have failed and that they have failed me. Only God can be a real friend to them, showing them a boundless love void of any selfishness. I became convicted that my friendship is a catalyst to their spiritual growth, not the end goal.

Conclusion

It was the willingness of Jesus to meet, speak and eat with just about anybody; the feeling he engendered that they could dare come to him as they were, that transformed them. The beautiful 'acceptance in their unacceptability' brought about repentance, forgiveness and the discovery of the joy that life with Jesus brings.⁹

Friendship was at the heart of Jesus' ministry and is what we need to model.

In your efforts to mentor, be simple, be creative, but most of all, be real...Through relationships with

you, the next generation will catch a vision of their worth to Jesus Christ, begin to see Him as their ultimate Hero, and ultimately take up the cause of the cross.¹⁰

My prayer is that you have purposeful friendships with your students that point them to Jesus our ultimate friend, so in turn, they can develop life-impacting friendships with others. **TEACH**

Endnotes

¹ White, E. G. (1952). *Education*. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

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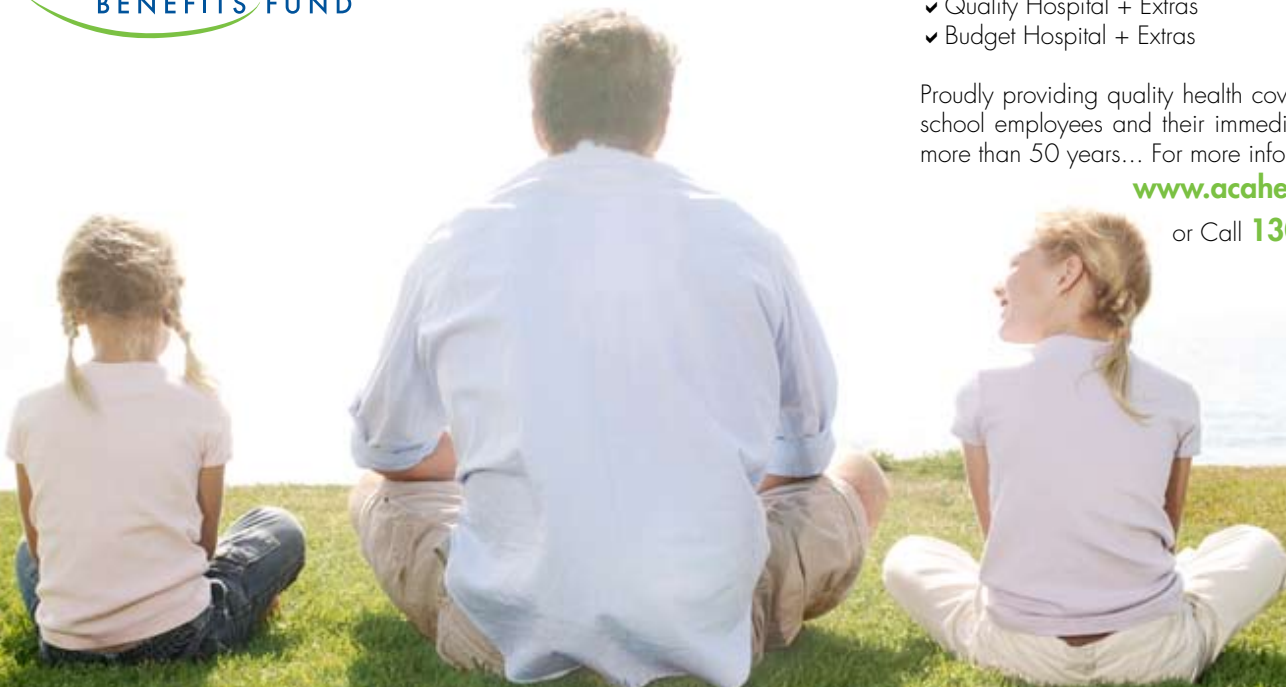
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EH&S Issues

Most OH&S officers take their responsibilities seriously, with good reason. Failure to act on potential hazards has serious consequences, both in terms of safety and accountability. Most schools appoint OH&S officers, yet it is important to remember that *all* staff members are accountable for students' health and safety. Safe work practice documents reveal that any individual who assumes responsibility in a school situation for the welfare of students by providing instruction, direction, advice or assistance is deemed an accountable person.

How accountable are you when it comes to the *Eternal Health and Safety* of the students in your school? Do you help take responsibility for the spiritual formation of your students? Or perhaps your school has an appointed *Eternal, Health & Safety Officer*. With increases in funding, many schools have employed chaplains who serve in this role. This issue of *TEACH* features the role of chaplaincy in Christian schools. Chaplains act as advocates for students. They have a heart to develop spirituality and a job description that fosters the *Eternal Health and Safety* of students. Their role in schools is very important, but as with any good practice, there may be inherent dangers.

In this case, the biggest danger is that classroom teachers may abdicate their role to the chaplain, leaving with this individual the responsibility for the students' *Eternal Health & Safety*. George Barna

(2003), researcher and author, points out that one primary function of churches is to equip people to reflect Jesus. As faith-based communities, Christian schools function as churches, and most perceive that one of their roles is to make disciples. This requires a greater commitment than merely learning about Jesus. It's like those 'learn about' and 'learn to' statements that appear in some syllabus documents. Christian educators desire that their students move beyond learning about God and learn to live in God's presence, so they can reflect His love to the world. For Christian teachers, their chosen career is more than a job. It is a ministry.

To be effective in this ministry demands an integrated approach that reaches further than the chaplain's office. Everyday teaching and school routines should reflect the spirit-filled lives of the teachers. This should be evident in chapel programs, during morning devotions or worships, in scripture classes, *and* in every aspect of the school program.

Students learn to reflect Jesus by associating with people who are reflecting Jesus in the way they live. This means all of us are accountable when it comes to the *Eternal Health and Safety* of our students. How seriously are we taking our responsibility? **TEACH**

EH&S issues are a joint initiative between the Adventist Schools Australia Curriculum Unit and Avondale College.

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Barna, G. (2003). *Think like Jesus*. Brentwood, TN: Integrity Publishers.

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Introducing psychology interns to counselling in Christian schools

Ray Southon

School counsellor, Mountain View Adventist College, Doonside, NSW; registered psychotherapist and counsellor

An illuminating idea

As part of a compulsory aspect of professional counselling practice, I had established a supervisory relationship with practicing psychologist, Colleen. Colleen happened to also supervise interns who were studying a Masters degree in either Educational Psychology or Clinical Psychology at various universities around Sydney. When I found out that Colleen was looking for placements for her students to gain experience in various counselling settings, an exciting idea was born. I began negotiations with the principal and school council of Sydney Adventist College (SAC) regarding the placement of psychology interns in the school and later in Mountain View Adventist College (MVAC).

Assessing the potential value of intern placements

I discussed with the principal the needs of the school and the training and skill level of the interns in order to determine how the interns might best serve the needs of the College.

During the infancy stage of the project, the interns placed in the school played a significant supportive role in the effort to establish a needs-based assessment of perceived ways the school counselling team could best serve the school community. They assisted in surveying staff and student needs and began setting up structures to respond to them. During a parent information night, they helped conduct a parent-needs survey and utilised the results to develop pathways to address parents' needs.

Developing a job description

There was no existing protocol or pathway for the introduction of psychology interns into our school setting. We needed to carve a new pathway for integrating psychology interns into a major school system. The university required the formulation of a job description for the interns. We wanted to develop a job description that reflected the needs of the school and how the interns would be utilised in order to address those needs.

Drawing on the findings of the needs-based assessment we had done of students, staff and parents, I formulated a draft copy of a 'Needs-Based Assessment for the Integration of Psychology Students'. The draft included suggestions for possible services the interns could provide and needs they could fulfil. This proposal later developed into a model that would provide not only an adequate job description but also the prime function and accountability structures of our department.

Selection of interns

Selection of a suitable intern is critical. We liaise with the placement coordinator at the University of Western Sydney, School of Psychology in order to find those students interested in a placement in a Christian school setting. Potential interns submit a resume and indicate their willingness to operate within the school's value system.

Contributions made by the interns

The benefits of hosting and supporting psychology interns at Sydney Adventist College and Mountain View Adventist College have been extensive. These benefits have mostly come through the expanded services the counselling departments can now offer at the schools.

Interns were involved in the formulation of a major Anti-Bullying Project for SAC. They formed part of a brainstorming group and made it possible to visit sixteen other major private and public, co-ed and non-co-ed colleges around Sydney with a view to determine best practice in addressing bullying. These findings then formed an important resource during the development of school policy and practice.

With increased counselling staff, SAC has been able to establish two additional counselling rooms. School administration supported this growth and it wasn't long before the interns began supervised meetings with students. Counselling sessions help address issues such as cutting, suicide ideation, family break-up, sexuality, sex, identity issues, anger management, depression, relationships, grief, separation anxiety, integration adjustment, and bullying.

“Benefits have mostly come through the expanded services the counselling departments can now offer at the schools”

An educational psychology intern has been placed as a classroom supervisor with the learning support coordinator. This intern works with teachers to develop and implement behaviour support plans for individual students; manage small groups of students who require specialised support; work with students on an individual basis as required; carry out appropriate testing (including for integration) of students when required; and liaise with teachers regarding student progress.

By utilising the interns, we have been able to offer increased support to parents. The interns played an essential part in the development and delivery of a 'Relationship Recovery Workshop' aimed at empowering families of divorce, separation or bereavement in their healing and reinvention. The interns acted as facilitators of small groups, supporting parents and their children.

The interns were integral in the development and delivery of a parent night for middle school parents. The program included a panel discussion with several brief presentations on teenage developmental stages and parenting issues. The program gave us an opportunity to introduce ourselves as professionals, facilitate networking amongst parents, and provide feedback to parents. Following are further services offered by the interns:

- skills training
- support for teachers dealing with difficult behaviour
- assistance in supporting learning difficulties
- follow-up with students
- career guidance
- psychometric testing, including feedback to parents about the child's needs with respect to psychometric test results
- liaising with teaching staff and documenting cases to assist resolution of student-related issues
- delivery of anger management courses
- support for student mums.

The relationship between the interns and the school is truly of mutual benefit.

Welfare to wellbeing

After careful consideration of the services offered at the school, including those by the counselling department, we planned a change of name for 'Student Welfare'. Instead of being called 'Student Welfare', the inference of which is helping the needy, I suggested a new title 'Student Wellbeing Support Team'. This new title suggests a positive and holistic approach to caring for students. This proposal was met with favour and was passed by the School Council.

The interns' experience

During the first placement, entry, orientation and integration were poor due to teething issues. In spite of this, our intern enjoyed her early experience with us and was enthusiastic to get more involved in the school. Over time, her confidence grew and teachers started to show their appreciation of her input. (Experience and the development of a job description now enable us to facilitate a smooth entry process.)

The interns are with us in order to further develop their skills. They have an opportunity to observe behaviours, see professionals in action, ask questions, and explore ideas and concepts in a supervisory relationship. Over time, they learn to trust their intuition as they use the student story and their own life experience and training to respond to needs. They also learn to reflect on situations to determine what can be learnt about themselves, about others, about life or about God.

As the interns grow in confidence, experience and competence, they start to team-counsel students and parents under my supervision. When appropriate, they then branch out on their own, seeing their own list of students. During their university training, these interns have not had the chance to do one-on-one counselling so our school setting offers a tremendous learning opportunity.

In addition, interns have the opportunity to fulfil the requirements of their university internship program.

Conclusion

'Where there is no vision, the people perish'. For me, fulfilling one's dreams is an exciting adventure. This project has made an important contribution to Christian education in our schools. The process hasn't been without its challenges but we have seen effective multiplication of our labour, allowing us to care for even more needs within our community. This project is a worthy fulfilment of a wonderful dream, and the illumination has only just begun for those who see its potential. **TEACH**

“
The relationship between the interns and the school is truly of mutual benefit
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Culturally relevant approaches to classroom management

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Summary

Students from various cultural backgrounds may experience cultural dissonance when teachers and educational administrators from the mainstream culture misconstrue, misinterpret or simply disregard their cultural patterns of learning, behaviour and communication. Due to changing demographics worldwide, cultural diversity is the norm for many schools today. It is therefore imperative that teachers and educational administrators become aware of the variances and unique qualities and characteristics of the groups, cultures and languages represented in their schools. This article specifically highlights important sociocultural issues in classroom management and presents effective strategies for managing multicultural classes. Implications for Christian teachers are addressed.

Changing world demographics

It is evident that we are living in an ethnically and culturally diverse world. Pluralistic countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, France, Australia, Holland and New Zealand are continuing to experience an influx of immigrants. These countries are therefore faced with the challenges of providing opportunities for these groups to be meaningfully included in the sociopolitical, cultural and educational systems and structures, while at the same time, creating avenues for maintaining the uniqueness of each group's cultural patterns. Diversity also demands further restructuring and modification of educational systems and processes, and further revision of educational policies and philosophies to reflect multicultural parameters and contexts.

One of the most challenging issues in multicultural education concerns classroom management. Techniques and approaches to classroom management, which in the past have reflected the values, norms and beliefs of dominant cultures must be modified to meet the academic, sociocultural, developmental, moral and ethical needs of ever-increasingly ethnically diverse school populations.

Sociocultural issues in classroom management

In order to avoid problems of culturally irrelevant classroom management techniques, teachers must be culturally sensitive and culturally literate. Cultural literacy may be achieved through a thorough knowledge of the history, social patterns, customs, mores, family characteristics, values and educational challenges of ethnic and racial groups. Cultural illiteracy may pose serious threats to the health and well-being of students. Teachers may be attempting to solve problems which do not exist, or may fail to notice problems which do exist, or may use culturally ineffective strategies to deal with problems which may arise.¹ Such teacher attitudes may be attributed to ethnocentrism, cultural tunnel vision, racism, prejudice or ignorance. These attitudes may trigger feelings of alienation, anger, helplessness, normlessness and distrust among affected students. These feelings may ultimately lead to externalising behaviours (i.e., overt aggression, destruction of school property, violence towards others, defiance) or internalising behaviours (i.e., depression, anxiety, withdrawing from school and classroom activities, extreme fears).

Cultural sensitivity is achievable through an empathic grasp of how each group feels, thinks,

Cultural sensitivity is achievable through an empathic grasp of how each group feels, thinks, acts and reacts

acts and reacts. Teachers may accomplish this task by developing an awareness of their cultural assumptions, values, prejudices and biases, and in so doing, seek to eradicate stereotypical behaviours, attitudes and responses. In this connection, it is especially important that teachers remain open to learn as much as possible from their interactions with students. Teachers are the foundational building blocks in the construction of a strong classroom and / or school community, where respect and tolerance for cultural and ethnic differences are demonstrated and valued.

Prerequisite skills for managing multicultural classrooms

Addressing the management of diversity in the classroom starts with the training and education of the teachers. Teacher education programs need to place a greater emphasis on embedding multicultural applications and implications in professional and practical courses and activities. This will increase knowledge and understanding of how culture strongly influences children's and teachers' behaviours, attitudes and thought processes. In turn, this may ultimately motivate them to construct and implement culturally relevant instructional and management strategies.

An essential component of the training and education of teachers is an exploration of their own cultural and ethnic background. A cultural self-assessment, such as the one listed below, is strongly recommended. Such an exercise gives teachers an opportunity to critically analyse and evaluate their prejudices and their scope of knowledge concerning culture and diversity.

Cultural assessment questionnaire

- What is my definition of diversity?
- What is my ethnic background?
- What is my cultural background?
- Do the children in my classroom and school come from diverse cultural backgrounds?
- What are my perceptions of students from different racial and ethnic groups, with language or dialects different from mine, or with special needs?
- What are the sources of these perceptions (e.g. friends, relatives, television, movies)?
- How do I respond to my students, based on these perceptions?
- Have I experienced others making assumptions about me based on my membership in a specific group? How did I feel?
- What steps do I need to take to learn about the students from diverse backgrounds in my

school and classroom?

- How often do social relationships develop among students from different racial or ethnic backgrounds in my classroom and in the school? What is the nature of these relationships?
- In what ways do I make my instructional program responsive to the needs of the diverse groups in my classroom?
- What kinds of information, skills and resources do I need to acquire to effectively teach from a multicultural perspective?
- In what ways do I collaborate with other educators, family members, and community groups to address the needs of all my students?²

Armed with the increased sensitivity this self-knowledge brings, teachers can then move forward to the next step of getting to know the cultures of the students in their classroom. The kinds of cultural context knowledge that are essential for teachers to learn include the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their students, which can serve to promote the "multilingualism and multiculturalism of all the students and the teacher".³

Knowledge and awareness of the social, cultural and religious practices of the countries from which their students have emigrated can aid teachers in understanding how these practices have influenced students' behaviours, attitudes, lifestyles and thought processes. Teachers should take the opportunity to know each country's geographical location and have some knowledge of the languages spoken⁴ since country of origin and language are so important to children's sense of identity.

Teachers and administrators can even go the extra step and learn to greet children in their native language. This type of cultural context knowledge may be used by teachers as a way of demonstrating an openness and willingness to learn about aspects of culture that are important to students and their families.⁵ Additionally, cultural context knowledge should also be considered essential in the development of curricular innovations and applications that are culturally inclusive.

Useful strategies for managing multicultural classes

The special feature in managing a multicultural class "is the heterogeneity or multiplicity of students' cultural background".⁶ This is evident in schools in Australia and New Zealand where many students from varied ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds attend. Such diversity of students' backgrounds demand that teachers become enlightened about how

“Diversity of students' backgrounds demand that teachers become enlightened about how cultural teaching and learning influences the manner in which children respond to classroom expectations”

cultural teaching and learning influences the manner in which children respond to classroom expectations. A child's meaningful participation in the activities of his / her classroom is highly dependent on how he / she perceives his / her roles and functions within that learning environment. Four important elements that need to be woven into the framework of classroom management approaches are as follows: (1) a supportive, nurturing classroom environment; (2) the physical design of the classroom; (3) instructional relevance; and (4) collaboration among school and community personnel.

A supportive, nurturing classroom environment enhances relationships among teachers and students, and is a strong antidote to indiscipline, intolerance, indifference, prejudice and bigotry

A supportive, nurturing classroom environment enhances relationships among teachers and students, and is a strong antidote to indiscipline, intolerance, indifference, prejudice and bigotry. This type of environment can be created from the first day of school by teachers "greeting students at the door with a smile and a warm, welcoming comment and communicating with second language learners with a phrase from their native language".⁷ Teachers can also instil in students' minds that they all can succeed. Such expectations, with encouragement, will help students feel that they are being supported in their efforts.⁸

When students know that you care for them and that you are looking out for them, it makes all the difference in the world. Students then feel valued regardless of their characteristics and are more likely to participate actively in the classroom.⁹

Respect and tolerance for culturally diverse groups may be enhanced by **the physical design of the classroom**. Classroom displays could include a map of the world that identifies the countries from which the students or their parents emigrated, and signs and banners welcoming students in their language. Arranging desks or tables in clusters creates opportunities for students to work together in small groups on class assignments and activities.¹⁰ This type of interaction creates an atmosphere in which interpersonal relationships are conceived and nurtured. Bulletin boards can highlight the social, technological, political, scientific and educational contributions of culturally and ethnically diverse individuals or groups. The media corner should contain books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and videos that highlight multicultural issues, experiences and traditions.¹¹

Instructional relevance enhances the classroom management functions of teachers. This is achievable when teachers become culturally responsive in their classroom interaction and instruction strategies. Children who do not belong to mainstream middle-class culture are at risk of educational failure if their teachers do not have the

cultural sensitivity, knowledge, skills and attitudes to facilitate their learning.¹²

The process of infusion, which integrates content and process, involves using ethnic and cultural materials to develop mastery of general academic and subject matter skills. For example, teaching reading skills such as comprehension, vocabulary and inferring meaning may be achieved through ethnic novels, poetry, stories and folklore; patterns of ethnic migration and settlement might be used in teaching geographic directions, and locations; and mathematical skills such as ratio, percentages, proportions and probabilities may be derived from looking at ethnic and gender employment trends.¹³

In addition to instructional approaches, teachers must also learn about the brilliance the students bring with them 'in their blood'.

Until they appreciate the wonders of the cultures represented before them—and they cannot do that without extensive study, most appropriately begun in college courses—they cannot appreciate the potential of those who sit before them, nor can they begin to link their students' histories and worlds to the subject matter they present in the classroom.¹⁴

Teachers cannot successfully implement culturally responsive classroom management techniques without effective support systems. **Collaboration among school and community personnel** is vital. Teachers can assist each other by establishing instructional and classroom management guidelines that are culturally and ethnically relevant. They can also enlist the support of professionals, such as school psychologists, counsellors, social workers and behavioural intervention specialists who clearly understand the contexts and dynamics of multicultural education and diversity.

School administrators can also be involved by working with teachers to create a school environment that emphasises respect and tolerance for cultural differences.

Administrators are the primary role model for the teachers and the students; having them participate in what the students are working on validates the importance of the work that the students are doing.¹⁵

Communicating with parents is essential to the success of any classroom management system. Teachers can send "newsletters to all families providing an overview of culturally-responsive curriculum goals, classroom activities and selected student-written stories and poems".¹⁶ Through parent-teacher conferences, teachers can gain additional insights from parents on how students' families influence and / or shape their behaviours

and attitudes. Parents can learn from teachers how their children are adjusting to the demands of school.

Implications for Christian teachers

Christian teachers who operate in culturally diverse school environments must be ever conscious of the opportunities and challenges presented as they seek to integrate their faith with learning and instruction. This goes beyond adopting teaching techniques that are facilitative of learning outcomes that predispose students to respect and embrace diversity as a God-intended reality. It requires that teachers be intentional and explicit about identifying particular Bible-based principles that guide their management techniques and strategies.

Specifically, because Christian schools are worldview driven, with specific philosophical and theological claims undergirding such a worldview, Christian teachers will do well to justify their pedagogic and management styles against such claims. Not only will this approach facilitate faith / subject integration, it will also aid in helping students make the connection between their learning, behaviours, attitudes, and their faith.

Cultural diversity presents both a challenge and an opportunity for Christian teachers. The challenge arises from the fact that attitudes and behaviours are culturally driven, and can trigger differences, which may lead to conflict and misunderstanding in learning environments. With this challenge comes the opportunity for teachers to aid students in the cultivation of Christian virtues, which will be evident in behaviours and attitudes that reflect tolerance, acceptance and respect for those who are culturally and ethnically different.

For example, two constructs / concepts that may be associated with the Christian worldview are *Oneness*, which emerges from our human differences, and *Interdependence*, a requirement for *Oneness*. Teachers can point students to the biblical concept of *Oneness* which is derived from differences, as exemplified by the triune God (three separate, different individuals) constituting a single reality (unity, wholeness). The construct / concept of *Interdependence* as a requirement for *Oneness* can be linked to the biblical example of the Apostle Paul's discussion in 1 Corinthians 12:14–15 and 25–26 in which he makes a strong case for interdependence.

For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?... That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. (KJV)

From the aforementioned examples, teachers can use group projects and cooperative learning techniques which foster interdependence—the pooling of diverse individual strengths to achieve a common goal. These management approaches enhance meaningful relationships among students and teachers, and engender mutual trust and open communication.

Christian teachers must continue to create and sustain learning environments in which all students meaningfully participate in setting and reinforcing standards and guidelines for learning and behaviour. They have a sacred obligation to demonstrate to other teaching professionals, how to visualise students as unique individuals, created by God, who have an “object to achieve, a standard to attain that includes everything good, and pure, and noble”.¹⁷

TEACH

Endnotes

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“It requires that teachers be intentional and explicit about identifying particular Bible-based principles that guide their management techniques and strategies”

Campus churches

Optional extra or imperative inclusion in our *Next Gen* schools

Mel Lemke

Chaplain, Avondale School, Cooranbong, NSW

Gateway, our church on campus, is a most exciting initiative. Three individual parents approached me in the car park after school a week before our campus church officially started. Their common question was “Pr Mel, I hear there is a church starting on campus. Can we come?” All three came to church that weekend, with their families. They love the community of faith they have discovered there. Each has become active in our church and has chosen to follow Jesus. This choice alone has added great value to their lives. New families keep coming to see what our campus church is about. They come because they love what they have seen in us, and want to know more. In my years as a pastor, I have never had anyone walk up to me in a car park or on the street and ask if they could come to my church, or if they could join my church. It happened three times in our first week of having a campus church, and grew out of an already-established relationship.

Never have our schools been so well placed to influence the lives of Australian and New Zealand families. Before us lies an unprecedented opportunity to invite children and their families with limited prior knowledge of God and His ways to consider Him and choose Him. In a growing number of schools, we find ourselves in a position where students from non-Christian or nominal-Christian families make up the greater percentage of student enrolment. At the same time, many of our schools have become schools of choice in the private sector and enjoy a growing reputation as places of learning that deliver not only excellent academic achievement but also produce high quality citizens and leaders through an intentional program of values transmission, relationship building, community service, and life-skills development. Parents today are looking for more than just education for their children. They are looking for the added value that good schools provide. A concurrent development sees us with more chaplains in schools than we have ever had. In Australia, government support and funding of chaplains in schools has helped boost this very

positive trend. This initiative alone has raised awareness of the important role chaplains play in schools. It has enabled some schools to hire chaplains for the first time and other schools to strengthen their already existent chaplaincy program.

Identifying opportunity

Dr Barry Oliver, leader of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the South Pacific region, recently identified Christian education as core to the mission of the church¹. This was a strong affirmation of the role of our schools in reaching unchurched families in our community.

Our school campuses could be the sites where our most fruitful kingdom growth occurs over the next decade if we are wise enough to maximise what we have. No other ministry arena has such wide and open access to the homes and hearts of secular families. Families who know nothing of God have already opened a door towards a life of faith when they enrol their children in our schools. Trust forms naturally as committed Christian teachers invest in bringing out the best in each child. Relationships with parents strengthen as children grow and learn and become.

Our campus church

A strong chaplaincy program was seen as an integral part of our school's vision for growth over the next decade. Pastoral care workers were recruited with the skill and life experience to meet current and future needs. We recognised that parents who chose to send their children to our school liked what we did, and supported our values. We saw that parents considered our school an inviting, safe place, with a strong commitment to bringing out the best in their children. This provided an excellent foundation to invite families to explore and experience what sat underneath our values and commitments—our faith. It was seen as important to plant a church on campus, a place that was neutral and already known and trusted by school families.

An initiative was taken to start a church on our school campus with the express vision to be a church for the families of our school. Our campus

An unprecedented opportunity to invite children and their families with limited prior knowledge of God and His ways to consider Him and choose Him

church is growing rapidly. This is not just a church that meets on campus. It is a church that is intimately connected with and supportive of the life of the school. Our pastor has an office on campus and is a part of the school chaplaincy team. The chaplains are a part of the pastoral team of the church. There is a memorandum of understanding between the school, the church and the conference that sets terms of reference for the functioning of the church. Our head of school is a key player in the life of the church, and our church pastor a key player in the life of the school. Our school and church are by no means perfect; we have our share of challenges. But God is here, He is in this, and it is an exciting place to be.

The role of chaplain

The role of the chaplain in such a future is crucial. The chaplain forms a vital link between the school, the church and the families we seek to reach. Chaplains help build stability, resilience and strength into the lives of students, enhancing the learning that takes place in the classroom. The pastoral care team works alongside teachers and family members in helping students reach for and achieve their best. Every encounter is an opportunity to “make God touchable”², to show we care, and to extend unconditional love and support. The chaplain provides spiritual leadership to all on campus, and provides a bridge to a new life experience within the campus church faith community.

The future

We have struggled for years to find a way to support and demonstrate genuine care for secular families in Australia and New Zealand. We spend larger budgets and greater effort on programs that convince fewer people to consider our faith. Alongside this trend, the Seventh-day Adventist church in Australia is aging, and we find it difficult to contemplate a future of decline. We don't need to. That is not God's intent for His church. He has given us a way ahead to an exciting future of kingdom growth, a future that sees our school campuses being strategically transformed into centres of pastoral care and selfless service. In so doing, they become ministry centres, inviting people to a full life with God.

Our campus church commissioned a group to plan for as many ways as possible to build friendships with school families and to invite them to come along to church and check it out. The chaplains are a part of that group. Everything is geared towards making church a welcoming and safe place for the unchurched as well as a place of worship for committed believers. We want church



[Avondale School collection]

to be a place where people feel secure, valued, included; a place where quality networks develop and lifetime friendships form; a place where people meet God, and grow to treasure being in His presence. The *Gateway* story has only just begun.

Our experience points to a way forward that holds rich reward. Inherent are some important system strategies worth considering:

1. Plant a church on every campus, with the clear intent of reaching the families of the school.
2. Staff the church with a pastor or pastors who have the ability to fit seamlessly into the life of the school and who relate well to the local community, men and women with charisma and energy, who are Spirit-filled and forward looking. Campus churches call for our best pastors.
3. Place a chaplain in every school. The chaplain works with students, staff, parents / families, and the church pastor and is the relational bridge between school and church.
4. Develop a strategic plan that is embraced by the school and the church for reaching the families of the school.
5. Reprioritise system resources. Within the Adventist system, deploy evangelism funds from Conference, Union and Division resource pools to fund specific evangelistic initiatives the school or campus church embark on. Access Global Mission funding for church plants on school campuses. Such funds could be used to support chaplaincy or campus pastoral placement in smaller settings or for a 'start-up' period. Within other church systems, access whatever funds are available to underwrite and ensure the success of this venture.

The combination of excellent school, campus church, and a dedicated teaching and chaplaincy team could well be our most effective evangelistic

“
A future that sees our school campuses being strategically transformed into centres of pastoral care and selfless service
”

Teaching & Professional Practice

strategy for at least the next ten years. Ours is not the only school moving in this direction. A number of other schools have realised the benefit of good schools having a strong chaplaincy program and an integrated campus church, and are already seeing the results of their investment. This paves the way towards an exciting future.

Leading church administrators and educators within the Seventh-day Adventist system have recognised the vital importance of chaplains to the future of our schools. The recent Australian Union Conference Education Consultation³ invited submissions and extensive discussion on the future of chaplaincy. Several key gaps were identified, with a clear will to move towards resolving the issues tabled and to promoting the growth of school chaplaincy into our future. Current proposed recommendations and discussion revolve around the following:

1. That a strong chaplaincy program be implemented in each school.
2. That chaplains invest in the pastoral care and support of our teachers.
3. To position chaplaincy ministry as a calling to pastoral ministry in the fullest sense, and that a steering group be established to:
 - develop a national chaplaincy program;
 - create national guidelines for the employment and professional development of chaplains;
 - establish guidelines for career paths for chaplains, including ministerial internships where appropriate;
 - create a formal network for chaplains;
 - clarify the relationship between the chaplain and local church;
 - develop guidelines for the funding of the chaplaincy program;
 - develop strategies to ensure chaplaincy services extend to all teachers;

“All they are waiting for is the invitation to come, and to “taste and see that the Lord is good””

4. To explore the possibility of providing undergraduate studies for chaplains;
5. To enhance connectivity between local churches and schools by developing strong partnerships between the ministry, the principal and the chaplain; and that the spiritual sponsorship of school students be promoted within the local church.

While still at an early stage of development, there is clear recognition of the importance of chaplaincy ministry to the future of our schools, and a deep commitment to building capacity and depth in the chaplaincy program into our future.

Using our schools as a vehicle to help people and to educate them for this life and the next is not a new idea, but it seems that God is rebirthing this strategy as a most important way to build His kingdom in our post-postmodern society. It is a strategy built on meaningful long-term relationships, something deeply important to today's generation.

We have a rapidly growing number of unchurched families who send their children to our schools. They like what we do, or they would not entrust their children to us. They like and support the values we stand for. They appreciate the unconditional care and genuine interest we show them. Their children are making decisions for Jesus during weeks of spiritual emphasis, and are studying the Bible with our teachers and pastors. In very many cases, all they are waiting for is the invitation to come, and to “taste and see that the Lord is good”.⁴ **TEACH**

Endnotes

¹ Australian Union Conference Education Consultation Opening Address, March 18, 2009, Melbourne Victoria.

² Term used by Mother Theresa to describe the work we do when we act as “a pencil in God's hand,” demonstrating His love to others through our actions.

³ Held in Melbourne, Victoria, March 18–19, 2009.

⁴ Psalm 34:8

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Pastoral care, action research, and teaching as a profession

Can ‘joining the dots’ facilitate teacher reflection on practice and identity?

Wilf Rieger

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Introduction

Educators have increasingly demonstrated commitment to, and invested much effort in advancing the cause of pastoral care, action research, and the status of teaching as a profession, over the last two decades. What is largely unrecognised is how these areas of education are linked. A shared focus of attention—evident in educational literature and professional practice—however, constitutes only a minor nexus between and among these three emerging areas of education.

Noteworthy and central to all three areas appears to be the idea of *making a difference in the lives of others*. This article explores some of the challenges and complexities inherent in existing and potential linkages, including some disjunctions, and their implication for teachers.

Pastoral care (PC)

A needs context and a ministry of care

In western societies, negative influences are impacting many students' lives and their learning at school. The 300,000 Child Safety Protection reportings in NSW alone confirm the claim the Department of Community Services was ‘drowning’ in the number of cases referred to them.¹ Similarly, the diary of a young girl in the print media by a non-government charity organisation, typifies and individualises the challenges of “680,000 disadvantaged kids living in homes where no parent is working”.² The young age of some of the affected children may locate them outside schools' domain; never-the-less, they will sooner or later come under the care of schools.

Pastoral care, in a school context, is an ethic of care that demonstrates an active concern for the wellbeing and wholeness of all members of the school community. In the past, pastoral care programs were often perceived as competing with academic ones. Such perceptions of an oppositional relationship tended to be counterproductive. In

contrast, recent research findings from the NSW independent schools sector concluded, “pastoral care and academic progress are inextricably linked”³, underlining that effective pastoral care in schools calls for a pedagogy that integrates the cognitive, social-relational, emotional and physical dimensions of students' lives.

In Christian schools, this occurs in a spiritual environment grounded in scriptural values and teachings that incorporate horizontal as well as vertical relationships; providing hope, healing and direction to individuals. Approaches of this kind emphasise the education of the *whole* person and frequently employ aspects of experiential education.⁴ Furthermore, from a structural viewpoint, pastoral care may become the ‘umbrella’ for a number of initiatives which schools might run, such as anti-bullying, Life Education⁵ and Peer Support⁶ programs, including a fully functioning chaplaincy ministry.⁷

Pastoral care is now a *sine qua non* for schools. They are expected to perform broad pastoral tasks—effected at a proactive, reactive, or developmental level—that may be summarised as providing nurture and healing; facilitating the learning of knowledge and acquisition of skills that develop resilience; promoting responsible self-disciplined conduct for community membership; and a whole-school approach that emphasises awareness and participation—*vis a vis a modus operandi* that is the preserve of specialist school staff.⁸ The beneficiaries of pastoral care may range from specific individuals, to (gender) groups and classes, or even whole school communities, as in the case of trauma and crisis management. The various pastoral tasks, levels of effect; beneficiaries and their respective subsets mentioned above, illustrate the rich and diverse framework in which pastoral care occurs.

Caring is viewed by teachers as an important personality trait in their colleagues. US research shows 86% of teachers perceived their colleagues as *caring*, higher than any other trait.⁹ Students also

“*Pastoral care is an ethic of care that demonstrates an active concern for the wellbeing and wholeness of all members of the school community*”

place a high value on teachers' caring, as Sheila Bethel contends: "Students don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."¹⁰ Current Australian of the Year, Professor Patrick McGorrey—adolescent mental health expert—in his acceptance speech stated that Australia is "in need of a system of care with early intervention". Pastoral care endeavours to address that need in a school setting.

Next, before attempting to explore some meaningful initial linkages, it is necessary to provide a brief coverage of the second area under examination.

Action research (AR)

Definition and brief historical background

There is no agreed definition for action research.¹¹ One educator has defined AR as:

Any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counsellors, or other stakeholders in the teaching / learning environment to gather information about the ways that their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how their students learn. This information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved.¹²

The philosophical antecedents of action research point to phenomenology. Drawing on aspects of the work of various educators, social psychologists and philosophers spanning the 20th century and several continents, AR has built up wide acceptance with a diverse 'clientele', mainly in the social sciences. The numerous conferences and journals presently devoted to action research are indicators of its current prominence, together with the AR theses completed at the MEd, EdD, MPhil and PhD levels.

The nature of action research

Action research represents a new orientation to research rather than a methodology. Partly a reaction to the logical empiricist approaches to enquiry that emphasise statistical analysis, objectivity and values neutrality, it indicates a paradigmatic shift from a *modern* to a *postmodern* mindset.

AR, in classroom and other educational contexts, challenges teachers to assume responsibility for their work practices (resolving specific, complex and problematic educational situations) and professional development. The AR process, although variously practised and described, basically consists of a cyclical 'model'¹³ that involves teachers in:

- *identifying a particular problem or focus area for improvement.* This leads to formulating key

questions and, in turn, necessitates planning that may be informed by educational literature and research. Collegial help may also be sought.

- *ethically collecting relevant, evidential data.* This requires acting on preceding planning. Data collection methods may range, among others, from teachers (and colleagues) observing, journaling and interviewing, to students completing group tasks, projects and questionnaires or doing tests; multiple methods may even be employed.
- *making sense of the collected data.* Analysing and interpreting the data requires asking incisive questions: Are there sufficient data? Are they valid? What patterns or themes emerge from the data? Is there broad agreement among data from different sources? Do the data facilitate the construction of concept maps? Could the data analysis benefit from the comments of a 'critical friend'?
- *reflecting on what has been learned and deciding: What should be done next?* Having reached this point, is it constructive to engage in another cycle of the process; perhaps with some modifications, before deciding on future directions regarding the identified problem?

The four-step cycle summarised above is descriptive rather than prescriptive. It should not be regarded as a scripted 'lock-step' process. Indeed practitioners, upon reflection, may revisit any previous step(s) and make modifications before proceeding further. Reflection thus becomes a dynamic element of the process.

Stringer¹⁴ condenses the inquiry cycle into a look-think-act process, within the phases of planning, instruction and evaluation (not unlike the ancient transformative practice of reading Scripture, *lectio divina*: read, think, pray, live).¹⁵

Levels, modes and performance texts

Action research can be conducted at various *levels* and in different *modes*. AR may be carried out at the level of the *individual*; it may target a *group* or *class*, or have a *whole-school* focus and even beyond, with beneficiaries of the inquiry also being 'collegial participants'.

The literature commonly identifies three AR modes: *technical*, *practical* and *emancipatory* (or *critical*).¹⁶ Any one of these theoretical perspectives may typically characterise an action research endeavour. Respective school examples are, instrumental actions assisting learners master spelling rules in English or creating mnemonics to recall the periodic table in Chemistry; motivating students to participate in cooperative learning; and

“AR challenges teachers to assume responsibility for their work practices and professional development”

enabling and empowering victims of disadvantage and / or abuse to become resilient, self-confident and independent individuals. The latter is typified in the literature by such inspirational classics as Sylvia Ashton-Warner's *Teacher*,¹⁷ an autobiographical account of raising the self-esteem and consciousness level of children in a small school on the north-east coast of the north island of New Zealand; and also *Letter to a teacher*,¹⁸ the reflective educational experiences of the schoolboys of Barbiana and Lorenzo Milani, maverick priest and educator, in northern Italy. The critical mode of AR also aims to expose and change unjust, oppressive or exploitive power relationships and socio-economic structural systems. For Christians, these "social evils: sin embedded in societal systems"¹⁹ are fiercely denounced by Old Testament prophets.

In contrast to written and published documents or online text, action research may also be disseminated and shared in creative ways by means of *performance texts* such as poetry, music, audio-visuals and drama.²⁰ It is not difficult to imagine the powerful effect that some emancipatory AR case studies, creatively presented, might have on audiences.

Some initial intersections

As foreshadowed in the introduction, pastoral care, action research and the notion of teaching as a profession (TP) incorporate powerful common values. Most important, PC, AR and TP uphold a clear commitment to the improvement of lived human experience by addressing social problems of varying complexity; an outcome that might be achieved irrespective of whether one operates from a secular or religious platform.

Perceptions of AR as a moral and ethical stance committed to action resulting in qualitative change²¹, apply equally to pastoral care in schools and to the conceptualisation of an authentic profession. The latter's meaning is derived from 'to profess', which denotes 'believing and taking a stand'. It presupposes a commitment to service and the good of others, a value enshrined in many codes of conduct and ethics of professions. Teachers in their roles as carers and practitioner researchers are thus mandated to *act* in intellectually and morally responsible ways and incorporate values and human interests in their endeavours. This translates into research not being pursued for the sake of curiosity or knowledge *per se*, but being applied for worthwhile purposes. Knowledge alone does not lead to transformation. Literally thousands of education research reports, gathering dust on bureaucratic shelves are often testimony to 'lifeless' knowledge and values. Words and talk are

not enough. As has been argued, values remain abstractions until put into practice.²²

A Christian viewpoint, such as Eugene Peterson's, speaks directly to this challenge:

What we *know* about God and what we *do* for God have a way of getting broken apart in our lives. The moment the organic unity of belief and behaviour is damaged in any way, we are incapable of living out the full humanity for which we were created (emphases added).²³

At this juncture, it is reasonable to conclude that PC and AR both draw teachers' attention to schools' human dimension and point toward a particular conception of their profession.

Teaching as a profession (TP)

Continuing issues

The very notion of what constitutes a profession is problematic. The term is beset with ambiguities and conceptual difficulties. As a buzzword clamouring for public attention, it is claimed by or applied to occupations that extend from arbourists, basketballers, plumbers and hitmen, to architects, lawyers and neurosurgeons. Long-standing traits theory presents a list of specific criteria that form an archetype of a profession. It is conceptualised as an occupation that requires skills to solve complex problems; initial and ongoing learning and mastery of theoretical knowledge in a tertiary context; performs a crucial social service; involves socialisation into a set of values; controls its functions, workplace, credentialing and ethical practice.²⁴ This raises the questions: Is teaching a profession? Does it meet the criteria?

Answers are often conditional, depending on contexts of time and location. Two decades ago, teaching would not have been considered a profession, even in western countries. In Japan, teaching is currently not regarded as a fully fledged profession; although nursing is.²⁵ By contrast, in 2009, Holly et al. in North America, perceived education as being among "[t]he *classic* professions".²⁶ A strict application of the above criteria finds teaching 'short of the mark'. For instance, teachers mostly are employees of large bureaucracies. Teachers are not in control of their workplace and, "When was the last time that teachers disciplined one of their colleagues for a recognised misdemeanour, perhaps removing their right to teach?" asks Neil Hooley.²⁷ Just as important, according to McCulloch et al., "may be the way teachers are regarded by governments and the community", and how teachers see themselves;²⁸ the latter relates to their identity and its formation.

“PC, AR and TP uphold a clear commitment to the improvement of lived human experience by addressing social problems of varying complexity”

More than a profession

As part of a larger teacher population, Christian teachers are constantly exhorted in the literature and by education bodies to perform their various responsibilities and tasks, as professionals. Is it prudent to borrow uncritically from and conform to the idealisation of a profession? It is questionable; given “the pathologies of prevailing professional practice”²⁹ and a suspicious public that formerly regarded professionals as ‘social trustees’, but now views them merely as experts who market and hire their skills at a price.³⁰ A cynic may conclude that the term is merely an aspirational appellation based on a set of ascribed values, or an exclusive idealisation of one’s work that strengthens claims for status and hence increased remuneration in a competitive labour market.

From a Christian standpoint, it seems both biblical and desirable, to perceive teaching as more than a profession; rather as a *servanthood ministry* that emphasises, integrates and practices the kingdom values lived by Jesus. Technical rationality—as skills and expertise—is not devalued by such a perspective; rather it realigns and validates these on the basis of their values underpinnings and life integration.

A wider exploration of linkages

The link between action research and the notion of teaching as a profession has potential for positive developments. AR reinforces the service orientation expected from the professions, which is so evident in pastoral care. Simultaneously, teachers need to be aware that they don’t ‘lapse’ into an idealised model of the professions where, for instance, *affective neutrality*—a personal detachment from the client, i.e. students—is a guiding principle.

Symptomatic of the problem is the televised case of Dr. Charlie Teo, a very skilled, but controversial Sydney brain surgeon who “[r]ides a motor cycle. Wears Hawaiian shirts to work. Laughs and cries with his patients. Befriends them; befriends their families. Shows interest in...in them beyond just a neurological aspect.”³¹ The specialist is out of favour with many of his peers. He apparently has little regard for ‘objective distancing’ between doctor and patient. Also, his relations with the media leave much to be desired; an area where “[t]he medical profession has an unwritten code of silence, almost.”³² In short, his ‘colourful’ behaviour doesn’t conform to the accepted norms of the medical profession; professional culture takes precedence over authentic human relationships.

The compelling values advocated by and practised in pastoral care and action research call upon teachers to reconceptualise their

professional identity and ‘model’ of teaching as a profession. Such a repositioning will have to compete with the *managerial professionalism*³³ currently elevated and promoted by state and federal educational jurisdictions in Australia. Managerial professionalism applies private sector enterprise principles, ethics and vocabulary to education. Its privileged vocabulary, signifying what really counts, *inter alia* includes: *performance indicators, tests and measurements, benchmarks, best practice, efficiency, measurable outcomes, achievable targets, appraisals and reviews, and incentives and rewards*. One of the touted outcomes is performance related pay (and sanctions). In this context, there is a real danger of governments seeing education both as an instrument of economic policy and a commodity in the marketplace, where students—tracked by proposed identity numbers—and parents are *clients*, and where principals operate as *managers* overseeing productivity to set performance standards by a skilled contracted teaching workforce.

Two examples epitomise this viewpoint. First, the response in an interview of the current Deputy Prime Minister; minister for education, employment and workplace relations and social justice and inclusion: “I’ll be happy to be referred to simply as the minister for productivity.”³⁴ The ‘deep grammar’ of the minister’s language seems indicative of the dominant priorities and ruling market place values embraced.

Second, the recent construction and publication of NSW league tables, in the media, of National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results: This is no different from the listings on the stock market! The data were made available to the general public by the Commonwealth Government *for the purpose of transparency*, but appear to underline a strategy of ‘naming and shaming’ to improve teacher productivity. A former Director of Education in NSW and more recently Head of the UK Curriculum Authority has clearly stated that NAPLAN results should be used principally for diagnostic purposes. He noted that overseas experience has shown that many teachers spent the term before the scheduled battery of tests teaching to the tests;³⁵ an observation borne out by the reported comments of a parent, whose children attend a Sydney school that is very highly ranked on the published league tables.

There was enormous pressure at the school on both teachers and students from day one of term one to achieve good results. The ‘preparation’ for the tests was intense, with extreme pressure to practise through regular class time and heavy-duty homework. Many children felt overwhelmed and

“From a Christian standpoint, it seems both biblical and desirable, to perceive teaching as more than a profession; rather as a *servanthood ministry*”

stressed by the level of work and the performance expectations. Publishing these tables endorses this type of approach.³⁶

There is thus a credible possibility of the NAPLAN tests becoming an example of 'the tail wagging the educational dog'.

Even more important, how should one view a profession that accommodates its pedagogies and ethics to performance values? NAPLAN tests are mandatory across Australia and teachers have been required to administer tests and participate in data collection processes, knowing the data are likely to be or will be misused and thus contribute, either directly or indirectly to negative educational outcomes. These include narrowing the curriculum; increasing rote learning; and labelling and stigmatising students and teachers in low-ranking schools, among others.

Furthermore, managerial professionalism operating in a performance culture³⁷ requires time-consuming record keeping, often to the detriment of teachers reflecting on and improving their pedagogies. In this culture, teacher productivity outweighs integrity; also collegial competition and performance comparisons—the NAPLAN test results being just one example—are rife. The culture not only advances a particular model for the teaching profession, but also poses a threat to the identity of teachers—who they are and how they see themselves. Collins and McNiff challenge teachers to "carefully consider the values base of their work and whether or not those values are being realised in practice,"³⁸ further, to endeavour arriving "at a position where they may say that their values are being lived more fully in their practice".³⁹

One might ask: Which values? Decided by whom? For teachers serving in Christian faith-based schools, this is unlikely to be a contested area. For them the values enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount should act as their guide in reconceptualising teaching as a profession. These values represent a culture driven by God-affirming *vis a vis* God-denying ground motives,⁴⁰ as briefly exemplified below:

A servanthood ministry eschews elitism and upward mobility. Teachers in their biblical role as stewards appreciate the gifts and talents entrusted by God to individuals for uplifting, guiding and benefiting their learning communities.

Service rendered by teachers is an end in itself. It is not some abstract notion, but a tacit recognition of the intrinsic value of others for whom Christ gave his life.

Christian teachers find their core identity in Christ. In Him is found the answer to their question,

who am I? And through Him they connect with a fellowship of believers that represents a loving support network. This relationship subsumes the recognised function of most professions in having an important socialising effect on, and giving an identity to individuals.

The lives of Christian teachers are not compartmentalised into *personal* and *teaching* boxes that are moral disjoint sets. There should be no credibility gaps; committed servants lead integrated lives that are sustained by God's grace, evidenced by humble, skilled and compassionate service.

One additional point is worth noting. Teachers in the secular arena, who commit to their students and empower them, should be commended for their efforts to make a difference. Christian teachers, however, believe that in teaching, mere human efforts are insufficient, unless empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

In this article I have asserted that both students and teachers benefit from educative relationships that are underpinned by an ethic of care. Furthermore, I have argued that the shared values embedded in pastoral care and action research have the potential to reshape the traditional *conception* of profession in an educational context. This is particularly important in the present educational environment, where managerial professionalism driven by economic rationalism holds sway. Teachers in faith-based schools, who build their practice on Jesus' countercultural values, should consequently find an ally in the values embedded in PC and AR, as they reflect on their pedagogical practice and endeavour to make a difference in the lives of their learning communities. **TEACH**

Endnotes

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School and the law

Today's teachers 'spooked' by the law

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Over the last couple of decades there has been a change in our society where litigation and the threat of it in all aspects of life has significantly increased. The schools and, in particular, the teachers have not escaped this change. Child protection laws and increased cases of litigation are part of the teacher's working environment. Increasingly, educational professionals have to focus on and engage with the legal dimension of their work.¹

Teachers were not only challenged by the potential for litigation but were also stressed about their lack of knowledge of the law and how it related to their teaching environment

We are already seeing litigious proceedings become commonly accepted responses to schools' management of such areas as student misbehaviour, curriculum choice and attendance in class.²

How are the teachers coping with this school-based rise in 'litigious proceedings'?

From NSW based studies of those teaching for the Department of Education and Training, it appears the answer, for this group at least, is not very well. These studies indicate that a combination of time shortage, potential litigation and resourcing issues are resulting in considerable stress for NSW Department of Education teachers.^{3,4,5} These teachers are reported to be taking more time off than ever before and they are blaming stress. Figures show a dramatic rise in the amount of sick leave taken by teachers who are reported to be saying that they simply cannot continue to cope with work pressures resulting from increased change. The NSW Department of Education and Training's annual report (2007) shows that in New South Wales (NSW) 18,305 state school teachers took stress-related sick leave in 2000. Stress-related sick leave increased by more than 50% in just two years. In 2002, the figure was 27,299—a rise of 9,000. It appears that these teachers were, and are continuing to be, 'spooked' by the law.

One could be tempted to see the negative impact of potential litigation on teachers as a public school phenomenon. We would initially speculate that teachers in private schools, with their close

connection to their community and consultative ethos, would not feel the pressure of potential litigation to such an extent. However, in a recent private-school based study, where 282 primary teachers within the Australian Seventh-day Adventist school system (ASA) were surveyed, the results suggest otherwise.⁶

The data from the Matthes (2010) study, part of which looked at factors that were challenging teachers in their present role, indicated that teachers were not only challenged by the potential for litigation but were also stressed about their lack of knowledge of the law and how it related to their teaching environment.

This study (Matthes, 2010) reported that 82.1 percent of the participants indicated that increased likelihood of litigation against teachers was indeed a challenge. This finding was not predicted; rather it was thought that as all the teachers belonged to a church-based education system where litigation is normally very infrequent, that this would not be of considerable concern to them. One teacher stated, however, that:

I sometimes experience fear that I am like a flammable liquid, waiting to be ignited. I have resorted to not taking children on excursions anymore, in case something happens to a student.⁷

This study went on to report that all the teachers knew someone or they themselves had experienced an encounter with the law in relation to a school matter. They indicated that sometimes what they had heard was most likely somewhat exaggerated, but the real facts were never communicated to them and this may have highlighted the perception of this challenge. The participants indicated that they perceived that when teachers were subjected to the law, either rightly or wrongly, the formal systems put in place by both the employing body and the government seemed to desert rather than support the teachers. This was very disconcerting.

This concern can be summed up in the following teacher's comment:

At the whim of a parent's accusation, I was suspended from my duties. I didn't even know what the accusation was; meanwhile I didn't have a chance to defend my innocence as the rumour mill ran rife. I felt very vulnerable, with little support and not much information through proper channels.⁸

Teachers saw the need for a "school-wide implementation of change and procedures for [teachers'] protection". Another teacher stated:

A teacher friend of mine is no longer in the ASA System teaching. His career was cut short based on an accusation that was never proven. It seems often that we only receive Admin support when the 'chips are up'.⁹

Once again, it appears that these teachers are 'spooked' by the law.

The Matthes (2010) study suggests that in the ASA system, at least, the teachers are considerably stressed by the potential of litigation and their lack of knowledge of the school and the law. Further, it would seem reasonable to suggest that teachers within other private school systems could also be experiencing similar responses. The teachers in

ASA schools also have a perception that the school system needs to provide a considerably more comprehensive set of procedures for safeguarding them against potential litigation and for support for teachers when they are confronted by litigation.

The challenge for school and system administrators is to find ways to 'de-spook' their teachers as 'de-spooked' teachers must surely be more effective teachers. **TEACH**

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“The school system needs to provide a considerably more comprehensive set of procedures for safeguarding teachers against potential litigation”



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Mission in Action (MIA) was founded in 2004 by Ivan and Mary Budulica. The family relocated from Australia to establish the Nakuru Baby Orphanage located in rural Kenya, Africa.

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With Jesus in the family

How early childhood attachment styles influence later relationships, both with God and in the workplace

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Abstract

Attachment styles profoundly influence human relationships throughout life, including aspects of religion and the workplace. Individual educators as well as educational institutions take on parental qualities in relation to those who rely on them. Depending on the degree of early parental responsiveness and later life situations, humans live with a basically secure or insecure approach to peers, partners, God, and employing institutions. This article argues that it is important for Christian educators to be aware of this, and that core concepts from attachment theory are verified by current neurobiological research. Research in the field of psychology of religion supports John Bowlby's emphasis on the importance of sensitive, long-term relationships. These relationships in turn enhance optimum functioning in all relationships, including religious and workplace relationships.

Ten years after working in a boarding school, a teacher happened to meet a former student. "Good God, you look older," said the student. "And you have grown up," responded the teacher. "I remember you very well," said the student, "I really liked you, and tried to get to see you and spend some time with you every day." "It was a pleasure for me to spend time with you, too," answered the teacher.

This exchange illustrates an attachment relationship, where there is mutual pleasure for the older and wiser, and for the younger and dependent. Secure attachments give mutual pleasure, and have a profound influence. This article will show how an inner model, secure or insecure, is projected onto peers, partners, God and workplace in later life. This provides another framework for explaining pupil behaviour, and the behaviour of self and colleagues, as well as religious expressions of attachment to God. It also offers an explanation for why some educational institutions are more comfortable workplaces than others. What follows is a brief summary of some salient points in an extensive field of study. Even these few examples will give cause

for reflection as Christian educators consider how God concepts are developed through bi-directional effects, and how this influences not only familial lives but also functioning in the workplace.

Most educators in the field today have gone through their teacher education at a time when Piaget's findings on cognition was the predominant focus. Because of the pervasive influence of Piaget's massive contribution, cognitive processes have received considerably more attention than social emotional processes (Shore, 1994). Investment in the field of cognition has, for a long time, dominated developmental psychology, with cognitive processes being viewed as quite separate to social emotional processes.

Current discoveries in neuro-behavioural and social-emotional development integrate previously disparate factors (Tronick, 2007). Berk (2009) explains that "emotional development—formerly overshadowed by cognition—is an exciting, rapidly expanding area of research" (p. 399). Cognitive and social emotional domains no longer seem starkly different! Hart (2008) notes, "We have only just unearthed the Rosetta stone of neuroaffective understanding" (p. xiv). Hart goes on to say that we are moving towards a time when we will more fully understand the interdependence of nature and nurture.

Through the relatively new study of neuro-plasticity, we understand that our brains are more well-equipped for change, and more at risk from the impact of the social environment, than was previously thought (Doidge, 2007). There is a growing awareness that our emotional connectedness with others is vital to both mental and physical health (Tronick, 2007). The rapidly expanding field of neuroscience is constantly highlighting the importance of human relations. We may not yet be used to thinking of the brain as a "social organ" (Cozolino, 2006, p. 7) that is developed through our social and emotional experiences with significant others, but there is a growing understanding that social emotional experiences influence the young brain's development. Cozolino (2006, p. 7) uses the term,

“Our brains are more well-equipped for change, and more at risk from the impact of the social environment, than was previously thought”

“bidirectional causality” to describe this process. This has profound implications for educators, who are parental figures to large groups of children / students.

Rise and relevance of attachment theory

Attachment theory is a framework for understanding social emotional relationships in early childhood and consequences for development through the lifespan. A large body of research supports the concepts inherent to attachment theory. The theory includes ideas from control systems theory, cognitive psychology and learning theory, and has steadily been used by social psychologists, and in research in the field of the psychology of religion (Granqvist & Hagekull, 2001).

John Bowlby’s attachment theory was developed before the recent explosion in our understanding of brain function. Nevertheless, attachment theory included an understanding of the bi-directional influences between child and caregiver through what Bowlby called “the child’s tie to his mother” (Bowlby, 1958, cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, p. 7). Bowlby himself had a personal experience of what he later termed “the breaking of affectional bonds” (Bowlby, 1979, p. 126), when his long-term nanny left. Bowlby became sensitive to grieving children and, like some teachers today, was followed around at the school where he worked by a couple of lonely children (Ainsworth, 1974, cited in Bretherton, 1992, quoted in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Parents and adequate substitutes: The secure base

Bowlby argued that infants are social creatures who thrive in the company of responsive mothers or sensitive substitutes. He terms the sensitive caregivers, other than parents, “a known and trusted substitute” (Bowlby, 1980, p. 320). In short, when safe enough, infants enjoy exploring their environment. When fearful, tired or ill, they hurry back to their secure and trusted base, their attachment figure. Bowlby stressed that attachment relationships need to be permanent, sensitive and intimate. The bi-directional idea is embedded in attachment theory in that Bowlby emphasised that attachment enjoyment needs to be mutual (Berk, 2009). Excessive turnover of carers often negatively affects the child’s ability to form lasting relationships later (Lindon, 2005). Ainsworth, who worked with Bowlby at the Tavistock Clinic in London, extended the theory. She developed what is known today as the “Strange Situation”, which is an assessment tool of attachment styles for infants and young children. Attachment inventories for the assessment of adult attachment styles have also been developed and are in use, but they will not be discussed here. Ainsworth

described three main attachment styles which will be used as broad conceptualisations for discussion purposes (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Walls, 1978).

The “strange situation”

The mother and infant are in an unfamiliar environment and there are toys for the baby to play with near the mother. A stranger is present. This assessment task uses departures of the mother followed by reunions with her baby to reveal already established patterns of attachment (Gonzalez-Mena & Eyer, 2007). While the original strange situation was done with mothers, today the “quality of toddler’s play” highlights security between child and father (Diamond & Marrone, 2003, p. 73). Fathers engage in large-muscle activities, while mothers engage with more quiet activities (Clark-Stuart, 1980, cited in Harwood, Miller & Vasta 2008).

Secure attachment (secure meaning “feeling no care or apprehension” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989)

Ainsworth found that securely attached infants appeared comfortable playing in this new setting. They were unhappy when the mother left, but immediately reconnected with the mother, and were comforted when she came back (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters & Walls, 1978). As a result, it was argued that when the child’s clear expression to the caregiver receives a favourable response, a secure attachment style will be developed (Main, 1990 cited in Ghafoori & Hierholzer, 2007).

Anxious avoidant attachment (avoidant meaning “holding aloof from” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989)

“Attachment theory is a framework for understanding social emotional relationships in early childhood and consequences for development through the lifespan”



[Photography:
Esther Marshall]

The children who did not seem distressed when the mother left, and who avoided her when she returned, were described as having an insecure avoidant attachment style. They showed more friendliness to the stranger in the room than they did to their mother (Bowlby, 1982).

Anxious ambivalent attachment (meaning “contradictory emotions towards the same person” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989)

These infants who were very anxious and unwilling to separate from the mother, and barely able to play with the toys, were the most distressed when the mother left. They sought closeness when the mother returned, but expressed anger with her, and were slow to settle.

We need to remember that, for the infant, separation from the caregiver is the greatest threat—greater than any mistreatment—because the infant needs someone to care in order to survive (Dozier, Manni, & Lindheim, 2005). Long term, stable, sensitive care is best, but not always possible. It is important to understand that the various attachment styles are adaptive. This is not a matter of right or wrong. For example, when the avoidantly attached child turns away from the mother, it may be to avoid hostile treatment (Bowlby, 1988). Infants make these adaptations in an effort to survive in their environment. Bowlby understood the function of attachment as fundamental for the species to survive. The connection between a weak individual and one perceived as more competent and more capable is essential for survival (Suomi, 1995, cited in Wulff, 2006). Human infants even attach to carers by whom they are mistreated (Egeland & Stroufe, 1981 cited in Kirkpatrick, 2005) because “fear and distress, activate the attachment system” (Kirkpatrick, 2005, p. 83).

Tarabulsy and colleagues found that many parents who grew up insecurely attached were able to be sensitive and responsive in their own care of their babies, with the result that their babies grew up to be securely attached (Tarabulsy et al., 2005, cited in Harwood et al., 2008). Generally, securely attached children remain securely attached in adulthood, at least in the absence of extremely adverse life situations. Securely attached children as well as securely attached adults enjoy life more easily, and are usually more happily adjusted to their own culture (Harwood et al., 2008).

Applying attachment theory to psychology of religion

Lee Kirkpatrick, while a psychology student in America, noticed that religious behaviour was hardly mentioned in his psychology lectures. This led

to his research for his PhD and beyond. Religion is crucial to many as the foundation of a sense of meaning, and in dealing with concepts of the sacred (Pargament, 1997, cited in Park, 2005). Kirkpatrick and others have, over the years, applied the principles of attachment theory to concepts of God. Kirkpatrick argues that the function of an attachment is to place us in the presence of someone who can help and enhance our survival, for example, as adults it may be “pastors, rabbis, priests, ministers” (Kirkpatrick, 2005, p. 93). There is general consensus today that attachment theory can be employed in the various manifestations of religiousness (Park & Paloutzian, 2005). Since Bowlby first published, attachment theory has had a powerful influence in the study of both children’s and adults’ constructs of, and relationship to, God (Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002).

This article does not discuss religion or theology as such, but how one’s religion can be experienced and understood through one’s attachment style. Miner (2007, p. 112) has argued that looking at God concepts through the lens of attachment theory needs a “corrective grounding in Trinitarian theology”. Miner affirms attachment theory as “a powerful account of the formation of relational bonds that provide for physical survival and psychological security...Nonetheless their [the psychologists’] theory is limited because it relies on cognitive-affective approaches to attachment, and neglects a fully-developed theological base” (p. 112). This perspective does not acknowledge that all frameworks, including theological bases, can only be understood cognitively and experienced affectively.

Religions across the world provide frameworks to explain the final separation through death (Fricchione, 2002). Death may be seen as the final “strange situation”. Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) point out that not only in the Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—do believers experience a safe base, but also that “a common Buddhist prayer encourages adherents to ‘take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha’—a mentally represented loving teacher, the scriptures flowing from his teachings, and the local religious community” (p. 248). Conversely, in a Swedish study of older adolescents, Granqvist and Hagekull (2001) found that an orientation to New Age religious expression “directly” correlated with insecure attachment to parents (p. 536). In New Age thinking there is no single obvious attachment figure, which allows “the insecure new ager...to switch dishes on the spiritual smorgasbord without reaching a stable point where the ingredients have potentially lasting beneficial effects” (p. 539).

“Securely attached people who perceive God as a “secure base”, are more likely to be able to consider a wider range of theological ideas”

“I have come to give them life abundantly” (John 10:10)

In the same way that the securely attached child is free to play and explore his environment, a study by Beck (2006) indicated that securely attached people with theological interests who perceived God as a “secure base”, were more likely to be able to consider a wider range of theological ideas. These securely attached people also showed greater tolerance towards Christian groups who differed from their own, which is a way of saying that they were able to play nicely with others! They also seemed to have better capacity for self-regulation, in that they experienced “more peace” and did not find their religious experience distressing. It was very unlikely that they would break their connection to God (Beck, 2006).

Studies show that people who undergo a more gradual religious change had usually experienced greater security in their attachment to their mothers (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2004). A secure person’s gradually deepening religious conviction is not likely to be an outcome of a crisis in their life. Instead, a significant other, who is a spiritual person, has a steady influence for change. At the same time, it is interesting to note that the attachment model is not an indicator for qualities like religious participation (Nelson, 2009). While securely attached individuals are better able to cope with negative emotion, and are less likely to develop post-traumatic stress after trauma (Siegel, 1999 cited in Ghafoori & Hierholzer, 2007), they do not necessarily have better church attendance.

Earned secure: The possibility of moving from an anxious attachment to God and others, to a secure attachment to God and others

Research suggests that attachment styles are not static, but develop complexity with maturation (Levy & Blatt, 1999, cited in Nelson, 2009). People who have had the experience of a religious conversion may outgrow an insecure attachment and no longer be insecurely attached. The ability to calmly talk about difficult childhood experiences indicates increasing security. This new state is termed ‘earned secure’. Some formerly insecure parents mature into more secure caregivers; others are extensively supported by family and friends. In situations like this, earned secure attachments are likely to arise (Berk, 2009). Also, a secure relationship with God, partner or therapist, has profound therapeutic influence. This may contribute to a shift in the internal model from insecure to secure (Granqvist & Hagekull, 2002, cited in Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2004).

Insecure attachments

People with avoidant attachment are more likely, when stressed, to make use of a distancing style of interaction, and are less likely to forgive perceived wrongs (Davis et al., 2008). Christians with avoidant attachment are less likely to seek “spiritual comfort” when they experience stress (Davis et al., 2008, p.299) and are more likely to see God as controlling (Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002). There are also more agnostics among people who have an avoidant attachment style (Hazan & Shaver 1987; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1998, cited in Byrd & Boe, 2001).

Anxious ambivalent people are more likely to experience emotional fluctuations, showing greater likelihood to convert to another religion, or to turn away from spirituality (Kirkpatrick, 2005, cited in Davis et al., 2008). Although not a large percentage of the general population experience sudden conversions, those who do, have experienced greater insecurity with both mothers and fathers (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2004). These sudden conversions often seem reactive to a difficult life situation. In this way, a religious conversion is possibly a way of feeling better and regulating emotion (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2004); this seems adaptive and helpful under the circumstances. More Christians with anxious ambivalent attachment report spiritual conflict and anger with God (Exline & Martin, 2005, cited in Davis et al., 2008). Granqvist and Kirkpatrick (2004) also found that converts tended to report that they experienced the relationship with God as renewing; they had a new identity and a newfound sense of love and safety (cited in Paloutzian, 2005). “Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) found anxious adults to report a higher incidence of glossolalic (speaking in tongues) experiences than either avoidant or secure adults” (Kirkpatrick, 2005, p. 141). It is important to note that in spite of several studies trying to connect speaking in tongues with poor mental health, “very little evidence has been found” (Plog, 1965; Hine, 1969; Richardson, 1973, cited in Kirkpatrick, 2005).

“Let the children come to me; do not try to stop them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14)

The first “God representations” are forming in children from about two years of age (Nelson, 2009). For example, Boyatzis, (2005) described a study by Coles (1990) who analysed a large number of children’s drawings of God. He noted that 87% of these drawings showed God’s face. In an earlier study, Heller (1986) explained that Hindu, Jewish, Baptist and Roman Catholic children saw God as “considerably more than human” (Boyatzis, 2005,

“*Research suggests that attachment styles are not static, but develop complexity with maturation*”

“The better the teacher and child bond, the more loving God seems to the child”

p. 127). Children are able to conceive of God as more than human, while often in a human form.

Pearce and Axinn (1998) found that children felt closer to church-going mothers. Varon and Riley (1999) found that the church-going mothers reported greater satisfaction with offspring and life in general (both cited in Miller & Kelley, 2005). Many researchers have found that competence in social relationships is strongly correlated with a secure childhood (Bohlin, Hagekull & Rydell, 1998; Elicker, Englund & Stroufe, 1992, cited by Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999). Securely attached children are more adequately socialised, and are more likely to gradually become socialised into their primary caregiver's religious approaches and lifestyle (Granqvist & Hagekull 1999, cited by deRoos, 2006).

By the time children begin school, their understandings of God have begun to form. The relationship that is established between the kindergarten teacher and the child has great potential for the child's later school competence (deRoos, 2006), as well as the child's God concepts. School-aged children live in two worlds—the imaginative world of play, and their everyday lives (Nelson, 2009). The better the teacher and child bond, the more loving God seems to the child (deRoos, 2006). deRoos develops these findings by saying that the young children who enjoyed “close, open, and harmonious relationships” with their teachers were more involved in groups and experienced higher self esteem. These positive emotions were indicative of “loving, caring God concepts” (deRoos, 2006, p. 92). It is interesting that in this study, the teachers were religious, working with students from non-religious homes (deRoos, 2006). Even when a child has negative experiences in the relationship to primary carers, a teacher can significantly impact the child's positive God perceptions (deRoos, 2006). It was a great help to children to have at least one warm, positive relationship with a teacher. When home attachments were stressed and negative, it helped the child who had a close, significant relationship with their teacher to experience an intimate relationship with God. The significance here lies in the fact that the child has one important positive relationship (deRoos, 2006), which builds self-esteem.

In contrast, Gur, Mill and Weissman (2004) found that depressed mothers are correlated with less religiosity in the child, possibly due to the home being low in hope and lacking a sense of satisfaction (cited in Miller & Kelley, 2005). A teacher or other who is secure enough to encourage positive feelings in the child will help to influence that child in developing a positive image of God and a child-God relationship (Kirkpatrick, 1998 cited in McCullough, Bono, & Root, 2005).

A Scandinavian study by Granqvist and Hagekull (1999, p. 266) highlighted that the more securely the child is attached to both parents, the more likely the child was to show “intergenerational similarity”. In other words, the safer the child felt with the parents, the more the child identified with the standards that the parents represented. In the same way, adults who were securely attached to their adult partners showed deeper religious commitment and their God concepts were more favourable than those who were insecurely attached to their significant other (deRoos, Miedema, & leDema, 2001).

While securely attached children slowly grew into a lifestyle with similar values as their primary caregivers, the anxiously-attached were more likely to report religious conversions of a sudden nature (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999). Religious changes tend to come later to people who have an insecure attachment style (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2004). Many converts tell about unhappy childhoods, stressful adolescence, problems with mental health, or drug dependency (Hood et al., 2009). A spiritual conversion involves a positive life transformation (Hood et al., 2009). Hazan and Shaver (1987; 1994) highlight the tendency of anxious-ambivalently attached individuals to also fall in love suddenly and deeply (cited by Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999). Suddenly falling in love and suddenly experiencing a conversion are experiences which are common within the same attachment style.

“Call on me, you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28)

It has been argued by deRoos (2006) that people's concept of God mirrors their experience in early formative caregiver-child relationships. When the child experiences interaction with the primary caregiver as conflict producing or rejecting, insecure attachment styles follow (Izard & Kobak, 1991, cited in Ghafoori & Hierholzer, 2007). An insecure attachment style is correlated with perfectionism (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007) and with conversion experiences. Childhood attachment shapes concepts of God through the very socialising process of forming emotional bonds with significant others (deRoos, 2006). Hood, Hill and Spilka (2009) claim that in the years between early and middle childhood, children's aloofness from parents was in inverse proportion to nearness to God. A sharper focus on God attachment occurs as children grow independent of their primary carers (Granqvist & Dickie, 2006, cited in Nelson, 2009).

In most religions there are concrete places considered sacred, places where people can feel nearer to God. Besides sacred places, there is also sacred time, like the seventh day and specific festival

times; but that which is most frequently sought is proximity to God through prayer. When religion is a part of life from early on, this influences prayer (Byrd & Boe, 2001). Prayer for the believer is a way of addressing God. Prayer is an expression of the wish to be in a knowing relationship with God (Byrd & Boe, 2001). Prayer has been compared to the crying of an infant (Kirkpatrick, 2005). The infant has no language, but calls to his parent through crying. Adult humans cry out in prayer. Hands raised in prayer may constitute proximity seeking.

Different approaches to prayer are indicated by a person's attachment style. It makes sense that people with an avoidant attachment style are not likely to use meditative or conversation prayer (Byrd & Boe, 2001). People with attachment styles other than avoidant may use meditative and conversation prayer. Securely attached people find closeness comforting and stress reducing (Byrd & Boe, 2001), and are more likely to see God as loving and not controlling. God is usually experienced by secure people as accessible (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1998, cited by Byrd & Boe, 2001).

Attachment statements can be found throughout scriptures and in hymns and spiritual songs. Both Granqvist (2005) and Kirkpatrick (2005) drew attention to the believer's efforts at being close to God.

[A]chieving a safe haven in times of distress ('Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me'; Psalm 23:4), and using a 'stronger and wiser' other as a secure base (e.g. 'On the day I called, you answered me and made me bold with strength in my soul'; Psalm 138:3). (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, p. 244)

The Protestant hymn, 'Nearer, My God, To Thee' is given as an example of group proximity seeking.

Attachment styles and the workplace

Attachment behaviour and its impact is also in evidence in educational institutional settings. Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) define a cohesive group as one that brings about a unique experience of approval and security in being together. A group of people, such as the staff of a school, can serve as a secure base that supports exploration of the environment (Forsyth, 1990, cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). This cooperatively functioning group becomes security enhancing for its members. It is easier for a securely attached individual to experience the group as positive, and be comfortable with emotional interaction. Insecurities in relating to a group may mirror insecurities relating to individuals. Avoidant individuals are often less

engaged with their staff, tend to feel less supported and are more likely to view others negatively (Smith et al., 1999, cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). In short, the various attachment styles reflect how individuals relate to their group.

An attachment figure is someone who has people depending on them (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). In 2003, Popper and Mayseless (cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007) published a study that demonstrated a strong connection between leaders (including managers and teachers) and the role of attachment figures. In educational settings, this equates to teacher, team leader, principal, head of faculty, or president. Secure leaders are more "sensitive and responsive" caregivers (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, p. 440)—resources are provided, creativity and initiative are encouraged, and competence and self-worth are strengthened. Numerous researchers have found this to be true (Bass, 1985; House & Howell, 1992; Howell, 1988; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993; Zaleznick, 1992, cited in Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). A secure leader is sensitive to genuine needs among the team members. This stimulates hope and competence among team members (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Insecurely attached leaders are less likely to encourage their staff in the direction of growth and creativity. Insecurely attached staff are less likely to commit to the institution (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Avoidant leaders, for example, may achieve success in a specific task-oriented area crucial to the organisation, such as finance, while being unable to meet emotional needs and provide growth opportunities for their staff (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Anxious-ambivalent leaders tend to focus on socio-emotional needs within their team, to the neglect of wider organisational goals and values (Davidovitz et al., 2006, cited in Mikulincer & Shaver 2007). Even secure team members working for an insecure leader can feel tense and insecure (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Based on findings by Desivilya, Sabag and Ashton (2007), Mikulincer and Shaver (2007, p. 452) conclude that "attachment style differences are relevant to organisational effectiveness and sustainability". Team cognitions and emotions are influenced by insecure and secure attachments, as are issues such as institutional change and team functioning.

Socialised, transformational leaders tend to function as symbolic attachment figures, bolstering members' and followers' senses of safety, security, and permanence, activating and supporting a broaden-and-build cycle of attachment security, and facilitating personal and organisational effectiveness and personal growth. (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, p. 453–454)

“*A secure leader is sensitive to genuine needs among the team members—this stimulates hope and competence*”

Conclusion

Attachment theory is receiving more attention from research in neurobiology and has been successfully applied to research in the psychology of religion. What infants understand cognitively and experience affectively profoundly influences later socialisation and spiritual expression. Research has shown that it is possible to move from an insecure to an earned secure attachment style and that previously insecurely attached parents can raise their own children with secure attachments. Secure / insecure attachment styles inform human interactions at home, at school, with peers, with life partners, at worship, and in the workplace. It is important for educators to be aware that they may be experienced as attachment figures. This provides an opportunity to foster secure interactions. To Christian educators, God is the ultimate attachment figure. In their areas of influence, Christian educators can be stable, long term, sensitive attachment figures for children, students, families and colleagues in their care. **TEACH**

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The formation and enactment of teacher expectations of student achievement in private schooling

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Abstract

This study examined how teachers form expectations of the students they teach and how their self-reported behaviours in the classroom reflect these expectations. This qualitative study, theoretically informed by phenomenological hermeneutic inquiry, used in-depth, semi-structured, interviews with six teachers in private schools in Melbourne, Australia, and results were critically analysed. The paper reports issues identified by the teachers as being important in the formation of their expectations of student achievement, particularly the idea that low achievement is closely related to students' poor self-image. It then discusses a paradox evident in the behaviour reported by the teachers: that in their attempts to build student self-image and communicate high expectations, the teachers may unwittingly communicate the low expectations they are at pains to overcome.

Introduction

Teacher expectation has long been considered a powerful pedagogical tool (Good & Brophy, 2000, p. 109), playing a vital role in determining the quality of student learning. Since the 1960s, research has suggested that teachers' interactions with students are affected by the expectations they hold about those students and there is some evidence that high teacher expectations produce high student achievement and low expectations produce low achievement (Capel, Leask & Turner, 1999). Furthermore, it is likely that student achievement may confirm teacher expectations, effectively creating a cycle of self-fulfilling prophecies (Jussim & Harber, 2005). Teachers adjust their pedagogy in line with their expectations of their students and thereby treat students differently, in line with those expectations (Diamond, Randolph & Spillane, 2004; Good & Brophy, 2000; Sadker & Sadker, 2005), setting the stage for self-fulfilling prophecies to come true.

“*Teachers adjust their pedagogy in line with their expectations of their students and thereby treat students differently*”

How do teachers form these expectations in the first place? And how do they believe they convey these expectations (or not) to their students? This paper is drawn from a study that attempted to identify the factors contributing to the formation of expectations of students, amongst a small group of teachers in private schools in Melbourne, Victoria.

Recent research (Sadker & Sadker, 2005) suggests that teachers form expectations of their students due to a numbers of factors. These include information typically recorded in schools, such as previous test scores and other documentation from previous teachers, but there is some evidence that less formal information, such as staffroom discussions, identifiable stereotypes, and even children's physical attractiveness can have a bearing (Sadker & Sadker, 2005). Several researchers (e.g. Jussim, Smith, Madon & Palumbo, 1998; Mandon, Jussim, Keiper, Smith & Palumbo, 1998) argue that teachers use personal characteristics of their students in forming their expectations and, according to Diamond et al. (2004), teachers use race and socioeconomic status to judge students' academic potential. For example, US teachers' perceptions of low income and African-American students' academic capacity are lower than those they hold for middle- and upper-income white students (Farkas 1996; Farkas, Grobe, Sheehan & Shaun, 1990). Diamond et al. (2004) also suggest that widely circulating stereotypes based on racial classification may influence teacher expectations of students.

Research has shown that other types of labelling can have a significant effect on the formation of teacher expectations of academic achievement. For example, Touranki (2003) suggests that in explaining a lack of academic achievement in areas such as reading, the education system as a whole applies labels that may influence teachers' judgment. There is also evidence that teachers' attitudes and expectations regarding students vary as a function of labels attached to particular disabilities (Diebold & Von Eichenbach, 1991; Soodak & Podell, 1993). Further, Jussim and Eccles (1992) identify gender

as a variable in teacher expectation, arguing girls get higher grades because teachers perceive girls try harder than boys; teachers then reward girls with good grades for their effort. McMillan (2004) likewise argues that gender stereotypes about ability are partly responsible for teachers' expectations. For example, elementary school teachers consider boys to be more skilful in tasks that require mental or abstract operations (analysing, synthesising, hypothesising, evaluating, interpreting questions), whereas girls are perceived as more competent in skills related to completing a task (observing, measuring, communicating, graphing, manipulating equipment and material) (Shepardson & Pizzini, 1992). According to Elwood and Comber (1996), girls are generally perceived by teachers to be more motivated and conscientious than boys, but boys are perceived as more confident and carefree. Researchers argue teachers not only use gender-based characteristics (Myhill & Jones, 2006; Shepardson & Pizzini, 1992; Elwood & Comber, 1996), but even students' names (Figlio, 2004) to form their expectations of their students.

The claim that "general societal stereotypes seem to be reflected in the attitudes, perceptions, and expectations of many teachers" (Tartar & Emanuel, 2001, p. 216) is hardly surprising, given that teachers are not immune to beliefs and attitudes held by society beyond the school gates. However, there is considerable evidence that the expectations of student achievement held by teachers profoundly affect teachers' classroom *behaviour*. In other words, teachers' expectations are communicated to students, with important consequences for student learning. For example, Brophy and Good (2000) argue that teachers treat high-expectancy students differently to low-expectancy students during classroom interactions. One consequence of this is that high expectancy students receive higher quality interactions with the teacher, which increases the likelihood of those students experiencing greater achievement. Hence, the students' achievements serve to fulfill the teacher's prophecy, forming a kind of 'virtuous circle'. According to Jussim and Harbar (2005), this phenomenon is more pronounced in elementary (primary) schooling than at later levels. Students in the earlier grades have more contact time with individual teachers and if their teacher consistently reveals low expectations, these are more likely to accumulate for students over a period of time, potentially distorting students' achievement and self-image (Good & Brophy, 2000). In secondary schools, by contrast, teachers have less contact time with their students so low expectations for students are less likely to have a cumulative effect.

The present study

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how teachers in independent school settings in Melbourne believe they form expectations of their students; determine whether they believe these expectations impact on student achievement; and identify how these teachers believe they communicate (or conceal) their expectations to students.

The participants were five primary school teachers from two private schools in south-east Melbourne, Victoria. The teachers were aged between 20 and 50 years and were a mix of male and female; the ethnicity and social class of the participants was not seen as important in the original selection of participants (an issue that is touched upon later in this paper). The participants had all been in the field of education for at least four years, as it was assumed that experienced teachers were more likely to provide the insight needed to inform the aims of the study. Permission was sought from the principals of the participating schools and the teachers signed consent forms agreeing to participate in in-depth, semi-structured, interviews. These interviews sought to explore the phenomenon of interest and to elicit rich descriptions of the perspectives of the teachers. With the permission of teachers, each of the approximately one and a half hour interviews were tape-recorded for accuracy (Burgess, 1984). The transcribed data was then analysed following Lichtman's (2006) three Cs of data analysis: initial coding; identifying the categories; and developing concepts / themes.

Findings and discussion

The teachers participating in this study mainly described the basis for their expectations of their students in ways that were consistent with previous research. There was one exception, however, the teachers reported that the support students get from their parents at home was an important variable in influencing their expectations. This may be superficially explained by the fact that the participants were drawn from private schools where, presumably, parents have a considerable investment in their children's education. However, on closer analysis, the issue of 'parent support' was found to *intersect* with other variables, particularly that of cultural background, a point also taken up later in this paper. In the main, the teachers claimed they base their expectations on objective forms of information about student ability (citing previous test results, previous teachers' feedback, knowledge about the state curriculum, and direct observation of students). However, the teachers also described, either explicitly or implicitly, a range of variables

“**Teachers treat high-expectancy students differently to low-expectancy students during classroom interactions**”

they believed were influential in the formation of their expectations of student achievement. In this section, two of these variables are discussed at length: student gender and cultural background.

Students' gender as a variable in the formation of teacher expectations

Student gender clearly impacted on the participating teachers' expectations, as they explicitly identified it is a factor in student achievement. Mary (all names are pseudonyms) stated that, despite not encouraging gender differences in her classroom:

[I] sort of tend to think that girls are better; boys [being] sort of loud [and] they are more playful than girls. They don't seem to care as much as girls in their presentations or in their general expectations, that 'we are boys, it's okay for us if we miss this'. But again, I am not going to encourage this in my classroom. It should not be in any classroom. But I know from the result, from the work I get, you can just tell. (Mary, Gr. 1)

Malinda's ideas were consistent with Mary's, both in claiming the existence of gender differences and claiming she did not allow these to impact on her expectations.

Girls generally are a little bit hard[er] working than the boys. Boys tend to be, particularly at the grade three age, more easily distracted than the girls. But I still have similar expectations though. (Malinda, Gr. 3)

Malinda also believes that teacher expectations influence some (but not all) children, and girls more so than boys.

Oh yeah...not for all children...some children care for what you think...[but] it won't affect them all. But most kids, particularly girls...[it's] what you think that really matters...and they will do their best to try and please you and most kids will do their best...to fulfil what you requested of them... so [it] depends on the child a lot. (Malinda, Gr. 3)

This expectation, and its impact on practice, was described by Bob (a Grade 6 teacher) who was explicit about his awareness of gender differences in his teaching. Bob explained the way in which his decisions about how much material could be covered in class depended on the ratio of girls to boys present. More girls meant that more teaching could be done with more achievement and fewer problems; more boys meant less achievement and more problems. Bob explained that, up until last year, his focus had been on "managing behaviour" rather than on "teaching" because of the number of boys in his

class. However, this year he was more focused on teaching (rather than behaviour) because he has more girls than boys in his class.

I have no bullies. I have more girls than boys, which is a statistically good thing for me in the classroom...Last year I had a class where I [was] often managing the class and their behavioural expectations in terms of calling out and rejecting others and all sorts of behaviour. (Bob, Gr. 6)

This is potentially a circular problem. Are teachers' claims about the relationship between gender-appropriate behaviour and students' achievement preconceived or are they the result of hard-won experience in the classroom? In fact, the teachers described their management strategies, instruction, and handling of curriculum as being both guided by their experiences with the different genders, *and* by preconceived notions about different personality characteristics of girls and boys. They then consciously or unconsciously communicated, through their behaviour, their differential expectations of male and female students, including how much each gender is going to achieve. Bob, for example, stated, "We often let girls to get over things that boys might not necessarily get away [with], especially with regard to Mathematics and Sciences." Bob had gone as far as asking someone else to observe his teaching to check the gender balance in his classroom questioning, including the gender balance in his use of open and closed questions.

My balance was fine, [although] my questioning to the girls in Science is more closed than to boys. So I know as an experienced teacher. I feel still very guilty of myself trying to elicit correct answers from girls rather than allowing them to come to appropriate answers themselves, so that may be a bit of bias from a teacher's point of view. (Bob, Gr. 6)

Analysis of the teachers' transcripts clearly indicated that the participating teachers were consciously or unconsciously gender biased, and that their male and female students receive different educational experiences based on what these teachers believe to be appropriate gender-based behaviour. These findings are consistent with research by Bennett and Bennett (1994). These teachers (see also Myhill & Jones, 2006) reported lower expectations of boys, both in terms of academic achievement and beliefs about behaviour and attitude, but had high expectations of girls, viewing them as hardworking and caring more about what teachers expect from them.

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These teachers reported lower expectations of boys, both in terms of academic achievement and beliefs about behaviour and attitude, but had high expectations of girls
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Students' cultural background as a variable in the formation of teacher expectations

In addition to differing expectations based on gender, the participating teachers reported that the cultural and linguistic diversity of students contributed to the formation of their expectations of student achievement, with students from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) eliciting low expectations.

[When children have a] non-English speaking background...expectations are going to be slightly lower than kids growing up in English speaking backgrounds. Because their ability to understand certain things is going to be a bit lower, naturally, you expect that. (Malinda, Gr. 3)

Rena (a Grade 2 teacher) argued that students' ESL (English as a Second Language) status was a stronger variable than social class or ethnicity, and stated that language barriers are the most important factor affecting her students' achievements and, therefore, her expectations.

Because English is not their first language, that is one factor that is affecting them...but I am hoping it won't...We have low expectations from the students with ESL background as a whole staff and often discuss how to overcome some hurdles that we face from the problems that arise, [such as] children playing up because there is a language barrier. (Rena, Gr. 2)

Malinda's ideas were partly consistent with Rena's:

Most of the challenges come from their language background, and also their different cultural backgrounds. Sometimes...their language can be a bit of a barrier too. (Malinda, Gr. 3)

Rena also reported how the teachers in her school often thought of ways to help ESL students overcome language barriers, *but* based on low expectations.

Again, these teachers' perspectives are consistent with earlier research, which has shown that teachers rate students differently based on students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Diamond et al., 2004). Paradoxically, the participating teachers also reported high expectations of Asian and Indian students because they believe these cultural groups have a strong work ethic, meaning they are subject to *higher* expectations based on teachers' beliefs about their cultural backgrounds. Mary reported that she believes Asian students are very hard working.

I think last year the Asian students that I had have high percentile [scores] anyway. I was expecting them to be performing above the level my class is at. (Bob, Gr. 6)

How do teachers communicate their expectations to their students?

So far, this paper has reported the participating teachers' descriptions of *how* they form expectations of their students. The discussion will now turn to how they *communicate* these expectations through their day-to-day teaching. The teachers reported that they are aware that they project onto their students the kind of expectations they have for them, in direct or indirect ways; furthermore, they consciously do this according to what they believe will be best for their students.

A key concern for these teachers was children's own perception of their likely achievement. The teachers reported that they convey to their students, through their teaching behaviour, what they see as each student's strengths and weaknesses. These teachers believe that the students then formulate self-images and expectations of themselves, based on what has been conveyed to them, and that this will consequently influence the students' achievement. This idea is consistent with the work of Deans (1996), who argued that small children form self images by seeing themselves in the eyes of others (teachers, parents and other adults). Thus, by experiencing high expectations, students are more likely to form high self-images; with low expectations, students' self-image is lowered. For the teachers in this study, the act of conveying expectations to students was not simply one of direct reinforcement. Instead, the teachers reported a range of complex pedagogical strategies, such as tailoring their instruction and adapting the curriculum to enable their students to experience success. The teachers believed this was a key strategy in promoting self-image. The teachers all reported the attempts they engaged in, based on their expectations of their students, to raise the self-image of low-achieving students. These strategies include adapting tasks to suit each student's present achievement, so they can succeed in the work and feel motivated.

A lot of children that we work with [who have] learning difficulties are very prone to low self-esteem...[There are] a whole range of things that they're really stuck with or they really find challenging, [this makes]...a lot of children... become anxious about coming to school because everything is too hard and challenging...so the children have low expectations from themselves... So, again, if we work with them then we break things down into little chunks to provide things that they can succeed in and to give them feedback on that...to develop feelings and showing a bit high expectations for the students. (Leanne, Gr. 1)

Bob also explained in detail how he adapts the curriculum to match his expectations of his students' achievements. For example, Bob omits some

“**Teachers rate students differently based on students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds**”

“**If teachers communicate low expectations to their students over a long period, it is more likely that negative self-fulfilling effects will occur**”

activities for children who have learning difficulties because he does not want to lessen their motivation for learning.

Asking children to complete various activities at various times, with a sense of priority for certain students, is very important, so for my autistic child it's far less relevant to be doing decimals to three places. It's more relevant to him to be working at his bus timetable and some simple word mathematics questions. So in that manner, I can drop activities for him that he does not have to complete. (Bob, Gr. 6)

The teachers' ideas reflect Blatchman's (1992) argument that, with each success at school, children develop enhanced motivation and self-perception. By contrast, with each failure at school, children feel de-motivated and develop low self-perceptions (Chapman, 1988). Montgomery (1994) also found that children with learning difficulties generally have lower academic self-perceptions. The teachers reported that they believed that it is important to convey realistic expectations to low-achieving students.

I try to show them that I believe in them...not in a false way...that my belief and my expectation of them is based on reality...what they can succeed at...and if a child is resistant to have a goal...and they're too worried about failing...all you need to do is then make it smaller...it's negotiated in a different way or from a different angle. (Leanne, Gr. 1)

Mary put this more pragmatically.

I won't be expecting much...only at their own level. I have expectations, if you can't finish two pages of writing then at least one page would be enough for you...because I know this child can't go beyond one page. (Mary, Gr. 6)

Rena's ideas are consistent with Mary's.

The ones that [you] might de-motivate, you need to watch yourselves with them then work at their level. I don't push them too much...if you push them so much...they can't do it...just at their level...That's why I said ones who want to do more...I challenge them...the ones who can't...whatever they do I am fine...I am happy with them...so they can achieve as much as they can. (Rena, Gr. 2)

These statements portray how the participating teachers communicate their expectations to high and low achievers differently, by challenging their high achievers and giving lower level tasks to low achievers. At one level, it is understandable that these teachers do not give challenging tasks to students with low ability because they fear that, if their students fail, the students will be de-motivated and

develop poor self-images. However, as Good and Brophy (2000) indicate, if teachers communicate low expectations to their students over a long period, it is more likely that *negative* self-fulfilling effects will occur.

Despite this (or perhaps because of it), all the teachers described how they motivated their students by giving positive comments.

'Well done', or 'I can see you counting on your fingers, that is fantastic', 'I can see you working really hard, that's great'...All of them, not just the low or high...all of them get that...They want to show they can do it...they try hard for me...and I can see it. (Rena, Gr. 2)

Rena believes that these comments boost students' self-esteem. However, Babad (1990) argues that even though teachers try to provide emotional support and show more concern and vigilance in teaching low-expectancy students, the fact remains that these low achievers are the victims of more negative teacher effects.

Conclusion

This paper argues that teachers' expectations of their students' achievements are subject to a number of variables, including student gender and cultural background. As Australia is a highly multicultural country, with many schools having a large number of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, teachers need to ask themselves whether they consciously or unconsciously hold low expectations of non-Anglo-Australian students or students for whom English is not a first language. Likewise, these teachers admit they treat girls and boys differently, which may suggest teachers are not fostering the learning of boys adequately, due to lower expectations.

Second, this paper has argued that the strategies teachers use in order to motivate students for whom they hold lower expectations may instead reinforce those expectations and lower students' academic self-perceptions. The challenge for teachers is to provide appropriate levels of challenge without telegraphing to students expectations of low achievement. The teachers participating in this study believe in having realistic expectations and working just at their students' level. Moreover, they do not believe in pushing their students too hard in order to achieve more, fearing that students might feel de-motivated if they fail to accomplish the task. A concern raised by this finding is that, if teachers only provide low-achieving students with a combination of easy tasks and positive feedback, students may become accustomed to these kinds of expectations in the longer term, and will not strive to do difficult tasks, always achieving just at the level expected by their teachers. Students, upon recognising their

teacher expectations, behave in a way that conforms to those expectations (Atwell, 2001; Good & Brophy, 2000; Jussim & Harber, 2005). Thus, teacher expectations may cause students' achievements and vice versa. Furthermore, students may come to depend on teachers' positive comments to develop positive self-concept and motivation to enhance their achievements. Perhaps by displaying high expectations both for their students and for themselves, teachers may indeed break down barriers between students' present and future achievements. **TEACH**

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Ministry Of Teaching

Boys and behaviour

Alternative strategies that support boys with ADHD

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Abstract

Boys are diagnosed five times more often than girls with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and frequently medication has become the first option in addressing this condition. Many teachers find it difficult to cope with boys with ADHD due to a lack of understanding about ADHD symptoms and boys' personalities. This research study examined current practices used for boys with behaviour problems as well as trialling a number of alternative approaches such as music therapy, aromatherapy, yoga, building and construction, gardening and computer generated learning. During the implementation phase, teachers were closely observed and then participated in an in-depth interview with the researcher. The data revealed behavioural improvements when using the alternative strategies and demonstrated that these methods may be a better option than medication for some boys with behavioural problems, including ADHD.

Background

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) has been described as a neuro-developmental disorder characterised by impulsivity, distractibility, and hyperactivity that manifests in early childhood (Sadiq, 2007, p. 632) and as the display of inattentive, hyperactive or impulsive behaviour observed more frequently and severely than is typically observed in other children of the same age (Efron, Sciberras & Hassell, 2008, p. 1). ADHD prevalence rates for school-aged children in Australia were reported as 11% (NSW Public Health, 2002).

The implications of the diagnosis of ADHD are a matter of concern to both parents and educators:

Children with ADHD commonly experience a broad range of difficulties, including social problems and difficulties at school. They have an increased risk of serious long-term consequences such as slow academic achievement, peer rejection and antisocial behaviour. The disorder also has a

profound affect on parents, siblings and teachers of children with ADHD. (NSW Public Health Bulletin, p. 4)

Another implication of an ADHD diagnosis relates to the use of medication to manage or reduce the symptoms. While many research reports describe the benefits of stimulant medication for children with ADHD, others are critical of its use. It is a controversial option due to the young age of the children, the amphetamine base of the medication and the dramatic increase of its use in recent years (Buckmaster, 2004). Between 1993 and 2003, prescriptions for dexamphetamine sulphate in Australia increased by 910% to 249,207 prescriptions in 2003 (Buckmaster, 2004). In the United States approximately 60% of children with ADHD are medicated, whereas in Finland, less than 1% receive drugs and by late adolescence little difference is found between those receiving medication and those not (McGuinness, 2008). In the context of medication, it should be noted, however, that many children who have been diagnosed with ADHD do not receive medication for the disorder (Fulton, et al., 2009).

Efron (2008) found that teachers have inadequate understanding and training in the area of ADHD and schools are frequently not meeting the needs of boys with ADHD, as teachers do not have adequate knowledge, understanding or strategies for dealing with these students (Cooney, 2008, p. 171). It has been estimated that nearly two thirds of those diagnosed with ADHD have probably been mistakenly diagnosed due to the initial misunderstandings of teachers (Gurian, 2002, p. 37; Quinn, 2004, p. 1). A pilot study in South London, UK (Sayal et al., 2006) reported that a brief educational intervention with teachers improved their ability to recognise children with, or at risk of, ADHD.

Strategies for dealing with ADHD in the classroom

Trying to teach a restless, inattentive child is never easy and this is compounded by many teachers'

“*Teachers have inadequate understanding and training in the area of ADHD and schools are frequently not meeting the needs of boys with ADHD*”

limited understanding of the behavioural profiles of children with ADHD (Arcia, Frank, Sanchez-LaCay & Fernaindez, 2000). This study also found that while teachers used a broad range of strategies, these tended to be reactive rather than proactive and did not constitute a comprehensive plan of action, which is necessary for managing students with ADHD.

Teachers need to accept that the child with ADHD will have challenging behaviours which, for much of the time, the child cannot control. Kindlon and Thompson (2000, p.202) recommend that boys with ADHD need four things: understanding, structure, clear guidelines in the classroom and support. West (2001, p.6) also agrees that structure is the most important strategy in order for students to understand expectations and limitations. Boys with ADHD will usually respond best in structured and predictable environments with clearly defined rules and regulations (Houghton, 2004, p. 18).

Some schools have responded to these findings and have altered their teaching styles and classroom structures, for example, breaking lessons into sections and incorporating breaks for the boys (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2008, p.1). Houghton (2004, p. 18) recommends the teacher should include a combination of educational structure and support in managing ADHD behaviour.

Additionally, Myers (2009, p.2) believes that if a child has difficulty following a plan, the teacher should assist in setting long-range goals and breaking the goals into realistic parts. If a child with ADHD has poor time management, use of a time limit, a timer, lists, calendars and charts will assist (Myers, 2009, p.2). Additionally, attention-getting techniques, humour and a soft voice when giving direction are helpful (Myers, 2009, p. 1).

Using immediate feedback on behaviour, time out strategies and small group instruction lessons have obtained meaningful improvement in the behaviour of children with ADHD (Fabiano, 2003, p.2). Classroom strategies should also include the use of visuals to support instructions, teaching students how to break their work into sections, monitoring their work frequently and colour coding timetables and books (Houghton, 2004, p. 16).

When applying strategies it is important to consider the reward that will be used. For reinforcement to be beneficial, it must be perceived by the student as good and desirable (Edwards & Watts, 2004, p.51).

Another useful strategy for boys with behaviour problems is teaching them how to self monitor their behaviour. West (2001, p.2) noted that boys can be taught to use simple strategies such as looking for instructions on the board, raising their hands, waiting and seeing if they remember or quietly asking another child for help.

While helping the child avoid boredom, the teacher should also help the child alleviate stressful situations. These situations can be averted by having a time-out location, which should be a place for calming down rather than for punishment (Myers, 2009, p. 1).

Building and constructing activities

Using body activities and hands-on lessons, boys with ADHD can learn to control their impulsivity and increase their concentration (King & Gartrell, 2008, p.9). King and Gartrell (2008) suggest the use of block building and wood working and the provision of materials with which students can experiment. Building activities such as Duplo and Lego may be used to calm impulsive behaviour.

These changes were enjoyed both by the girls and the boys in the classroom but, in particular, worked best in calming impulsive behaviour in boys with ADHD. (King & Gartrell, 2008)

Gardening

Other building and construction activities such as gardening have been shown to benefit boys with ADHD. According to Byrne (2009, p. 1), gardening improves symptoms of ADHD by promoting team work; boys work together in planning and developing the garden bed and boys develop care, respect and responsibility which motivates their learning in the classroom. Watkins (2008) recommends having boys with ADHD working on tasks in a collaborative learning group with a partner who has been previously trained on the task, as this improves boys' planning strategies and efficiency in activities.

Behaviour management and the use of choice

Giving boys choices in their classroom activities is important (Loe, 2007, p.8). Choice making, peer tutoring and computer-aided instruction are strategies that will support boys' appropriate behaviour. Additionally, William Gasser's Choice Theory is an appropriate behaviour management approach as it allows students to stop and evaluate their behaviour. Choice Theory advocates the utilisation of five key aspects: developing goals, establishing classroom rules, allowing students to make classroom and learning suggestions, achieving commitment from students and implementing consequences (Edwards & Watts, 2004, p.134). Wilson (2006, p. 1) also agrees with Gasser's theory and recommends giving boys with ADHD more than one choice in activities. There is no easy solution for the management of ADHD but asking a child with ADHD what will help them, increases teachers' understanding of how they like to learn. "It is amazing how often their opinions are ignored or not asked" (Hallowell & Ratey, 2005).

“*Asking a child with ADHD what will help them, increases teachers' understanding of how they like to learn*”

Physical activity

Given that fidgeting is one of the symptoms of ADHD, physical activity is important to children with ADHD because they crave movement and need time to use their excess hyperactivity. Loe (2007, p. 9) believes that physical activity is helpful for children with ADHD as it has been shown to reduce disruptive behaviour inside the classroom. King and Gartrell (2008, p. 2) consider the outdoors as a vital teaching tool for boys' behaviour development and recommend creating indoor and outdoor body experiences, experiments, building and constructing activities and dramatic play to help boys with their concentration and attention.

Gurian (2002, p. 47) found that movement for boys seemed to help not only in the stimulation of their brains but also in the management of their behaviour. Incorporating exercise activities into the daily classroom schedule is believed to be an appropriate way of enabling boys with ADHD to control their movements and to increase the likelihood of experiencing school success (Mulrine, Prater & Jenkins, 2005, p. 1).

Aromatherapy

Smells can influence our moods and levels of anxiety and aromatherapy suggests that mental alertness, calmness and relaxation can be achieved (Jensen, 2000, p. 66). Berne (2002, p. 119) has studied the effects of aromatherapy on brain waves, with results showing that oils such as orange, jasmine, and rose enhance calmness and tranquillity in the brain. Furthermore, some essential oils such as lavender and rosemary have neuro-stimulating properties that help people relax (Sadiq, 2007, p. 6). Since children with ADHD do not always understand why they are acting out certain behaviours, Jefferies (2003, p. 64) recommends an important lifestyle change such as the use of aromatherapy to help create a calm, positive environment.

Music therapy

Children with an emotional disturbance and / or behaviour disorder benefit from the stress reduction technique of music therapy. Weston (2008, p. 1) believes that aromatherapy and soft music should be used in schools to help with behavioural problems. By simply playing low volume music in the background, students find it easier to relax and improve their learning. Appropriate music can help create a positive learning environment that may improve the behaviour of students (Jensen, 2000, p. 60). Research by Madewell (2009, p. 1) found that by playing classical music, students with ADHD become attentive and relaxed.

Meditation and yoga techniques

Stress, which may have a negative impact upon the health, development and wellbeing of children, is a symptom of many children with ADHD. Thomas (2002, p. 2) recommends that relaxation exercises such as Tai Chi can help manage behaviour. According to Myers (2009, p. 1), combining simple relaxation techniques such as deep breathing with positive visual imagery helps boys with ADHD improve or learn new skills. Yoga is a mind, body and spirit practice, including physical exercises, breathing techniques, relaxation, meditation and mindfulness. Cheesbrough (2006) believes that regular yoga practice can improve children's behaviour and schoolwork. "Hyperactive and disruptive children will grow calmer, particularly through the practice of breathing techniques" (Cheesbrough, 2006, p. 29).

Boys and technology

In making lessons as 'real' as possible, Browne posits that, "Technology is a great vehicle for boys with ADHD in learning at school" (Browne, 2001, p. 40). He recommends that teachers should link both communication and technology skills. Boys with behaviour problems, including ADHD, will commonly favour computer related learning as it makes instruction visual, allows them to participate actively and increases academic opportunities. Boys with ADHD will be assisted academically when teachers apply "boy orientation" topics to programs of work, for example, technology and enterprise challenges. This may include tasks such as designing badges (Browne, 2001, p. 50).

The current study—Method

This study explored ways teachers can manage symptoms of ADHD by using a number of different strategies which would appeal to boys and specifically address their ADHD symptoms.

A three-phased, qualitative mixed methods, research design was used: an implementation phase; followed by observation of the participants; and an in-depth interview.

The study was conducted in a country town on the Mid North Coast area of New South Wales at the larger of the two public schools which provided for students from Kindergarten to Grade 6. The research proposal was presented at a staff meeting and teachers were invited to take a booklet that outlined the strategies and techniques that would need to be implemented in the classroom over a five-month period. Sufficient detail was provided to enable the teachers to apply the strategy effectively. They were invited to identify themselves on the form and indicate the strategies they would like to

“Children with an emotional disturbance and / or behaviour disorder benefit from the stress reduction technique of music therapy”

trial. The booklet also included a feedback form which allowed the teachers to make comments after the strategy was trialled. A time of two weeks was suggested for trialling each strategy. The strategies were derived from an extensive literature review of alternatives to the use of medication for ADHD.

Phase 1: Implementation

In this three-phased study, the first phase consisted of the implementation of specific teaching and management strategies over several months by the five teachers who had agreed to participate. The strategies trialled were:

1. Building and constructing
2. Gardening
3. Behaviour management based on Choice Theory
4. Indoor and outdoor body experiences: (a) physical activity, (b) aromatherapy, (c) music therapy, (d) yoga
5. Technology assisted learning

The participating teachers were asked to answer a series of questions and given opportunity to comment critically on the strategies that were implemented to manage boys with ADHD.

Amongst the classes involved there were a number of important variables such as the number of boys who had been diagnosed with ADHD or who had displayed symptoms of ADHD in the participating teachers' classrooms, the different behaviours that were displayed by the boys and the age of the boys with ADHD.

Phase 2: Observations

The researcher carried out observations over a six-week period.

Phase 3: Semi-structured interviews

The third phase involved an in-depth, semi-structured interview which was used to gather data to describe the degree of understanding the teachers had about boys with ADHD and to determine which management strategies were perceived to be most effective in improving boys' behaviour and concentration.

The results from the three investigative procedures: booklet feedback, observations and interviews were then collated and analysed.

Results

All five of the teachers (100%) returned their booklets and nominated to be interviewed. Four of the participants (80%) trialled indoor and outdoor body experiences including strategies of music therapy, aromatherapy, yoga and physical activity. Four of the participants (80%) trialled building and constructing

activities, three of the participants (60%) trialled the behaviour booklet, one participant (20%) trialled computer generated learning, and two of the five participants (40%) trialled gardening.

Building and constructing strategy

Three out of the five teachers trialled this strategy. All three of the teachers reported successful results in boys' attention and behaviour during building and constructing lessons. These teachers reported that:

- Boys appeared to be less hyperactive and fewer ADHD symptoms were apparent when they were building. (Lego and building blocks were used in Science and Mathematics lessons.) (Teacher 5)
- "Boys are definitely more engaged when using hands on activities." (Teacher 2)
- "Boys enjoyed building and construction activities, they learnt by doing." (Teacher 5)
- 'Cogs and wheels' were beneficial building and constructing activities. (Teacher 1)
- "Boys could not wait to continue working on activities." (Building and constructing activities were used in Mathematics through measurement, number and space; and in Science through toy making and bridge challenges.) (Teacher 2)
- Building and constructing activities developed concentration and calmness in boys with ADHD. (Teacher 5)
- Building and construction methods assist perceptual learners and are a good way to "link student prior knowledge to curriculum". (Teacher 2)
- "It is possible to build in social skills [when using building and constructing activities]." (Teacher 2)
- "Groups need to be small for the benefits to show and be well supervised." (Teacher 1)

Gardening strategy

Two teachers out of the five explored the gardening strategy. These two teachers found such pleasing results that they discussed the results with other teachers and suggested they implement their own garden.

These teachers reported that:

- The boys took the initiative to set up a selling plan; develop prices for the vegetables and rule up a bank book to record their credits and debits. (Teacher 1)
- The boys with ADHD built a good sense of ownership with the gardens, which could then be used as a reward for stimulating learning and focusing students in the classroom. (Teacher 1)

“*The boys with ADHD built a good sense of ownership with the gardens, which could then be used as a reward for stimulating learning and focusing students in the classroom*”

- As the boys began to enjoy and find satisfaction in gardening, the teacher was able to set them special research and homework tasks. (Teacher 1)
- “They didn’t even realise they were doing Math.” (Gardening was integrated into Math measurement lessons.) (Teacher 2)

Behaviour management strategy

Three out of five teachers tested the behaviour booklet over a two-week period. All of the three teachers agreed that Glasser’s Choice Theory is beneficial for boys, especially those with a behaviour problem; however, structure needs to be constant and consistent.

Students were shown their booklet and it was their choice to follow the given outcomes. Teachers held the book at their desks, but students were involved in the discussion of their achievements. If students did not choose the appropriate behaviour, they could not receive the reward that had been made clear to them at the commencement of the activity.

It was found that:

- Boys chose the correct behaviour because they were in control of their behaviour. “Boys with ADHD need to have choice and need to feel in control, the teacher needs to give the child structure in order for this to work successfully, without structure the boy becomes the leader.” (Teacher 5)
- By setting a reward or a privilege for the student that was personalised or seen as desirable the student worked harder at achieving and focusing. (Teachers 1 and 5)
- Boys with ADHD need to be rewarded instantly. (Teacher 2)

Teacher 3 used a sticker chart that worked towards a reward. It was apparent that the boys were motivated to achieve because they were working towards a goal and responded well to these rewards. However, Teachers 1 and 2 reported more pleasing results when using the behaviour management booklet (Choice Theory). This is probably because they first found out what interested the boys and developed a reward from these interests.

Indoor and outdoor body experiences strategies

Teacher 4 used daily physical activity such as walking, running and in-class movement skills to stimulate learning and gain concentration as well as provide breaks in lessons. After using outdoor movement activities it was reported that, “Boys enjoyed the movement and looked forward to moving again, it seemed to calm boys when they came back inside.” (Teacher 2)

Music therapy, aromatherapy and yoga techniques were used to increase concentration and calmness in boys with ADHD. Regarding these strategies, teachers reported that:

- “Music was very settling for students while they were doing work.” (Teacher 2)
- “Daily integration of classical music after a physical activity and during Mathematics or English stimulates concentration and eliminates much disruptive behaviour.” (Teacher 5)
- These techniques (music therapy and movement activities) would work better when they become part of the classroom routine. (Teacher 2)
- After using aromatherapy regularly in the classroom, ‘orange’ was found to be the most successful in calming but still motivating boys with ADHD. “While the oil was burning I noticed a change in the boys’ physical bodies, they seemed to unwind and calm down, and it helped in eliminating many messages and disruptions around them.” (Teacher 5)
- “Yoga allowed boys to use their bodies to expel excessive hyperactivity and at the same time loosen muscles and calm down.” (Yoga was used on a daily basis.) (Teacher 5)

Teacher 5 told the boys they were going to do ‘strength and balance’ activities. This seemed to result in better participation than in classrooms where the term ‘yoga’ was used.

Technology assisted learning strategies

Two out of the five teachers chose to write feedback on using computers to motivate learning in boys with ADHD and commented that computer generated learning stimulated learning and interested the boys with ADHD. Teacher 5 also used interactive white boards to stimulate and interest learning. In these lessons boys with challenging behaviour were interested and less disruptive than in ‘normal’ lessons.

Discussion

This study has revealed that boys with ADHD need teachers who can implement strategies that cater for their ADHD symptoms, such as hyperactivity and aggression. The research aim was to explore a number of alternative methods that were thought to be beneficial to boys with ADHD, as suggested by various researchers. However, the study found that one strategy alone was barely enough to cater for boys with ADHD. Strategies needed to be used in conjunction with one another, modified and integrated into the timetable in order to give the classroom structure and routine. Gardening

“Boys with ADHD need teachers who can implement strategies that cater for their ADHD symptoms, such as hyperactivity and aggression”

became a reward strategy for the boys with ADHD. By integrating gardening and Choice Theory strategies, boys were given a daily choice to work productively and follow classroom rules in order to be involved in gardening. The boys became immersed in gardening, developing teamwork skills, Mathematics and English skills and a sense of pride and ownership.

Music was found to relax but also stimulate the students. Classical music was found to be the most effective type of music. In the afternoon as the boys became restless, aromatherapy was successfully used. Observation found that aromatherapy settled the boys, but at the same time also stimulated them, giving them creativity in story writing and discussions.

The major finding of this study was that boys with ADHD need to be understood. Teachers need to get to know them, develop a relationship with them, find their interests and understand their symptoms in order to implement a daily plan incorporating appropriate strategies.

Observing the five participants over six weeks, it became apparent the symptoms of ADHD, including hyperactivity, aggression and a lack of concentration were improved and minimised through the use of:

1. Structure and routine
2. Choice in their behaviour (Glasser's Choice Theory)
3. Desirable, instant rewards that relate to learning
4. Learning activities they perceive to be significant
5. Learning that is broken up through movement
6. Relaxation techniques that have a calming effect

While medication can be of value in settling the child with severe ADHD, this exploratory study found that alternative strategies can benefit boys with this condition. There is now a strong need to repeat this study with larger numbers and in a controlled and measured context to provide more detailed information. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder has been found to have a variety of aetiologies; this study has revealed that a variety of strategies, integrated consistently throughout the timetable and all within a framework of a caring educational relationship with the teacher, is highly effective at meeting the child's needs. It is the responsibility of the teacher to get to know students and understand the boys' symptoms of ADHD. Strategies can then be developed that support these boys and the classroom teacher. These steps could make positive, lifelong differences and are worth trialling prior to medication. **TEACH**

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“The major finding of this study was that boys with ADHD need to be understood”



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An ideological reading of *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories* using critical literacy

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Abstract

Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories stands as the principal and archetypal Seventh-day Adventist children's literature text. It is heavily inscribed with distinct ideologies, which are specifically referential to Seventh-day Adventist dogma and faith. As children read these texts, they are exposed to, and affected by, these ideologies. This thesis seeks to expose the overt and covert ideologies of the text so that their power can be recognised and their value evaluated. This is accomplished through a brief investigation of the author and the publishing institution that conceived the texts, then through an explanation of the development and aims of critical literacy reading processes. These reading processes are then applied to the text in order to render explicit the belief structures constructed into the text which sustain the stories' proposed 'truths' and 'meanings'.

This investigation has revealed that *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories* assumes levels of authority over truth, interpretation and the reader, which it does not intrinsically command. This assumption of authority allows the text to propose and defend one-sided 'truths', spurious arguments and potentially unethical behaviour.

Introduction

Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories were written in an era of fragility and upheaval in the post-war period of the 1920s. For the Seventh-day Adventist Church, however, it was a time of significant growth, especially through the Church's publishing arm. Arthur S. Maxwell made a substantial contribution to the church's mission through his literature, the most widely circulated of which was *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*.

Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories are arguably the most popular and influential Seventh-day Adventist

children's literature ever distributed. First published as a ten volume set in 1928, the books achieved a total circulation of over forty million books in twenty-one languages by 1982 (Jean, 1983; Neufeld, 1996; Schwartz, 1983). Part of the reason for this broad appeal comes from the texts' ability to traverse denominational lines; the books have been endorsed and advertised by people of varying faiths and in prominent leadership positions (Jean, 1983; Schwartz, 1983).

Designed and written as character-building children's storybooks, the texts aim "to lead boys and girls to choose the good way of life; to help them to be kind, honest, truthful, and obedient, and above all to love God with all their hearts" (vol 1, p. 12). The highly moralistic stories are presented as "true to life...about things that actually happened to real boys and girls" (vol. 2, pp. 10–11). The texts served the purposes of both reflecting the ideologies of their time, while also informing and shaping these same worldviews for the future. Maxwell attributed his worldview to his own near-death experience and "thereafter believed God had preserved him for a special purpose" (Jean, 1983, 24; Neufeld, 1996). This worldview of God's direct intervention in human experiences formed an intrinsic and foundational theme which ran through many of his children's stories (Jean, 1983).

A problem: Evidence of damaging social and religious effects of *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*

Despite the laudable aims of *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*, the response of some readers raises questions. Testimonial evidence compares the stories with the experiences of the reader. Berecz (1996, pp. 10, 12) questions the universal validity of 'Uncle Arthur's' "interventionist God", who "dispatches guardian angels to keep approaching drunk drivers from swerving over the yellow line

“The texts served the purposes of both reflecting the ideologies of their time, while also informing and shaping these same worldviews for the future”

and snuffing out...life". He argues that the "three major problems with such deliverance stories [are] probabilities, selective sampling, and linear theories of causality." McNiely (1996, p. 64) recounts the confusion she felt as a direct result of the tension between her lived experiences and her engagement with *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*. Having grown up with the texts in the mission field, she states that a tragedy that befell fellow missionaries "was a shock to me...I was never the same again". The problem created by *Bedtime stories* was so significant that she began writing her own stories that attempted to rectify the imbalance of 'Uncle Arthur's', "vivid scenarios of divine intervention" (Berecz, 1996).

The second category is the alignment of *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories* with distorted social and religious ideologies. The website, *whitefuture.com*, a propaganda text for a white supremacist organisation contains an article in which the author systematically and effectively deconstructs pictures from *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories* to endorse, apart from their "rock solid call to honesty, and other noble character attributes", the admirable lack of "non-white faces jumping up here and there, and everywhere, trying to invade the pleasant and relatively safe environment of White society".

While obviously an extreme reading, it requires no distortion of the texts and reveals a dynamic that exists within *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*.

That a Seventh-day Adventist children's storybook series can be effectively utilised to defend worldviews as destructive and offensive as these warrants a detailed and critical investigation of the social concerns of *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*. In addition, a study that indicates the extent, if any, of confusion arising for children (especially those from within Adventist culture) out of the belief systems regarding God's intervention in the world would likewise be valuable.

Critical literacy and *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*

Literary theory and critical theory recognises that a reader's response to a text is shaped by a variety of perspectives and experiences such as race, gender, class and / or religion (Athanases, 1998; Fish, 1995; Harris, 1999; Morrison, 1992; Spears-Bunton, 1990). The resistant reading and decoding of texts allowed by postmodernism, coupled with critical theory's emphasis on the liberation of the 'causalities' of scientific and capitalist 'progress' brings us to the purpose of critical literacy process. At its most idealistic, critical theory process is a reading approach concerned with making explicit the ideological workings of texts in order to negate the power of the belief systems which constructed

them (Boutte, 2002; Christie & Misson, 1998; Langford, 2001). Through the negation of these power structures, readers are able to negotiate and call into question the 'truth' assumptions of texts, and to interpret the texts' significance and meaning in the light of their own personal experiences. Further, as, "reading is an act of coming to know the world (as well as the word) and a means to social transformation", it is hoped that critical literacy processes enable the "alleviation of human suffering and the formation of a more just world through the critique of existing social and political problems and the posing of alternatives" (Cervetti, et al., 2001, p. 5).

Pertinent to this study are a number of critical literacy questions adapted from Johnson (1999), which deal with issues of literature, culture, and power relationships and assumptions. These questions include author-reader relationship, 'truth', and intention concerns. The 'author function' is merely as an arbitrarily controlling and limiting obstruction to reading and understanding, but it is all the more serious in the case of children's literature because children's texts "serve as a form of education and socialisation that conveys society's deepest hopes, fears, expectations, and demands" (Boutte, 2002). Boutte notes that where the power relationship between the author and the reader is more pronounced, the conveyance of the author's ideologies is likewise. The purpose of applying a critical literacy process is primarily to establish how the constructed author-reader relationship relates to the possible relinquishment of the reader's authority over truth to the author. Where there is an apparently 'natural' power relationship of author over reader, the author's ideologies become more compelling.

The 'truth' concerns of the chosen text refer to the metanarratives that constitute the structure on which meanings are transmitted through the text. These universalising truth claims, while perhaps explaining one aspect of the human condition and the world, invariably "impose restrictive boundaries on an otherwise pluralist, diverse cultural formation" (Webster, 1996, p. 125). To this end, a number of critical questions and ideas are relevant. Firstly, the truth claims which run consistently through the text need to be identified and made explicit. In a referential step backwards, it then needs to be asked, from what authoritative platform or 'pulpit' are these truth claims made and to what ideological context do the metanarratives refer? Additionally, to what extent are the truth claims made to appear natural, given and irrefutable? Does the text include fundamental ambiguities which allow for discussion of, and resistance to, the proposed truth claims?

Also required is a critical re-evaluation of the

“These questions include author-reader relationship, 'truth', and intention concerns”

notion that to know the intention of a work is to know the intrinsic truths that the work holds (Webster, 1996). For a text such as *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*, which explicitly and proudly professes its intentions from the very beginning, it is necessary to examine how the text works to realise these intentions, and how, in adopting its strategies, and the language used as a part of these strategies, the text holds other deeper-seated reasons for its creation and distribution (Boutte, 2002; Webster, 1996).

By applying critical literacy questions to *Uncle Arthur's bedtime stories*, it becomes possible to achieve some of its 'grand' aspirations, freeing the reader from institutional rhetoric which undermines the "train[ing of] the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts" (White, 1952, p. 17).

Ideology: Author-reader concerns

Arthur S. Maxwell—or more specifically, 'Uncle Arthur'—assumes a significant God-like presence in the texts. The pseudonym 'Uncle Arthur' 'naturally' confers the benefits of a trustworthy, wise and familial uncle to Maxwell. He has thus essentially breached a substantial interpersonal divide between himself and his audience, which might otherwise allow children to read his books from a more detached and sceptical perspective.

The presence of patriarchally authoritative 'Uncle Arthur' permeates the texts from cover to cover, despite Maxwell openly soliciting for submissions of experiences from his readers. Yet Maxwell also alludes to the subjectivity of the process of writing the stories. His own children were his original muse, providing "the ideas and the inspiration for so many stories". This recognition of the strong subjective nature of his stories runs in sharp contrast to his repeated assurances to parents and children that "every story is founded on fact" (Vol.3, p. 12–13), because factuality is based on objective observation rather than subjective interpretation. This assurance is especially questionable in light of the realisation that by the time these 'facts' are communicated to the child, they have been filtered and interpreted by at least two mediums, namely, the adult or child who wrote the story to Maxwell, and then Maxwell himself, as he recreated the letter into a readable and entertaining story for young children.

Through this confusion over the actual level of objectivity in the *Bedtime stories*, Maxwell adds another layer to the image of his authority and reliability. By blurring the lines between fact and fiction, Maxwell is able to attach a level of legitimacy and accuracy to his stories that doesn't actually exist. He claims that his stories are "true" (vol. 4,

p. 13) and "true to life" (vol. 1, p. 12) because of the factualness of the accounts. However, he ignores, and by implication, encourages the reader to ignore, his own process of selection and rejection that must inevitably take place as he constructs the stories. What he proposes then as an objective reflection of life, and of the way the world operates and humans behave, through his conception of a genre that can be accurately described as children's "classic realism" (Webster, 1996, 54), becomes merely his own selective and ideologically motivated take on reality. What would happen, it can be posed, if he was sent a story that described the failure of God to intervene? Would 'Uncle Arthur' include this story in the collection? If he didn't, then by his own definition, he is no longer being true to life. At a more 'ordinary' and everyday level, if a child sent a letter that described the experience of divorce would Maxwell include it? Certainly, a scan of the stories in the volumes suggests not, because it quickly becomes obvious that his stories largely ignore pain rather than exhibiting a "radical sensitivity to suffering", the likes of which is demonstrated throughout, and which gives further legitimacy to the Biblical narrative and texts (Middleton & Walsh, 1995, p. 143).

Ideology: Intention concerns

One possible explanation for the lack diversity of experience in Maxwell's stories is that a significant part of the thematic editing process probably occurred at the point of submission. Having engaged with his texts, those submitting experiences would have perceived that any stories outside of the genre to which he adheres would not be considered for publication.

That Maxwell engages in a process of conscious selection and rejection of stories and experiences is demonstrated in, *Those prayers of yours* (vol. 1, p. 39–42). This narrative consists of a highly rhetorical exposition of Maxwell's belief in an interventionist God. Maxwell's theology of the nature and workings of God in the world are essentially encapsulated in this four-page statement, which proposes that "Jesus cares *and* that Jesus intervenes" (Berecz, 1996, p. 10). Without exploring the validity of this theology, a critical examination of the reasoning Uncle Arthur employs reveals not only the highly subjective and problematic evidence he uses to support his claims, but also his lack of discretion in presenting that evidence to young and impressionable minds so as to maintain a highly limiting and exclusive worldview.

He begins the segment by posing a question, which he then immediately and authoritatively answers, "Does Jesus really answer children's prayers? Of course He does" (p. 39). No sooner has

“By blurring the lines between fact and fiction, Maxwell is able to attach a level of legitimacy and accuracy to his stories that doesn't actually exist”

he answered his own rhetorical question, than he demands that the young reader not “ever let anybody try to persuade you that He doesn’t”. Having set the tone for the piece in such a way as to disallow any voice that might disagree on any grounds, Maxwell then presents his case for his unequivocally affirmative ideology. He explains that he has come to his conclusion because he has “had so many children tell [him] that they have had their prayers answered, [that] they couldn’t all be mistaken, could they?” (p. 39). Again, the reader knows the question is rhetorical because of the unambiguous context in which it is asked. It is not a question of inquiry or uncertainty, as in ‘Could they possibly be wrong?’ but rather it is an unquestionable affirmation that Maxwell has come to the correct conclusion. However, the fallaciousness of his argument becomes evident in the light of the conspicuous and intentional omission of what is obviously the next logical question to ask in order to receive a balanced response, How many children have asked Jesus for something really definite, and have not been answered at all?

Another layer is added again to the authoritative patriarchal voice through the inclusion of a preface and lesson index at the beginning of each volume. The lesson index consists of two pages of headings such as “Cooperation”, “Grumbling, Cure for”, and “Temptation, Help in”, with ‘relevant’ stories listed under each heading. The explicit function of these prefaces is to communicate a number of facts about the texts, which Maxwell feels are important for the reader to know. These facts include such things as the intended purposes of the texts and the high level of consistency maintained in the stories. The explicit and obvious function of the lesson index is to “make the purpose [of each story] plain” (vol. 3, p. 13). From a critical perspective, the implicit function of these prefaces and indexes is to ‘prime’ the reader for the text, so that it is read in a prescribed and limiting manner. This perspective is bolstered by the fact that all but one of the prefaces direct the reader to move from the preface to the index and then to the text itself, in order to ensure that the text is read in the manner the author desires it to be read. Even the act of reading thus occurs under the direction and supervision of the author and the institution which published the texts.

In addition to the authority assumed over the meaning of the stories and the reading approaches to the texts, ‘Uncle Arthur’ is represented as similar to Christ and thereby gains the unimpeachable and incontestable authority of Jesus. Maxwell subtly places his claim to his connection with children immediately after pointing out the nature of Jesus’ relationship with children: “[Jesus] is the greatest

lover of little children...I love children very much.” The use of the key words “love” and “children” in quick succession work to bring the figure of Christ and that of ‘Uncle Arthur’ in closer relation with each other.

The use of language to position Maxwell in Jesus’ place extends beyond mere similarity and proximity. The manner in which the passage is constructed also leads to a pronounced link being made between the two figures. This can be seen where the focus of the discourse shifts from the identification of Jesus by name, to the replacement of his name with the personal pronoun “He”, then to the person of Maxwell, represented by the personal pronoun “I”. What in fact occurs through this transition is the blurring of the image of Jesus into the unnamed, and therefore to some extent unidentified “He”, and then onto the similarly somewhat vague identification of ‘Uncle Arthur’ in “I”. The effect of this language choice is to disseminate the identity of Christ from one direction and reconstruct this identity into ‘Uncle Arthur’ from the other.

This example of ‘Uncle Arthur’s’ assimilation into the image of Jesus does not stand alone in the texts. Another two examples occur in pictorial representations that similarly juxtapose the figure of Christ with the figure of ‘Uncle Arthur’. The first (Vol 1, p. 2) is where the reader is presented with a heavily constructed image of ‘Uncle Arthur’ sitting in an armchair, engaged in telling stories to three girls and two boys who sit either on his knees or attentively on the floor in front of him. In the picture, Maxwell occupies the central position of the page. His body language towards the children is intimate and affectionate, as theirs is to him. In the same volume (p. 322) is another image, which bears an uncanny resemblance to the one just mentioned, however, in this instance, the central space previously occupied by Uncle Arthur, is now filled with the image of Jesus. A second set of pictorial representations operates in the same manner as the ones previously mentioned (see Vol 4, p. 2 and 10). The messages that these visual representations contrive to inject into the text are no less powerful than the textual examples, which seek to elevate ‘Uncle Arthur’ into the position that Christ occupies.

Ideology: Truth concerns

The belief that ‘Uncle Arthur’ holds a similar status and authority as God is reinforced by the structure of the stories themselves and by the narrative voice used to communicate not only the circumstances of each story, but also the actions and motivations of the characters, and the meanings of the unfolding events. The over-simplification of each set of

“*‘Uncle Arthur’ is represented as similar to Christ and thereby gains the unimpeachable and incontestable authority of Jesus*”

circumstances allows the narrator to present a world largely sanitised of ambiguities. In this heavily constructed environment, characters act and react in a limited and predictable way and stories close with each 'good' action duly rewarded and each 'bad' behaviour justly punished. Closure then is the narrative tool 'Uncle Arthur' uses to create and maintain a "utopian" world, which he rules over with a God-like presence (Webster, 1996, p. 54). In stories such as, *The hollow pie* (vol. 1, p. 30), *Through fire and water* (vol. 1, p. 291), *Bonfire night* (vol. 2, p. 38), and *Telltale Topsy* (vol. 3, p. 301) the reader is presented with narratives that run in tight straight lines of cause and effect. In each case, the child protagonist who transgresses one of the core values 'Uncle Arthur' is trying to teach, suffers some immediate calamity as a direct result. One such example in volume four is *Paul's lesson* (vol. 4, p. 152–157). Paul is working diligently at carving a boat from a single piece of wood. When Sabbath comes, Paul is struck with the dilemma of his desire to continue working on his boat against his responsibility to "la[y] aside... ordinary work" and spend the day as "a time of rest and peace" (p. 152). When his mother leaves the house Paul takes the opportunity to sneak into the workshop and try to finish his project. He is so nervous about what he is doing, however, that he hits himself on the thumb with the hammer, then splits the boat with the chisel, before finally cutting his hand open and fainting on the floor. When he is revived by his mother, the first thing that he sees as he opens his eyes is a plaque which reads:

A Sabbath well spent
Brings a week of content
And strength for the tasks of the morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned
What'er may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow. (p. 157)

On seeing this Paul exclaims, "to think of that in front of me now!" (p. 157), thus revealing his perception that, as the poem notes, and as 'Uncle Arthur' consistently affirms throughout his texts, bad things happen to those who do wrong. In fact, it implies that God is watching for children to do wrong so that they can be swiftly and decisively punished.

At the other end of this narrative technique are those stories which highlight incidences where a child is recognised and rewarded, often in some material way for doing 'good' deeds. Again, in these stories, God appears to take an active role in the moral closure of the narrative, by intervening at some level to maintain the moral universe that Maxwell advocates. One poignant example of this is *Joe's quarter* (vol. 1, p. 43). This boy from a poor family is unable to find a quarter somebody

has given him. He goes to bed feeling "very much discouraged" and in his frustration he exclaims, "Why should I pray? I've lost my quarter, and what's the use of praying any more? If God won't show me where the quarter is, I won't pray to him" (p. 44). He is pricked by his conscience, however, and is unable to sleep, so decides that he'd "better say them after all" (p. 45). On kneeling beside his bed his knee presses on something which he discovers to be his quarter. Joe's adherence to the right belief structure pays immediate and recognisable dividends. While this event, and the myriad of others presented by Maxwell, may be based on an actual experience, the problem of Maxwell's claim to the stories being "true to life" (vol. 1, p. 12) arises out of the imbalance that is evident between those instances where things work out and those where things do not. As Berecz (1996, pp. 12–13) points out, when he speaks of the process of "selective sampling", truth and honesty about life, God and the human condition are lost when we leap "from one miraculous event to the other, as if there [are] no moments of ordinary living in between" and we fail to recognise that "*most of the time...miracles don't happen*". He adds, the "institutional bias" of 'Uncle Arthur' creates a narrative strategy that does "not include stories of failed miracles". If 'Uncle Arthur' is going to claim truth, balance and objectivity in his narratives, whilst disparaging "the usual run of children's stories" (vol. 1, p. 12) and "fairy tales" (vol. 2, p. 11), then stories which tell of such experiences are *siné qua non* to his voluminous collection.

A further problem which arises out of the creation of what appears to be a morally unambiguous universe is that almost any action is deemed appropriate and acceptable so long as it prescribes to the ideologies of the narrator, and works to realise the intention of the text. This includes behaviours that could be construed as unethical or destructive. A powerful example can be seen in *The I-know-that girl* (vol. 1, p. 105–109). In this story an eight year old girl (although the girl in the illustration is clearly much younger) is going through a phase of identity assertion and discovery, and is deemed by the narrator to be unlikable because, "She just wouldn't admit that there was anything she didn't know" (p. 105). In an effort to remedy this character flaw, her father decides to 'lose' her in Trafalgar Square in London. Of course, when the 'I-know-that girl' realises that her father is missing she becomes distraught, attracting the unwanted attention of a "big policeman" (p. 108), who tells her that he is going to take her to the police station. On embracing the child, the father tells her, "I only wanted to see if you really did know the way home, *as you said you did*, so I hid for a moment" (p. 109, authors' emphasis).

“**Characters act and react in a limited and predictable way and stories close with each 'good' action duly rewarded and each 'bad' behaviour justly punished**”

However, an unintended moral that could be taken from the story is that the father cannot be relied upon and that police officers are people to be feared rather than turned to in emergencies. Despite the potentially dangerous actions of the father, his role is not called into question. In contrast, it is all but applauded by ‘Uncle Arthur’: “When the little girl was tempted to say “I know that” she thought of the big policeman and of Trafalgar Square—and didn’t say it” (p. 109).

Friere (1971) and Leland (2000) assert that the author’s (in this case, Arthur S. Maxwell’s) self-appointed role as teacher of truth and transmitter of values makes him complicit in the maintenance of a selective presentation of the realities of spiritual and moral life. Though defenders of the institution may argue that his position was ‘neutral’, critical literacy responds by pointing out that, “Those who dwell in the sacrosanct, unquestioned centre...are thoroughly implicated in the unfolding of our cultural world—with all its inequities, injustices and scabrous edges” (Davis & Sumara, 1999, p. 28).

Conclusion

The most significant finding here has come via the critical investigation of the relationship that is constructed in the text between ‘Uncle Arthur’ and the reader. The text consistently works very hard to establish and maintain a definite and distinct power relationship with the reader through the control of knowledge and the assumption of a degree of authority that doesn’t intrinsically exist for either the author or the institution. This is done via the narrative style employed, the representations proffered, and the structures of the text itself. This relationship means that the truth claims, though contestable, are transmitted with such authoritative force that the rejection of them is difficult, especially for very young children.

Aside from the findings of the application of critical literacy to *Uncle Arthur’s bedtime stories* is the disturbing discovery of some degree of distorted perceptions as a direct result of young children’s heavy and extended engagement with the texts. While every reader’s reading cannot be laid at the author’s door, the ease with which it has occurred in this case warrants further and more stringent investigation.

Arthur Maxwell was an influential and revered figure in the world of Christian children’s publishing for fifty years. His work has influenced many thousands of people, undoubtedly for the good in many cases. However, this study points out the limited worldview presented in his stories. A worldview that contrasts with the narratives of the Bible with all their morally flawed heroes, and a worldview that does not match the experience of

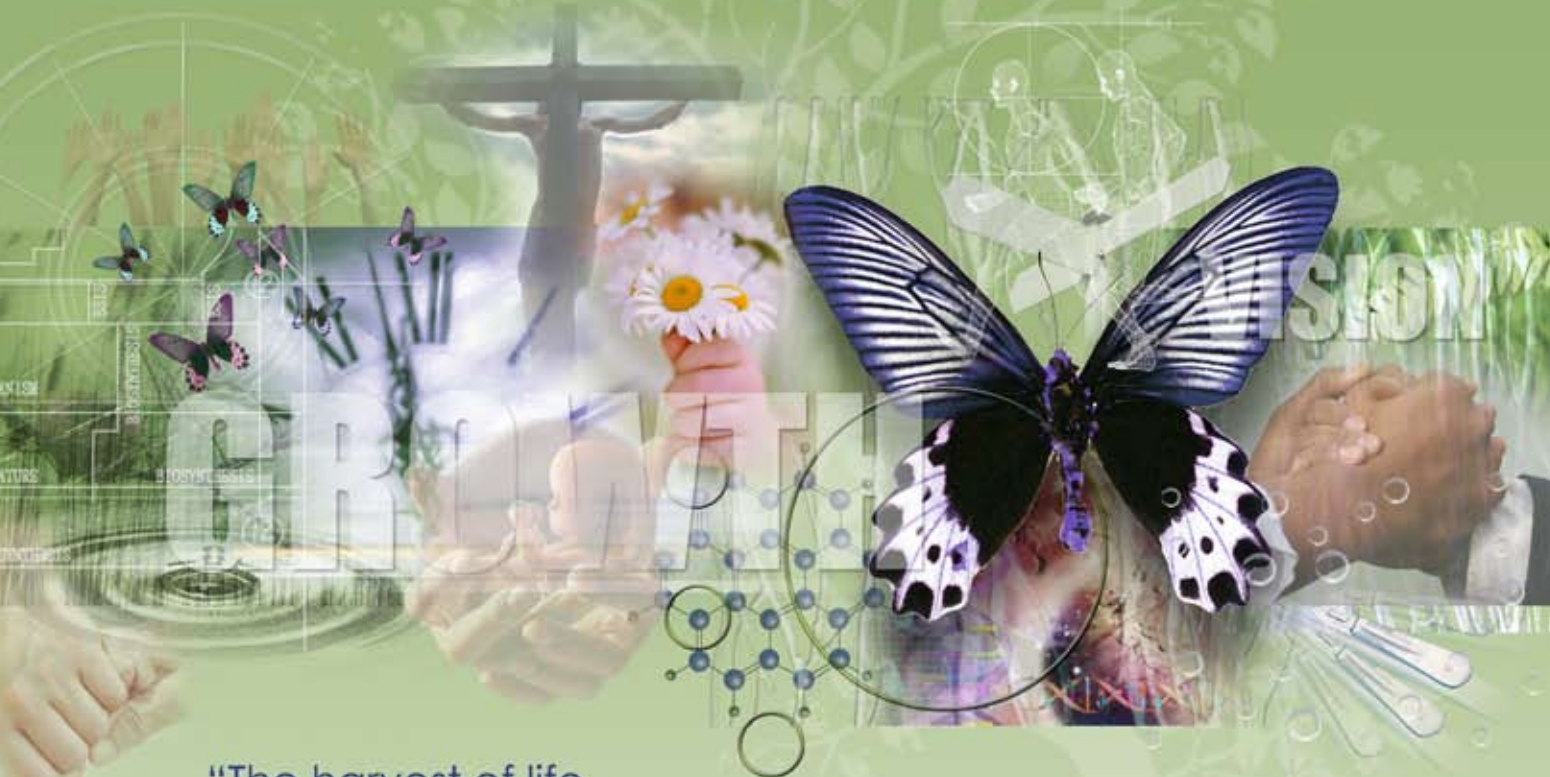
many children, who have to deal with pain, conflict, suffering and moral ambiguity on a daily basis, and whose prayers and the prayers of their parents do not resolve the problems, either in the short-term or necessarily in the long term. The potential effect, which has been realised in a number of cases, is to discredit faith, prayer and God, as it fails to deliver what has been implicitly and even explicitly promised. As one Christian writer sadly notes, “Christians are biased reporters... We leave it to pessimistic existentialists to deal with the darker side of life. In the process we fool ourselves.” Unfortunately, in the case of *Uncle Arthur’s bedtime stories*, we short-change our children of an important perspective on life, and on their future (Berecz, 1996, p. 13). Yet, this is not the model we have in the biblical account, where the actions of God’s heroes are sharply and accurately recorded, good, bad and indifferent, often with no clear moral outcome. **TEACH**

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“The truth claims, though contestable, are transmitted with such authoritative force that the rejection of them is difficult, especially for very young children

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"The harvest of life
is **character**,
and it is this
that determines destiny,
both for this life
and for the life to come."

E White, Education p 109

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In the footsteps of Jesus

How one teacher's experience impacted students' learning

Julie-Anne Truscott

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As a teacher, I have always believed that learning on site is a valuable experience, so I enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to join a study tour that took me to the Holy Land. This, I believed, would give me first hand experience that would enable me to bring my lessons alive. In addition, as a religious studies teacher, I have often encountered misconceptions about biblical places and events among my students, and decided to use this opportunity to do some 'myth-busting' of my own.

By conducting an informal survey of students from years 7–12 regarding their perceptions of archaeological issues and the Bible, I was able to confirm that there were some misconceptions. I was particularly interested in my students' perceptions of events relating to the life of Jesus Christ. Their responses revealed the following:

- there were a number of misconceptions about events in the life of Jesus;
- students were, in some cases, quite ignorant of the culture and environment of the stories we teach in Religious Studies; and
- most students were genuinely interested in the events of the Bible.

This led me to the following conclusion: In order for students to engage with the content of a Religious Studies class in a potentially life changing manner, more attention needs to be paid to facilitating an understanding of the culture, environment and people of the Bible, so as to ensure the greatest opportunity for a heart understanding of the principles of the event. For this reason, when given the chance to participate in the study tour of Bible lands, I grasped it, keen to learn how to bridge the gap between perceptions and reality that my students demonstrated. While student responses to the survey questions demonstrated a disparity in views, knowledge and understanding in each of the areas covered in the survey, the locations of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Messiah were of particular interest to me, and were included on my study itinerary.

Very few of my students actually understood what the term 'Biblical archaeology' meant when they were first confronted with it. When told that Biblical archaeology is the "science of excavation, decipherment, and critical evaluation of ancient material records related to the Bible,"¹ there was only more confusion. Consequently, I defined it as, "Digging up ancient places where it is believed that events from the Bible occurred, for the purpose of understanding the culture, people, climate, events, etc. of the past." Students expressed a variety of views as to the relevance of archaeology, with one Year 12 student stating that, "If I wanted to do a Bible study, it would be handy to know the context in which the book was written and how the surroundings and the people who it was intended for behaved, so we could interpret a meaning that is relevant to us today."²

Before leaving on my study tour, I asked my students, "What do you know about the location of the death and burial of Jesus?" About 60% of students gave accurate responses, including facts (sealed tomb in a garden outside the city walls), names (Joseph of Arimathea, Golgotha) and the most important fact of all; "He is not buried! He is in heaven!"³ The other 40% of students held misconceptions which included place (crucified on Mount of Olives, buried in Gethsemane), time (died during the time of tax payment) and fallacies about the geography and nature of the tomb.

The majority of students were vague about the details but knew some of the basic information surrounding the event. The misconceptions about the place of Jesus' death and burial held by 40% of students appeared to be generally inconsequential in the big picture. That being said, when I visited the two popular proposed sites of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, I was confronted by the idea of 'Does it even matter?' There were quite a few students who strongly felt the same when asked how important it is to them to know the actual location. One student declared, "The fact is that the event occurred, and that we are saved. If we were meant to know the exact location, we would have been told in the Bible."⁴

More attention needs to be paid to facilitating an understanding of the culture, environment and people of the Bible, so as to ensure the greatest opportunity for a heart understanding of the principles of the event

Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

What does the Bible tells us?

While the exact location of the crucifixion of Jesus is a matter of conjecture, the Bible tells us that Jesus 'suffered outside the city gates' (Jn 19:20; Heb 13:12), it was accessible to passers-by (Mt 27:39; Mk 15:21,29–30), and that it was observable from a distance (Mk 15:40). The location of Jesus' burial is also debated, with Scripture showing us that Jesus was buried by someone/s He knew who was probably wealthy, namely Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Mt 27:57–60; Mk 15:43–46; Lk 23:50–55; Jn 19:38–40), that the site was in a garden near the place of crucifixion (Jn 19:41), that He was laid in a 'new tomb', 'cut out of rock' (Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46; Lk 23:53; Jn 19:41), and a large stone was 'rolled' in front of the tomb (Mt 27:60; Mk 15:46; 16:4; Lk 24:2; Jn 20:1).

Our group's visit to the two main proposed sites of Jesus' death and burial raised as many questions as it answered, but it was still an amazing experience to 'walk where Jesus walked'. Since the 4th century, the traditional site is where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands, which is located in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. The Garden Tomb, which is located further north of the Old City, has been popularised predominantly by the Protestant arm of Christianity, since the 19th century. It is argued that both sites meet the criteria for the location of the tomb of Jesus.

What did I see?

Church of the Holy Sepulchre (CHS)

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is difficult to visualise as the possible location of the death of the Saviour of the world. It is sited in "a crowded sector of the Old City of Jerusalem"⁵, but despite this, is a site held sacred by many, and is the preferred site of biblical scholars for the tomb of Jesus. Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic and Ethiopian faith traditions each hold and maintain a portion of the structure. Within the church, pilgrims can visit the alleged location of Jesus' death, the stone where he was laid in preparation for burial, and the tomb where he was laid. Questions of authenticity mixed with general bewilderment as I moved through the clutter of candles, incense, altars and shrines of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. According to Robert Ousterhout, it is no wonder "General Charles R. Gordon proposed an alternative site for the Tomb of Jesus, the so-called Garden Tomb, located in a tranquil spot outside the wall of Jerusalem's Old City."⁶

The Garden Tomb

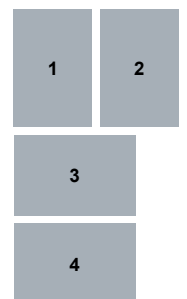
Due to scholarly dispute in the 19th century over the validity of the claim that the Church of the Holy

Sepulchre was the actual site of Jesus' death, Otto Thenius suggested an alternate site for Calvary (Golgotha) in 1842, a cliff face with the apparent eyes and mouth orifices of a skull visible for the discerning eye. It was not until 1867 that a tomb was located within what was perceived to be a garden



- 1 Crowds outside Angel Chapel, CHS
- 2 Place where Jesus' body was laid, CHS
- 3 Place of Jesus' death, CHS
- 4 Garden Tomb

[Julie-Anne Truscott collection]



Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

“I endeavour to ensure that students are provided with a more complete picture of the stories of the Bible, including any relevant archaeological information”

setting, and was labelled, ‘The Garden Tomb’ of Jesus. This site has become a popular site claimed by Protestant Christians. There is now a bus station at the base of this cliff. It is clearly outside of the city walls, and was evidently within a garden of a rich landowner, with a cliff with a skull configuration⁷. For all appearances sake, it conforms to the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ crucifixion and burial. What’s more, in the peaceful garden just north of the Damascus Gate, pilgrims pray and contemplate with more ease than the crowded Church of the Holy Sepulchre⁸. Despite these recommendations, the age of the alleged tomb of Jesus is under question, as it does not fit the ‘new tomb’ concept of the Gospel accounts.

The interesting thing is that when I visited the Garden Tomb in July 2009, the guide did not state emphatically that it was the site. In fact, Reverend William White, who is the Honorary Secretary of The Garden Tomb Association, asserts that “We [the association] should want to emphasise that our ministry in this place is more concerned with the theology of Christ’s resurrection than with the archaeology of Arimathea’s Tomb.”⁹ The mission of the Garden Tomb Association, since 1893, has been that the “Garden Tomb be kept sacred as a quiet spot, and preserved on the one hand from desecration and on the other hand from superstitious uses.”¹⁰

While I was there, I was deeply moved by the atmosphere of the setting and the lengths the caretakers had gone to ensure a deep spiritual experience for all who enter. Most poignant was participating in the service of Communion while within eyesight of the potential tomb of Jesus. The peace and solitude were overwhelming, in contrast to the mad hustle and bustle of the streets of Jerusalem just a few metres away.

It was difficult not to make comparisons between the two locations we had visited on the same day; however, my heart connected with the Garden Tomb on a deep level, while my head could see the logic of the location of the Holy Sepulchre. Jeffrey Chadwick sums up my reaction to the challenge I faced on this day.

The most remarkable thing about the tomb is that it is empty. He is arisen! We need no shrine to know of the reality of the resurrection.¹¹

Conclusion

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus was an amazing experience that has enhanced my ability to bring the Bible alive in the classroom. I would recommend that all teachers participate in a study tour relevant to their own discipline. For me, this experience has highlighted that, as a teacher, I need to take into

account the various stages of faith development of my students, their various learning styles and unique interests and personalities. It is with this in mind that I endeavour to ensure that students are provided with a more complete picture of the stories of the Bible, including any relevant archaeological information. By building a solid foundation of the culture of biblical times, students are in a better position to understand the principles of Scripture. That being said, it is more important to bring students to a heart understanding of Christ’s redemptive love for them, than it is to argue the particulars of an actual physical location of an event in time.

What of my quest to find the authentic burial site of Jesus? It was impossible to draw one solid, black and white conclusion from my visit to the ‘tombs’ of Jesus. The danger with knowing the exact location of various holy events in the Bible was articulately raised by a Year 11 student in the survey, “People may even start worshipping the ground at the place the event happened. People may start to care only about when and where and not the significant symbolism.”¹² Visiting the Holy Land was a life changing experience for me, one that will always be with me. I can now better understand Pixner’s statement, “Five gospels record the life of Jesus. Four you will find in books, and one you will find in the land they call holy. Read the fifth gospel and the world of the four will open to you.”¹³ TEACH

Endnotes

¹ Price, R. *The stones cry out*. (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1997), 25–26.

² *Do I care about biblical archaeology?* 2009. This is the survey I wrote for students to complete online.

³ It is important to note at the outset that while all students at Avondale School study the life of Jesus in detail in Years 7 and 9, there are students who are new to the school, and the current curriculum does not address the specifics of location and archaeology of the last days of Jesus.

⁴ *Do I care about biblical archaeology?* Student Survey.

⁵ Ross, J. The Evolution of a Church—Jerusalem’s Holy Sepulchre. *Biblical Archaeology Review* 2/03 (Sep 1976).

⁶ Ousterhout, R. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre (in Bologna, Italy), *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 26/06, (Nov / Dec 2000).

⁷ Sacred Destinations, ‘Garden Tomb, Jerusalem’.

⁸ Barkay, G. The Garden Tomb: Was Jesus Buried Here? *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 12/02 (Mar / Apr 1986).

⁹ White, W. Queries & Comments, Garden Tomb Article a ‘Real Shocker’, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 12/04, (Jul / Aug 1986).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Chadwick, J., & Lomon, B. Queries & Comments, Garden Tomb Article a ‘Real Shocker’, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 12/04, (Jul / Aug 1986).

¹² *Do I care about biblical archaeology?* Student Survey.

¹³ Pixner, B. ‘With Jesus Through Galilee According to the Fifth Gospel’, trans. C. Botha and D. Foster (Rosh Pina, Galilee: Corazin Publishing, 1992). In R. Price. *The stones cry out*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1997.

Ministering within the school

Karen Muirhead

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It's overwhelmingly wonderful having a grade five student's arms wrapped around your waist as they say, "I love Jesus", it's challenging when a year 11 student says, "but you don't really believe all this" and satisfying when another in the same year says, "God is awesome".

This is the core of Christian education and is of particular concern to a school chaplain.

Experiencing the shift from secondary teaching to chaplaincy has been enlightening. The boundaries and directions of the syllabus disappear and in many ways the way you fulfil or create your role is dependent initially upon the culture of your school (what they expect, what they allow). Every chaplain functions uniquely and relates in different ways to students.

The trouble with chaplaincy, and the beauty of chaplaincy, is that you don't get to fill out a register of work, or measure the value of the time you spend with a student in sick bay, or with a teacher on a walk around the oval. Each day starts with a prayer but the plan for the day and the reality of the day sometimes have very little in common.

As a former teacher, I understand the need to consider the timetable and the fact that teachers are heavily loaded. As a chaplain, I understand the need to support staff, all staff, because the giving nature of their work can leave them drained and, at times, spiritually worn.

I also realise that for some students, the school is their first opportunity to know anything of God. In this case, everyone on staff is representing Him, thus making consistency across the school a vital goal. Throughout the day, "coincidences" make me aware that God is very interested in everyone on campus. This heightens my awareness of the importance of the faith-commitment of each staff member as they are in a unique position to have an impact on students.

For seven years, I worked at a rural Christian school where the ministry of staff was integral to the existence of the school. The questions in the initial interview went a little like this, "Do you attend church", "Could your minister sign this slip to indicate you are a regular attendee?", "Do you believe in a literal six-day creation?", "What does the term 'salvation' mean to you?" A number of

similar questions continued from the principal and relevant heads of department. Later that evening, the parent board also asked questions about my Christian experience. To me, the interview process demonstrated particular care in the appointment of staff.

This school did not have a chaplain. All staff—administrators, receptionists, maintenance staff and teachers—met together each morning for worship and prayed together as they prepared to minister to the school's 600 students.

A move to Newcastle in 2008, allowed me to take on the role of school chaplain. My current school provides the amazing opportunity of weeks of spiritual emphasis, Bible studies for a large number of students, camps and retreats, and unique opportunities for worship and connection with God.

However, as student numbers increase in many Seventh-day Adventist and Christian schools, and as the numbers of students who know nothing of Christianity outweigh those that do, the chaplaincy role each staff member fulfils needs to be constantly reaffirmed. The historical role of the Seventh-day Adventist minister / teacher is being lived out on many campuses. Teachers are taking Bible studies, providing worships, befriending and caring for students.

It is wonderful to have school chaplains; the hundreds of Bible studies alone justify employment. However, chaplains alone cannot affect the lives of all students. We need to constantly acknowledge and support the minister / teacher within each class. It may be that the chaplain's role becomes skewed towards spiritual coordinator (as well as a Bible study, chapel and events organiser) as all staff are established and affirmed as the faith warriors of a school—and employed with that as part of their passion for teaching. TEACH

“We need to constantly acknowledge and support the minister / teacher within each class”

Equipping the school chaplain: A reflection

Arthur Patrick

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Wilf Rieger’s “Chaplaincy in Christian Schools” (TEACH vol 3, no. 2, 2009) rivets the attention of parents, students, educators and supporters on the potential for enhanced pastoral care within the educational process. It also offers a plethora of starting points for the extended discussion that is required amongst educational stakeholders if the “identifiable types of needs encountered in schools” are to be met. Stimulated by the proposals outlined, this short reflection focuses on one facet of a pervasive issue: the equipping of school chaplains.¹

The chaplain, according to the proposed generic school chaplaincy policy, “plans, organises, and implements a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities, events and projects, to achieve the pastoral care goals of the school”. A demanding set of personal qualifications are enjoined, plus “a recognised tertiary qualification in theology, counselling or education (or a combination of these) from an accredited tertiary institution,” as well as “relevant practical experience” (p. 28).

A proposal

This proposal is for at least some school chaplains to be trained in an interdisciplinary setting by undertaking Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) as an elective during their first degree or as part of a continuing education process during their employment. While at first glance this may seem like a call to bridge a significant chasm, there are cogent reasons why the school chaplain will benefit from such an experience. CPE brings participants into

supervised encounter with living human documents in order to develop their pastoral identity, interpersonal competence, and spirituality; the skills of pastoral assessment, interprofessional collaboration, group leadership, pastoral care and counselling; and pastoral theological reflection.²

Such a short definition of CPE needs to be clarified by a broad understanding of its goals and methods. CPE aims to develop a clear and growing sense of pastoral identity, enhance professional competence, integrate theology and the practice

of ministry, foster spirituality and build ethical awareness. These and related goals are pursued by “a graded, competency-based curriculum” that builds a sense of responsibility and emphasises constructive reflection through verbatims and case conferences, assisted by contemporary technologies. Seminars and personal growth groups extend the impact of these methods, but at the core of the process is the unique role of specially-trained supervisors.³

From scripture and theology to experience

One of the great affirmations of Scripture is that deity understands humanity. God, according to an Old Testament poet, is a father who has compassion on his children, knowing how we are formed (Psalm 103:13–14, NIV). The New Testament exults: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling amongst us” (John 1:14). According to Brian Hebblethwaite:

The significance of the doctrine of the Incarnation in Christian theism is very great. The gap between God and man is here held to have been crossed from the side of God, who by making himself known within the human world in a life of dedicated self-sacrificial love overcomes the vagueness characteristic of religious awareness generally and makes possible a much more personal and intimate saving knowledge and experience of God for the believer.⁴

If the Incarnation, as in Hebblethwaite’s argument, presents a “morally credible God”, the active listening that is at the core of process-based CPE assures the client of a morally credible chaplain. Thus, a trustful relationship is developed and enhanced, the innate capacities of the person experiencing pastoral care are respected, and the individual becomes an active participant in the process of growth or healing.

A personal history

A fragment of history may be needed to explain the development of CPE and my particular engagement with it. I arrived at Christian Theological Seminary (CTS), Indianapolis, United States of America, in 1972, with two freshly minted graduate degrees, an MA in Systematic Theology and a Master of

“The active listening that is at the core of process-based CPE assures the client of a morally credible chaplain”

Divinity, plus an abiding confidence in counsellor-centred pastoral therapy. Rather like some famous counsellors of the era, I regarded the ideal counsellor as an expert able to convey to the receiver of pastoral care the life-changing data capable of facilitating whatever development or change may be required. It was with this attitude that I attended the pastoral counselling lectures of Dr Lowell Colston, a specialist who trained in Chicago under Carl Rogers.

Under the impact of Colston's analysis of human capacities and how best to unlock them, beginning with depth-knowledge of the client derived from their own words, my approach began to change. More than that, as a Doctor of Ministry candidate, the seminary channelled me into a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education offered in a Methodist Hospital. Such training began with the candidate wearing the white coat of an orderly, mostly wheeling patients to their various appointments, meanwhile writing verbatim accounts of conversations and sharing these with a small group of peers under skilled supervision. Then came the main phase of the training when the student presents as a chaplain, writes verbatims of interviews and discovers in small-group interaction with peers and supervisor just what patients are saying and the nature of the chaplain's communications.

When our family sailed to the US in 1967, I was completely unaware of CPE; by the time I flew back to teach ministerial students in 1973, it had already leapt the Pacific Ocean. For the next eighteen years, there was opportunity to cherish the ideas and experiment with them in an educational setting. Then, appointed to lead a team of chaplains in a large hospital, at last I was in daily association with a group of people who had undertaken CPE and were ministering effectively to people in crisis. During the next five years, I visited perhaps fifteen thousand patients. I recall the most challenging interactions as occurring when nursing staff anticipated a death might occur. During the most demanding week of my hospital chaplaincy, I was called to attend ten deaths and, of course, a number of these events were followed by requests to conduct funeral services. Interactions with dying patients in their last hours were often minimal due to such factors as the need for pain control; the communications with staff and families at such times were often exceedingly rich in quality, especially when we were together for extended periods (often during the night-time hours) as the life of a loved-one ebbed away.

It was during those five years of chaplaincy that I engaged with the New South Wales Council for Clinical Pastoral Education and realised how effectively the training I had received in the United States was now established in Australia.

CPE training

Robert Leas pictures the recent world status of CPE.

CPE is international today, with clergy and graduate students in theology coming from a number of countries throughout the world along with the certification of international clergy. CPE has grown in 80 years to include over 3,300 members that make up the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, with some 350 ACPE Accredited CPE Centres, and about 600 ACPE certified faculty members (called CPE Supervisors). There are about 118 Theological Schools as members, and 21 Faith Groups and Agencies who are partners with ACPE. The model of education that CPE represents is a vital part of theological education today.⁵

As may be expected, the history of CPE in Australia is also readily available on the Internet, together with lists of the many locations where training is currently available. This process-based education thrives in a wide variety of settings—it has potential for any place where people need pastoral care. Trained counsellors are aware that there are multiple approaches to the task of people-helping. To ponder Rieger's insightful document, in the light of my experience in education and chaplaincy since 1973, leads me to the conviction that it is high time that more school chaplains were exposed to the CPE that is likely to enrich every aspect of their service to students and staff.

It would be sad indeed if those who implement the pastoral care that Rieger so well describes failed to consider what Clinical Pastoral Education may offer those chaplains who deliver programs that build "a community of hospitality" where children and youth identify with a larger group, and a "hospitable life where there is empathetic listening and genuine concern".⁶ TEACH

“It has potential for any place where people need pastoral care”

Endnotes

¹ The options for effective training in Australia are rapidly developing; see, for instance, <http://chaplaincyaustralia.com/content/view/77/113/>

² E. E. Thornton, "Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)", Rodney J. Hunter, general editor, *Dictionary of pastoral care and counseling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 177–182.

³ Observe Thornton's expression of these goals and methods and reinforce the ideas from recent, ongoing sources such as *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* and *Reflective practice: Formation and supervision in ministry*.

⁴ "Incarnation", Alan Richardson and John Bowden, editors, *A new dictionary of Christian theology* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 289–291.

⁵ The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. *A brief history of ACPE*. Accessed from <http://www.acpe.edu/cpehistory.htm>.

⁶ I thank Cheryl Bird, a CPE supervisor, for her comment made on a draft of this reflection that includes the quoted words. Bird also fittingly emphasises the crucial role of the "morally credible God / chaplain" for children / youth with a trauma background; e-mail, Bird to Patrick, 25 February 2010.

Visible learning

A book review

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Introduction

This book by John Hattie has been 15 years in the making and has pulled together information from “over 50,000 studies” involving “many millions of students” (Preface, p. ix). While you would expect that conclusions based upon so much data should be warmly welcomed, this book has created some controversy in the education world. Hattie did not deliberately set out to do this. His book is not a ‘how to’ exercise. It has simply reviewed the literature noting those factors that promote student learning and those factors that have little or no effect on student learning. Those most disturbed by the book have been the proponents of teaching methods found to be ineffective. These issues will be addressed later in this review.

The book examines a comprehensive list of factors that potentially could influence student learning. These have been grouped into the following categories: student characteristics, home characteristics, school environments, teacher characteristics, factors related to the curricula, and specific teaching approaches.

The base data reviewed by Hattie have not come directly from individual studies, rather they have been drawn from over 800 meta-analyses. A meta-analysis is a procedure that combines the results of a number of individual, statistically-based studies into a single set of results that represent them all. All of the component studies included in a meta-analysis must be conceptually alike in that they all focus upon the effect that the same interventions or treatments have upon a particular response measure (in this case, student learning).

Background information

In using the meta-analysis technique, Hattie employed Cohen’s *d* statistic to compare the size of the effect that different interventions had

upon students’ learning. An effective intervention (treatment) implemented with an experimental group will mean that the ‘after-intervention’ distribution of scores measuring learning will be separate from, and greater than, the corresponding ‘before-intervention’ distribution of scores. The more effective the intervention, the greater this separation. Usually the change in ‘before’ and ‘after’ distributions in learning scores for the experimental group is compared with the corresponding change in scores of the control group. Now, Cohen’s *d* statistic asks the question, “So, the change in mean scores is not chance, but does it really mean anything?”

The *d* statistic is defined as the ratio of the difference in the mean values of the ‘before’ and ‘after’ distributions to the pooled standard deviation (Howell, 2007). In other words, as the before and after distributions separate from each other, the difference between the mean scores become greater and hence the value of the *d* statistic rises.

As the two distributions separate and the *d* statistic rises, the percentage of non-overlap of distributions also rises. *Table 1* indicates that as the *d* statistic increases, the corresponding correlation coefficient (*r*) also strengthens. This indicates that as the ‘before’ and ‘after’ distributions get further apart, the rank order of the students, according to their scores in both distributions, become more alike. Hattie chose the value of 0.40 as the lower limit of a significant effect size. This value indicates a change in the response measure (student learning) that, while being small, is both clearly discernable and, given a sufficiently large number of participating students, unlikely to be a chance result. As the *d* statistic rises above the 0.40 limit, the size of the effect of the intervention strengthens.

Factors affecting student learning

While this description of Cohen’s *d* statistic is technical, it is important background knowledge because Hattie uses it to compare the various effects on learning that differing educational factors have. The following discussion highlights the results for all those factors for which the *d* statistic exceeds the 0.40 limit set by Hattie.

“This book has created some controversy in the education world”

Table 1: Cohen's statistic matched to the percentage of non-overlap of scores and correlation between 'before' and 'after' scores for the response measures*

Cohen's <i>d</i> statistic	% non-overlap of scores	Correlation coefficient (<i>r</i>)	Meaning
0.40	27	0.20	Weak but not likely to be a chance result provided <i>n</i> is large
0.50	33	0.24	Weak to moderate not a chance result
0.60	38	0.29	Moderate and definitely not a chance result
0.70	43	0.33	Moderate to strong
0.80	47	0.37	Strong
0.90	52	0.40	Strong to very strong
1.00	55	0.48	Very strong
1.50	71	0.60	
2.00	81	0.71	

* Table includes a synthesis of information from Hattie (2009) and Coe (2002).

Learners' personal characteristics

Collectively, the strongest factors influencing learning are those pertaining to the students' own characteristics. Here, the first two factors speak to student-readiness in that students need to be developmentally prepared for learning ($d = 1.28$) and they need to have a sufficient combination of background knowledge and skills in order to successfully approach a new learning task ($d = 0.67$). The next four factors indicate that successful learning occurs among those students who combine a healthy mix of self-knowledge ($d = 1.44$), self-concept ($d = 0.43$), personal motivation ($d = 0.48$) and willingness to concentrate and persist ($d = 0.48$). Two characteristics that have little effect upon learning are personality ($d = 0.19$) and gender ($d = 0.12$).

The final three characteristics relate to early development. Low pre-term birth weight is related to developmental stressors before birth ($d = 0.54$). Factors such as maternal illness, malnutrition and substance use (including alcohol and tobacco) all impact upon prenatal development and continue to delay cognitive development into the later years of life. However, appropriate and non-stressful early intervention programs ($d = 0.47$) and quality preschool programs ($d = 0.45$) do have positive effects on learning that flow on into the later years.

Students' homes

Hattie's book reaffirms a long held understanding that successful students tend to come from homes of higher socio-economic status ($d = 0.57$), homes that support and value education ($d = 0.57$), and homes in which parental involvement in education is significant ($d = 0.51$).

Essentially, these factors have to do with the

nature of the home-learning environment. For example, the kinds of learning resources in the home, parental support for schooling and that unstated but pervasive expectation that students will make an effort in their schooling.

Family structure does not have a significant effect upon learning ($d = 0.17$). This includes sibling order or marital status of the family. This does not mean that children are unaffected by the trauma of family breakup, but does mean that once the family situation settles, the learning of children from single-parent homes is largely indistinguishable from that of other children. Finally, the presence or absence of television is unrelated to student learning ($d = -0.18$).

School and classroom organisation

In general, as schools get larger, it becomes economically easier to acquire resources that promote learning. The critical size for schools appears to be about 800 students. When this number is exceeded, student learning does appear to begin to decline. In general, students learn more efficiently when working in small groups ($d = 0.49$) and when involved in micro-teaching ($d = 0.88$). Finally, gifted and talented students appear to learn best when judiciously accelerated ($d = 0.88$).

Those factors that do not appear to have a major influence upon student learning include: grouping students according to ability (often called streaming; $d = 0.30$); the general size of classes ($d = 0.21$) and multi-grade classrooms ($d = 0.04$).

Teacher characteristics

Teachers make a major contribution to student learning. Those teachers who are more effective in promoting learning:

“Collectively, the strongest factors influencing learning are those pertaining to the students' own characteristics”

Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

- manage their classroom in an effective manner (d=0.52),
- exhibit characteristics that engender classroom cohesion (d=0.53),
- create and use positive peer influence (d=0.53),
- employ the strategies of quality teaching (d=0.44),
- develop appropriate and pleasant relationships with their students (d=0.72),
- expect their students to learn (d=0.43),
- avoid labelling students (d=0.61),
- demonstrate teacher clarity (d=0.75),
- are able to sequence questions appropriately (d=0.46),
- continue to undergo professional development (d=0.62).

These characteristics are not unexpected.

Curricular contributions

The first and major grouping of curricular factors that influence learning are connected to the development of reading skills. These involve strategies related to:

- improving visual perception (d=0.55),
- improving vocabulary (d=0.67),
- phonics instruction (d=0.60),
- repeated reading (d=0.67),
- teaching for comprehension (d=0.58),
- using reciprocal teaching (d=0.74).

Reading strategies that were not found to be useful in improving reading skills included whole language (d=0.06).

Teaching strategies aimed at reducing cognitive load were found to improve mathematical skills (d=0.45). Cognitive load is reduced when an individual ceases to see elements of a problem as discrete units, but rather sees them as related components within the problem setting (Sweller, 1999). This has to do with pattern recognition and the ability to restructure a problem state into a form that is consistent with a theory driven solution path.

Other unrelated activities that successfully promote learning include teaching social skills (d=0.40) and outdoor and adventure programs (d=0.52).

For young children, tactile stimulus programs promote learning (d=0.58) as do play programs (d=0.50).

Teaching approaches

Contributions to student learning that flow from teaching activities involve aspects of planning, instructional approaches, teaching for self-learning, providing specific resources and feedback and finally, ensuring that practice is spaced.

Aspects related to teacher-planning include:

- setting goals with students (d=0.56),
- matching instruction to learning styles (d=0.41),

- employing methods of formative evaluation (d=0.90).

The second point relates to the deliberate rotation of modes of instruction so that over a period of time most students will have an opportunity to learn in their favoured style. Formative evaluation requires the teacher to collect information about the current levels of student interest, understanding and skills and rearranging the learning unit to suit this immediate situation.

Instructional approaches that promote learning included the use of strategies involving:

- direct instruction (d=0.59),
- advance organisers (d=0.41),
- concept mapping (d=0.57),
- mastery learning (d=0.58),
- a variety of cooperative learning approaches (d=0.41–0.59),
- teaching for problem solving (d=0.61),
- interactive technology (d=0.52).

Hattie's findings also indicate that students can be taught the skills for self-learning. Those aspects of teaching that relate to skilling students for self-learning include:

- the use of peer tutoring strategies (d=0.51),
- teaching metacognitive strategies (d=0.69),
- teaching study skills (d=0.59),
- teaching students to use strategies of self verbalisation and self questioning (d=0.64).

Finally, the provision of worked examples (d=0.57), adequate feedback (d=0.73) and the use of spaced versus massed practice (d=0.71) was also found to be associated with student learning.

Elements of Controversy

Constructivism is a movement that has grown out of an understanding that students create their own meaning for new information or skills from the interaction between their prior knowledge and memory of past experience and the new experience or information (Driver, 1983). This meaning-making process is covert and teachers have no direct access to it—they can only influence it. Conceptual change can be provoked by providing students with a judicious mix of experiences that challenge their current understandings and new information (Chinn & Malhotra, 2002). However, conceptual change takes place in the cognitive arena of the students' minds and the degree and nature of change can only be inferred by changes in their output.

Some constructivists carry this view of the nature of conceptual learning forward to argue that since students construct their own understanding, classroom activities, particularly in science and mathematics, should almost exclusively employ inquiry techniques (Bauersfeld, 1995). Those of this persuasion have been aroused by some of Hattie's findings and conclusions.

“*Constructivists have been aroused by some of Hattie's findings and conclusions*”

Table 2: A comparison of Cohen's statistic relating teaching strategies to student learning

Teacher as activator	<i>d</i>	Teacher as facilitator	<i>d</i>
Reciprocal teaching	0.74	Simulations and gaming	0.32
Feedback	0.72	Inquiry-based teaching	0.31
Self-verbalisation strategies	0.67	Problem-based learning	0.15
Metacognitive strategies	0.67	Inductive learning	0.06
Direct instruction	0.59	Smaller class sizes	0.21
Mastery learning	0.57	Individualised instruction	0.20
Goals—challenges	0.56	Different teaching for boys and girls	0.12
Frequent effective assessing	0.46	Web-based learning	0.09
Behavioural organisers	0.41	Whole-language—reading	0.06
Average activator	0.60	Average facilitator	0.17

Table 2 compares approaches favouring direct instruction with those that involve student-centred inquiry procedures. Hattie presents the view that the strategies employed by the 'Teacher as activator' are more successful than the strategies employed by the 'Teacher as facilitator'. Those supporting a tight constructivist approach are quick to point out that he has not included the qualitative studies that indicate that students enjoy and benefit from investigative approaches. While the quantitative studies involve forms of testing student knowledge, the qualitative studies involve observation of student activity and exploration of the change in the nature of their ideas through interviews (Hackling & Prain, 2008).

It would be a travesty if teachers responded uncritically to Hattie's information and retreated from the excitement of discovery procedures into the 'chalk and talk' methods of yester-year. There is much to be gained by running judiciously planned and carefully structured inquiry lessons. Particularly if skilling students for self-learning is, as Hattie suggests, so successful. In addition, there are important outcomes that are achievable through student inquiries. Even so, the literatures on expertise and problem solving suggest that successful student-inquiry and successful problem solving approaches mainly occur among mature students who have acquired a critical mass of systematic knowledge and understanding in their field (Feltovich, Prietula & Ericsson, 2006; Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006). School students, and particularly primary students, lack this systematic knowledge. Further, it is difficult to create a systematic knowledge among immature students through the sole use of inquiry methods that involve minimal structure. What is needed is a mix of delivery processes that include guided, hedged and

scaffolded inquiry procedures and the development of a systematic knowledge through the use of direct instruction and worked examples.

Conclusion

The mark of an important book is not necessarily that it gains universal acceptance. Often good books spark vigorous debates. They set people thinking. Based on this, Hattie's book is important. TEACH

“Often good books spark vigorous debates”

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BOOK REVIEW

Inside I'm hurting: Practical strategies for supporting children with attachment difficulties in schools

Louise Bomber. (2007). United Kingdom: Worth Publishing.

Karen Price

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One size fits all is often the catch cry you hear in schools. *The students won't think it's fair if I treat one student in my class differently*, is the other common fallacy in education today. As both a teacher

and therapist, Louise Bomber writes for busy teachers who want to make a difference in their students' lives and make inclusion a reality for their students with attachment difficulties.

Each chapter gives practical strategies in bullet point lists for easy reference and useful chapter summaries. The book is loaded with examples, which are indicated in italics to make it easy to locate what you need as a teacher.

Inside I'm hurting re-affirms teachers of the good teaching practises they are already engaged in, and strengthens these strategies for the best possible outcomes for children who are hurting on the inside. She answers the hard questions like, *How do I treat one student differently to the rest?* and *Why won't my program work for everyone, all the time?* Bomber explains how to support the hurting child in both recovery and

learning adaptive responses to trauma. The author emphasises that small steps are taken but are intentionally planned for by collaborative, supportive teams.

Bomber quotes Bowlby (1951, p. 114) as saying, "Children are not slates from which the past can be rubbed by a duster or sponge, but human beings who carry their previous experiences with them and whose behaviour in the present is profoundly affected by what has gone before." Children are not unlike you and I. Our personalities and experiences are all different. We expect to be treated according to our talents and fears, and children are no different. They deserve for themselves, what we expect for ourselves! **TEACH**

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A tribute to Eric Alfred Magnusson (1933–2009)

Lynden Rogers

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It was Principal, W G C Murdoch, who in 1950 encouraged the young Eric Magnusson to study at the Australasian Missionary College, now Avondale, and arranged for him to take the external BSc degree from London University. This was at a time when it was otherwise impossible in Australia to obtain a recognised degree outside a university.

Eric took his BSc in June 1953. Within a few years he was back at Avondale with two PhDs, providing pivotal leadership in the new Science Department from 1961–1970, after which he became Principal.

Both as scientist and principal, Eric pursued a long-held dream—the academic advancement of Avondale. The initial challenges he faced included recruiting staff

and upgrading their academic qualifications. When access to London science degrees closed, Eric used his strategic connections to set Avondale on its first tentative steps toward the official recognition of its courses. The large range of fully accredited degrees which Avondale offers today's students has grown out of his vision.

After 10 years as Avondale College Principal, Eric returned to full-time science, firstly at the ANU Research School of Chemistry and later at the Defence Force Academy, where he retired as Associate Professor, and with which he was still associated as a Visiting Fellow at the time of his death.

Over this period of time Eric took a keen interest in the comprehension of forensic science by criminal court jurors, not only publishing in this area but supervising research students. He also participated strongly in the children's drug education magazine, *One Jump Ahead*, published over 12 years by his wife Nainie, for which she was awarded a medal of the Order of Australia. It was for such contributions to society that he was honoured in the

Peoplescape display on the lawns of Parliament House.

Over four decades Eric also tried to help his Christian community face difficult issues relating to faith and science, an area in which he held a keen interest.

In what can only euphemistically be called retirement, Eric maintained research in theoretical chemistry in addition to his forensic work, as well as working as an industrial consultant. He also continued to serve Avondale College: as chairman of various Accreditation Committees, stand-in Academic Vice-President and as visiting science lecturer. Students quickly became aware of Eric's vast conceptual grasp of quantum physics and chemistry.

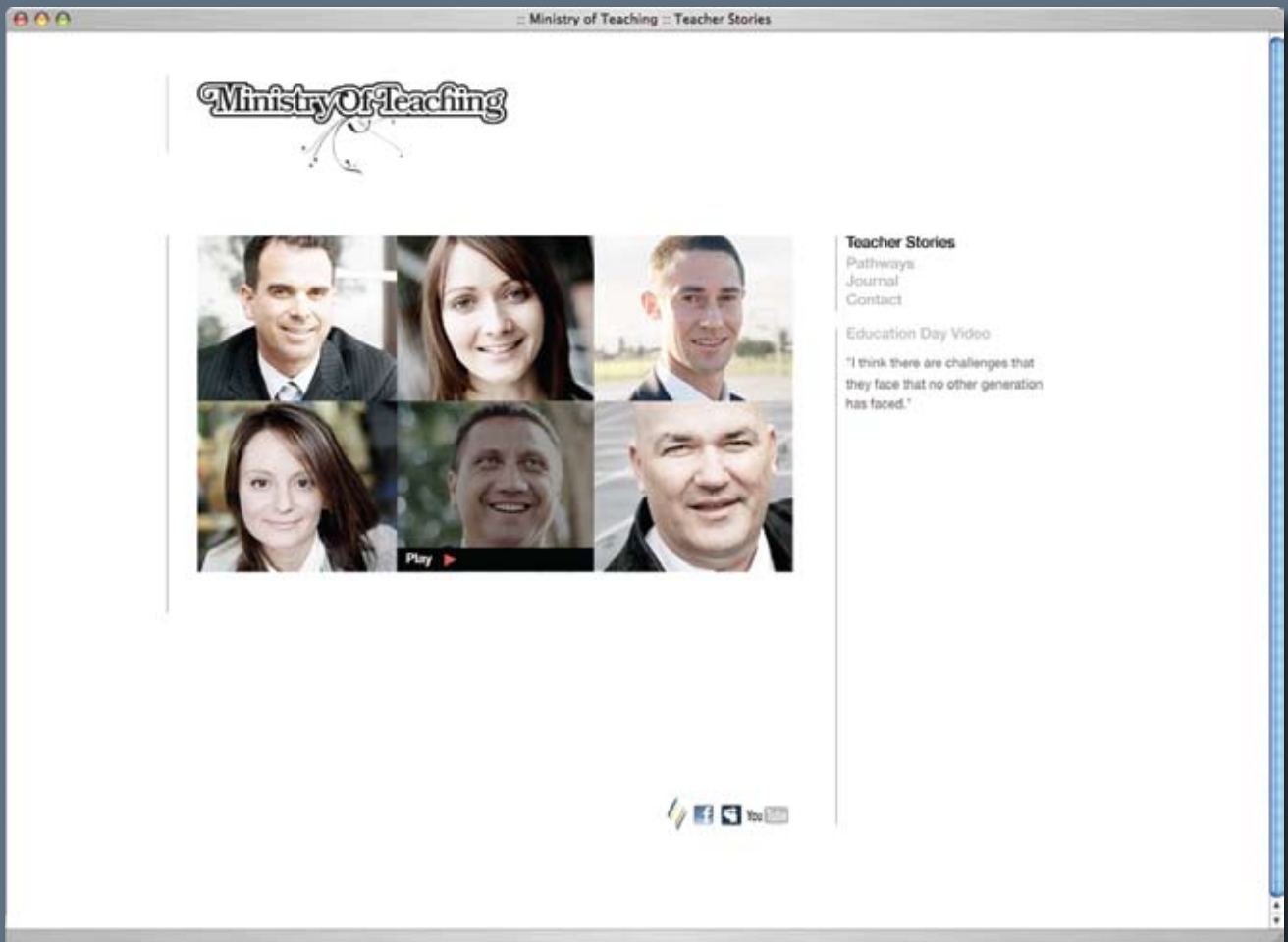
He was physically active, completing a number of Sydney City to Surf races. He also insisted on taking up new challenges, such walking through Cradle Mountain in winter in his mid 70s!

One of Eric's most endearing legacies was his ability to mix comfortably with all ages. His friends ranged from College contemporaries right down to current students, truly a rare achievement. **TEACH**

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