

Spectrum

The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

God, Caesar, And Science

UNCLE ARTHUR'S GOD
OR PROBABILITY?

ADVENTISTS AND BIOLOGICAL WARFARE

THE MANY FACES OF ADVENTIST
CREATIONISM, 1980-1995

THE BABY AND THE TINTORETTO

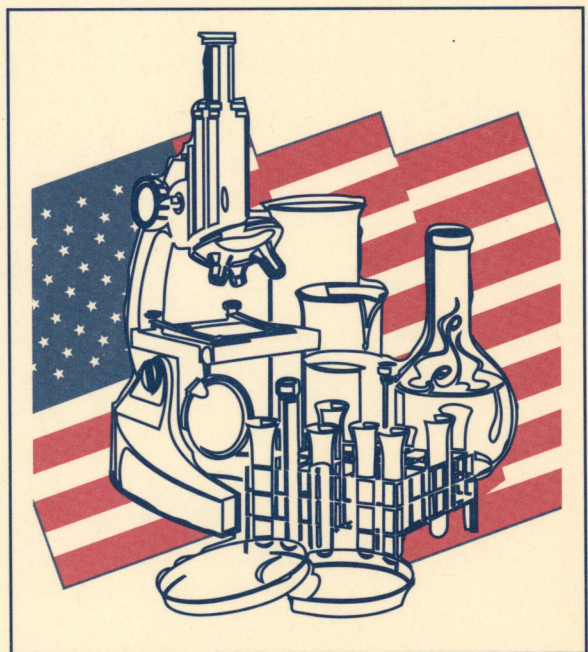
REVIEWS

The Welcome Table

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READERS' RESPONSES

Joe Mesar, Richard Rice,
C. Thorben Thomsen, and others



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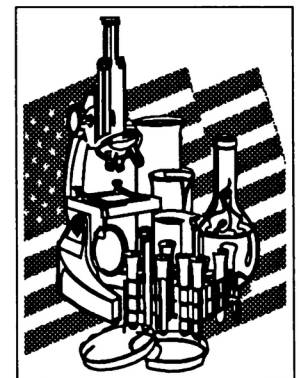
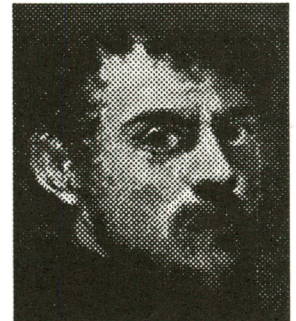
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God, Caesar, and Science

I went in [to Project Whitecoat] really thinking that I was going to be helping God and country, that I was going to be a human subject in a voluntary medical, experimental project that was going to yield information to the United States that would help defend us in the event that some mad person started a biological war with us. So I said, 'yes, this is something I as a Christian can support, because this is healing.'

—Arthur R. Torres, senior pastor, Sligo church

Church, government, science—three powerful institutions that compete to govern not only our bodies, but our imagination and trust. Contemporary Seventh-day Adventists are committed to all three. One of the dramas of Adventism, examined in our special section, is how members manage simultaneously to demonstrate loyalty to this powerful trinity.

Adventists show loyalty to their church in very concrete ways. Not only do Adventists construct their own hospitals, they send their children to Adventist schools. Beyond their offerings, Adventists pay a tithe of their income to the world church. When Adventists choose a spouse it is usually another church member, and when they select a profession many members continue to choose one valued by the church. Adventists are never more characteristically loyal to Adventism than when they pursue education. One result is Adventists who feel in the marrow of their beings the complexity of relating the commitments Adventism has fostered within them to God, Caesar, and science.

Adventists assume allegiance to government. Adventism has believed that the New Testament, particularly the Epistle to the Romans (chapter 13), advises respect for government. The laws of government, at least in principle, can express a moral order

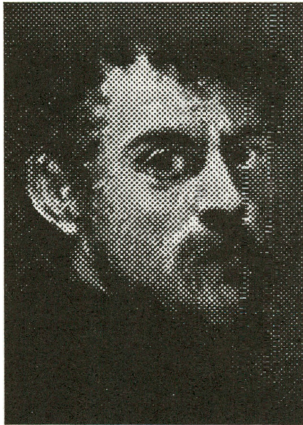
in human affairs that in some times and places—however dimly, however waveringly—reflects God's order. Adventists have sometimes naively endorsed specific regimes as godly. Other times, Adventists have courageously condemned rulers as demonic. What Adventists have never done is regard government as irrelevant to the moral life or to the history of salvation. Government matters so much it should be obeyed, or, if need be, fought to the death.

Adventists also accept the validity of science. Adventism's historic commitment to health has led us to accept not only medical science, but the assumption that our bodies and the universe operate according to reliable, recurring patterns. Adventists, along with scientists, believe that human reason knows what those recurring patterns are. Not only that, Adventists demand that those who wish to call themselves Adventists must live in accordance with those patterns of healthful living that our reason and science tell us are true.

In this issue, John Berez explores just what kind of a God Adventists encounter as they relate their varied commitments to one another. James Hayward narrates how, over the past 15 years, Adventists have increasingly found diverse ways to relate revelation of God in scripture and revelation of God in nature. In her case study of Project Whitecoat, Krista Thompson Smith sharpens the complications and ambiguities within an Adventism that recurrently brings church, government, and science into dramatic convergence.

One senses that all three authors believe that the glimpses of divinity encountered within churches, governments, and scientific institutions, point to a greater reality—the holy, powerful, and true God sustaining and transcending all institutions.

—Roy Branson



The Baby and The Tintoretto

In defense of immersing students in great art and literature:
The Good *is* beautiful.

by Nancy Hoyt Lecourt

“To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.”—Adorno

“The ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ is worth any number of old ladies.”—Faulkner

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE GOOD AND THE Beautiful finds passionate expression in the 20th century. An Adorno may argue that even to consider the aesthetic as a category is immoral in so corrupt a culture as our own. To spend time and energy creating or contemplating the beautiful is to be complicit in human suffering. Yet writers like Faulkner are adamant that beauty must have its own territory, separate but equal. “If a writer has to rob his mother, he will not hesitate . . .” (quoted in Booth, p. 131).

This aesthetic high ground, first glimpsed by Kant and staked out by the “Art for Art’s

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Sake” movement, that sunny knoll where the New Critics pitched their tents,¹ is a disinterested space where the flood water of ethical dilemmas cannot reach. In a 1987 *Harper’s* essay entitled “Goodness Knows Nothing of Beauty,” William Gass makes clear where he keeps his sleeping bag. He begins by posing the hypothetical dilemma often used to illustrate this conflict: The water is rising in Venice. A baby in a basket is being washed out to sea—and so is a Tintoretto. Which to save? As the title of his essay implies, Gass doesn’t really hesitate: “No one is so essential he or she cannot be replaced a thousand times over . . .” (p. 39). Sorry, baby . . .

But the waters of morality—now known as Political Correctness—have risen far higher than the New Critics ever could have imagined. Marxism, Feminism, Post-colonialism: these proclaim that art *does* matter, it *does* matter what you say, about class, about women, about “people of color.” Your language, your hidden assumptions, your basic attitudes toward the “Other”—these will inevitably affect your behavior. What people read changes

how they act. "A book," (agrees Sartre) "is a good or bad action" (quoted in Booth, p. 24).

And so the battle of the Good and the Beautiful rages on. Teachers of literature at Adventist colleges may sometimes feel as though the fight is being fought in their very offices. Several times a year, they hear the following: "Why do we have to wade through all this trash in order to get one good idea?" (Translation: Why care about the formal qualities of the work [the Beautiful] when the author could simply hand us the meaning [the Good] in a nutshell?)

"I refuse to read fiction." (Translation: Beautiful lies are Bad, not Good.)²

"Why should I waste my time with entertaining stories when Jesus is coming soon and the world needs to be warned?" (Translation: To read poetry prior to the Apocalypse is sinful, if not barbaric.)

"These stories are dangerous. I'm afraid that if I read them I won't enjoy the Bible or Ellen White. In fact, I'm not sure this book has a place in this classroom." (Translation: Plato was right: poetry does dishonor the gods and should not be used to educate the young.)

Censorship. Plato started it, and literary criticism ever since has been licking its wounds. And it is censorship more than anything else, of course, that gives moral criticism its bad name. Gass is positively hysterical:³

It is the moralists who want to bully and beat up on the artist, not the other way around. . . . Authors do not gather to burn good deeds in public squares. . . . On the other hand . . . We know what the other hand is full of; slings and

arrows, slanders and censorship, prison, scaffolds, burnings and beatings. . . . Throughout history, goodness has done more harm than good (p. 38).

What a relief it was when Kant taught us to contemplate beauty disinterestedly! But *some people* just don't get it. *Some people*⁴ go on feeling that literary texts have power to change people's lives—and that is what makes them potentially dangerous.

As Adventist Christian readers we believe in that power. We know that books—beginning with the Bible—have changed our lives and continue to do so. We want to choose wisely the books we will read and recommend to others. How can we find a balance between the Good and the Beautiful that allows us both to enjoy aesthetic contemplation and to accept ethical consequences? How can we find a way to read literature that acknowledges the suffering in

the world, yet embraces its beauty? Three recent books attempt, all more or less successfully in my opinion, to answer just these questions.

Writing as a Tool for Action

The first of these books, *Literature Through the Eyes of Faith*, is designed to be used as a companion to an Introduction to Literature class at a Christian college, and I suspect it would be quite effective. As I read it I couldn't help wishing I had known about it sooner; certain chapters (especially chapter 10, "Was This Author a Christian?") would have been

Books Discussed by Nancy Hoyt Lecourt

Literature Through the Eyes of Faith, by Susan V. Gallagher and Roger Lundin (Harper and Row, 1989).

Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature, by Martha C. Nussbaum (Oxford University Press, 1990).

The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction, by Wayne C. Booth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

very useful in dealing with some of my more literal-minded students. In fact, the book not only discusses the “main point” (Why should Christians read literature?), but also explains where the canon came from (and why we should have reservations about it), what the essential difference is between tragedy and comedy (and how they relate to Christian views of history), and why there are so many different interpretations of the Bible (!).

Gallagher and Lundin’s thesis is highly utilitarian: “Literary texts are not merely imaginative creations, but also instruments composed of language that we use to perform certain activities, such as thinking about social issues, moral questions, or personal feelings. A piece of writing is a tool for action” (p. xxv). However, they do make room for aesthetic experience; they see “aesthetic ends” as one of the many purposes that literature fulfills (p. xxvi). And they are careful to point out that “our delight in God’s gifts should include . . . our delight in the literary activities of our fellow human beings. . . . We have no right to conclude that literature that primarily instructs us is somehow better in God’s eyes than literature that primarily delights us” (p. 48).

The authors deserve kudos on many points. Rather than emphasizing what *not* to read, they have tried at all times to throw a wide net, to include rather than exclude: “Within our personal reading we should strive for variety and deliberately place ourselves in new reading experiences” (p. 115). This impulse to inclusiveness extends toward feminism and multiculturalism, something not often enough seen in conservative Christian circles. Indeed, they recognize a fact often overlooked: The same force that excluded women and minorities from the canon has more recently been excluding overtly Christian literature as well. More important, they recognize that the Christian duty to the oppressed extends to reading as well: “Christians should . . . have a special concern to recover the literature of minorities” (p. 111).

Finally, I would like to thank them for tackling the common misunderstanding that Christians should read “Christian” literature, written by Christians or based on Christian beliefs. They state very clearly that a “Christian” author does not necessarily write books that every Christian will agree with, and that an “unbeliever” can write in a way that is very valuable for Christians. Most important, they debunk the whole idea of “Christian” literature. “Our desire to label works of literature Christian or non-Christian, while common, is misdirected” (p. 120). Bravo, Gallagher and Lundin!

However, I do feel a need to remark on the limitations of this book’s basic assumptions about literature; we *ought* to read it, we *ought* to enjoy it, we *ought* to learn about life from it. Surely it is one thing to defend literature against attack, or to explain why one reads; it is another to suggest a *moral imperative to read*. With this attitude, all reading becomes required reading—a dreadful thought! Can we really “delight” in poetry because it is “part of our Christian vocation”?

Even more troubling is the authors’ emphasis on “understanding.” To suggest that the purpose of literature is to help us *explain everything* reflects, perhaps, a theology that leaves no room for mystery: “Everything in our experience has significance, and our attempt to discern that significance—as well as we can—is part of our calling as God’s servants” (p. 5). This rational element in the Protestant tradition, this emphasis on explaining everything, needs some healthy challenging, I think. Where is mystery? Why must all be explained? Beyond the good and the beautiful shimmers the Sublime: experiences and phenomena that we cannot explain. Instead of ignoring, repressing, or misrepresenting them, let us accept them for what they are: evidence that God and the universe are far more Other than we have ever imagined. Sublime theory, with

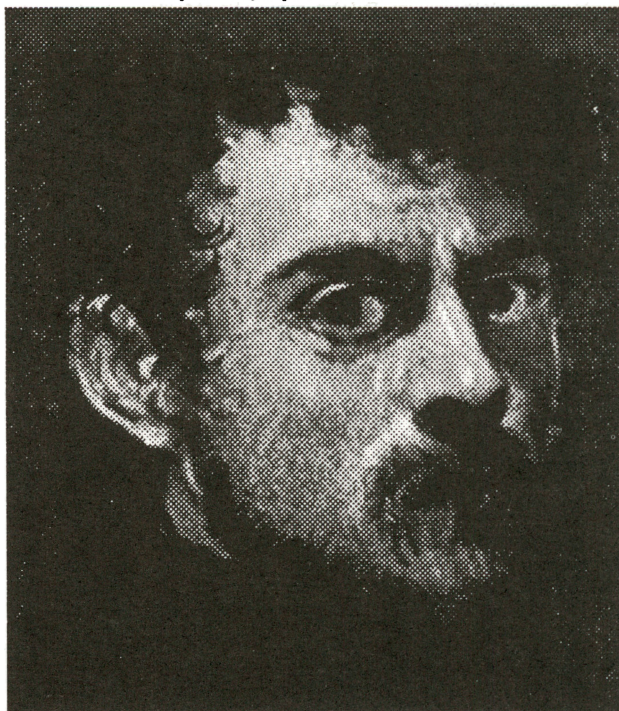
its emphasis on the inability of the mind to grasp certain concepts, should be an important part of any attempt to look at “literature through the eyes of faith.”

“Consider the Lilies of the Field, How They Are Particular”

Martha Nussbaum’s *Love’s Knowledge* is a group of essays collected from such sources as the *Journal of Philosophy*, the *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities*, and the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*.⁵ Nussbaum is obviously addressing a much different audience from that of Gallagher and Lundin. Perhaps because of this, the reasoning is more precise and the judgments more finely tuned than anything in their book. A more important difference, however, is that it provides an ethical approach to reading that is *compatible with Christianity without being explicitly Christian*.⁶

Many of Nussbaum’s essays touch on the

Adapted from Jacopo Tintoretto’s “Self Portrait”



relationship between ethics and literature. She has a particular love for Henry James, as a couple of titles will demonstrate: “Flawed Crystals: James’ *The Golden Bowl* and Literature as Moral Philosophy”; “Perception and Revolution: *The Princess Casamassima* and the Political Imagination.” Her readings of James’ novels embody what she values in literature: They demonstrate for us the process of delicate moral reasoning that we need to live life well.

We need, then . . . texts which display to us the complexity, the indeterminacy, the sheer *difficulty* of moral choice, and which show us, as this text does . . . the childishness, the refusal of life involved in fixing everything in advance according to some inviolable rules. . . .

Finally, without a presentation of the mystery, conflict, and riskiness of the lived deliberative situation, it will be hard for philosophy to convey the peculiar value and beauty of choosing humanly well. . . . (pp. 141, 142)

Nussbaum’s project is double: She argues for a literary theory that is friendly to moral philosophy, that recognizes “the sense that we are social beings puzzling out, in times of great moral difficulty, what might be, for us, the best way to live. . . .” (p. 170). She also demonstrates just what she means in many fine essays. The title essay, “Love’s Knowledge,” examines (and critiques) Proust’s approach to the question, “How do I know I am in love?” This is not a question we somehow expect a philosopher or a literary critic to handle, and yet we ask few questions more urgently. Why do we *assume* that we will get no help from philosophers when it comes to questions of feeling? Nussbaum rejects that assumption: “To make room for love stories, philosophy must be more literary, more closely allied to stories, and more respectful of mystery and openendedness than it frequently is” (p. 284).

As you have already noticed, where Gallagher and Lundin ask, “How does reading this book help me fulfill my vocation as a Christian?”

Nussbaum asks, “How does this book help answer the question, ‘How should one live?’” (p. 173). The difference will seem slight to some, monumental to others. Be that as it may, like Gallagher and Lundin, Nussbaum wants to make room for both the Good and the Beautiful. She does so by recognizing the simple truth that neither exists apart from the other:

We grasp the practical content of a literary text adequately only when we attentively study the forms in which it is embodied and expressed; and . . . we have not correctly described the literary form of, say, a James novel if we have not asked what sense of life it expresses (p. 172).

Nussbaum argues further that literature shares knowledge that simply cannot be communicated in any other way. Philosophy generalizes from particulars. Yet is there not a sense in which it is the particulars themselves that matter?

For stories cultivate our ability to see and care for particulars, not as representatives of a law, but as what they themselves are: to respond vigorously with senses and emotions before the new, to care deeply about chance happenings in the world, rather than to fortify ourselves against them; to wait for the outcome and to be bewildered—to wait and float and be actively passive (p. 184).

While this may not be Christian “doctrine,” I would argue that this willingness, this joyful acceptance of whatever happens to us, is a more deeply Christian approach to life (and literature) than the willful *can'ts* and *oughts* often associated with Christianity. “Consider the lilies of the field,” says Nussbaum, “how they are particular.”

In her love of life and her commitment “to wait and float and be actively passive,” however, Nussbaum has by no means forgotten the necessity for ethical action. She sees the other disciplines—economics, the law, psychology—influence the way our society makes its most important decisions, yet literary theory has been silent. And because of that silence,

“we . . . go on being governed from day to day by conceptions of rationality that seem impoverished next to the ones we know well and care about in novels that we love.” She argues that literary scholars should join the debate about what it means to be human, to live life well, to be a person, because “the hungry will be fed (or not fed) according to some idea of the person. . . . If we do not take a hand in these choices they will be made by default without us” (p. 192).

Books as Good Friends

Finally, I would like to recommend Wayne Booth's latest book, *The Company We Keep*. The title of this book points to its rich central metaphor: when we read a book we are spending time, keeping company, with a friend. Booth's central question, to simplify—though not, I hope, to mislead—is “What kind of person am I spending time with when I read this book? Who am I when I read it, and who am I becoming?” To answer this we participate in a guided tour of the history of ethical criticism, an explanation of the “threat” of subjectivism, an essay on what it means to be a “self” or a “character,” an appraisal of the workings of desire in the act of reading, an explanation of “co-duction,”⁷ and several other fascinating critical/philosophical discussions, enlivened by many examples of what he means in terms of specific authors, including detailed analyses of Rabelais, D. H. Lawrence, Jane Austen, and Twain.⁸ Further, each chapter has a thorough bibliography, supplemented by another of 30 pages at the back. And the whole is seasoned with apt quotations from wonderfully wide-ranging sources (including my opening epigram from Faulkner) and personal, often humorous, footnotes.⁹ Inevitably, one comes to feel that this book, at least, is indeed a friend, and its “implied author,” Wayne Booth, a lively, thoughtful, and honest human being with whom

to spend several hours.

Booth makes clear at the beginning what his basic assumption is about books: "Some experiences with narrative are beneficial and some harmful. No one who is unshakably skeptical about that notion will be likely to follow any argument about how a given narrative might nourish or poison those who take it in" (p. 40). While this may already sound frighteningly close to censorship, anyone acquainted with Booth's other books will not worry: the reading life is just not that simple for him. While he does argue that "some experiences" are good and others are not, he quickly complicates things by insisting, over and over again, that the "goods" which may come from narrative are many. "We must avoid at all costs the effort to reduce literary 'goods' to one kind; instead, we should seek to clarify and embrace a *plurality* of goods" (p. 115).

Further, what is good for me, today, may not be good for me tomorrow, or for you ever, because what "good" means is, "will help a given person grow at a given time." In Booth's words: "For some people, in some circumstances, Spark is likely to prove ethically more valuable than Dante, and for others—perhaps those who are a bit too comfortable with perpetual questioning—*The Divine Comedy* . . . would provide the superior gift" (p. 58).

Booth's central metaphor, of books (or their implied authors) as "friends," may sound simplistic at first. Yet he uses it to develop a fertile range of questions to be asked and issues to be raised when we read. Here is an interesting passage in which he compares Anne Tyler's *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* and

Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song*:

I know much less about the "real" Tyler than I know about the public image "Norman Mailer," or about the career author I have met in reading most of his books. "My" Tyler's range and daring are much more limited than "my" Mailer's, but I feel that she is giving me everything she's got, and she cares a great deal about what will become of me as I read. My Mailer, in contrast, is simply playing games with me; he does not care a hill of beans for my welfare—he would obviously be happy to sacrifice me and any other reader to further his own ends. This does not mean that he is not worth talking to—but it may mean that I finally regret spending quite so long with him, when I might have been reading more of Anne Tyler (p. 208).

Not only does the "friend" metaphor allow for careful analyses of this type, it also encourages us to give the process of rejecting an author the seriousness it deserves. He would not have us refuse to keep company with a book any more off-handedly than we would refuse the company of a real person. "To appraise a complex literary friend according to some single standard is critical bigotry" (p. 210).

Wayne Booth, then, like Martha Nussbaum, Susan Gallagher, and Roger Lundin, believes that something *does* happen when we read poetry. As T. S. Eliot says in his essay, "Religion and Literature," "though we may read literature merely for pleasure, of 'entertainment' or of 'aesthetic enjoyment,' this reading never affects simply a sort of special sense: it affects us as entire human beings . . ." (p. 350). Reading has serious moral consequences, and narratives help us to understand who we are and who we can become in a world of difficult choices.

It is not barbaric to read and write poetry

Reading well may just help us prevent another Auschwitz. Perhaps we will even come at last to a sunny island where the Good and the Beautiful live together in peace, with a Tintoretto on the wall and a baby crowing in its crib.

after Auschwitz; rather, reading well may just help us *prevent* another Auschwitz. Perhaps we will even come at last to a sunny island

where the Good and the Beautiful live together in peace, with a Tintoretto on the wall and a baby crowing in its crib.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Please imagine with me that this knoll is large enough to accommodate the differences between these three.

2. I don't suppose that this student would find Oscar Wilde persuasive: "Lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of art."

3. I use *hysterical* in full knowledge of the irony implied by using it to describe a man. I consider it only fair, since his article is not only full of sexist language, but also informed by sexist attitudes. For Gass, people are "men" who value many things, including the "beauties of women" (p. 38). In fact, he only uses inclusive language when he is pointing out that people are expendable: "That attachment to human life which demands that it be chosen over everything else is mostly humbug" (p. 39).

4. Am *I* getting hysterical now? This topic *is* emotional, isn't it?

5. I would like to thank Lucerne French Snipes for introducing me to this book.

6. I personally value such an approach because I feel it gives me opportunities for connecting with other readers of literature who care about the moral effects of

literature but are essentially excluded by Christian terminology.

7. Booth's method for comparing one's own experience of a work with those of many other good readers, in order to make an evaluative judgment.

8. He begins the book with an anecdote from the University of Chicago in the mid-sixties, when an African-American art teacher in the humanities core refused to teach *Huckleberry Finn* on moral grounds. Booth remembers how embarrassed he and the other literature teachers were that one of their colleagues could not "read" properly. "Poetry,' we were fond of quoting to each other, 'makes nothing happen.' To have attended to Paul Moses' complaint would have been to commit . . . 'the affective fallacy'" (p. 4). *The Company We Keep* is dedicated to Moses.

9. Like this: "Brooks and Warren performed a clever annihilation of 'Trees,' for example . . . and generations of students were taught that what they and their home folks had loved was contemptible. At its worst, such teaching—some of which I engaged in myself—was no more than an attempt to demonstrate one's own cleverness" (p. 220, n. 13).



Uncle Arthur's God Or Probability?

In praise of a God who sustains an orderly universe *and* intervenes—but rarely.

by John M. Berez

THE ADVENTIST GOD IS AN INTERVENTIONIST God. He dispatches guardian angels to keep approaching drunk drivers from swerving over the yellow line and snuffing out my life. When I'm hitchhiking home from college during a blizzard, God sends angels disguised as people to pick me up.

From his or her earliest years, the *Bedtime Stories* provide the Adventist child's about-to-go-to-sleep mind some of the most vivid scenarios of divine intervention. And as drowsiness blurs the boundaries of reality, and the child slips from the world of consciousness to nebulous realms of the unconscious, he or she is carried along on angels' wings and on the assurance that all will be well—and especially so if he or she is a good boy or girl. Stories like "Little Miss Grumblestone," "The Hollow Pie," "Saved From the Flood," "The Boy Who Ran Away From Home," "Four Chocolate Eggs,"

"Saved From an Earthquake," "Peter and the Pumpkin Seed," "Walter and the Wolves," "Boy in a Well," all teach that God intervenes in our smallest affairs, as well as dramatic disasters—most willingly when we've been good.

Adventist children around the world are taught, about the same time they learn their mother tongue, that Jesus cares *and* that Jesus *intervenes*. Adventist toddlers are regaled with stories like the Red Sea splitting for the Hebrews while simultaneously drowning the Egyptians, or Jonah's ride in the submarine that belched. With biblical stories available, Adventism has little need for fairy tales. Jack and the Beanstalk pales alongside the story of a shepherd boy who, with only a slingshot and a small stone, saves his country by slaying the evil giant and later becoming king. It's hard to upstage the image of three Hebrew lads serenely standing unsinged in a furnace so hot it kills the captors who threw them in. Who can be impressed by Grimm's tales, when he or she can hear about faithful old Daniel calmly petting the lions who would have

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ferociously devoured anyone less faithful?

This fundamental Adventist assumption, that God takes care of those who are good, runs through a recent book entitled *College Faith*, edited by Ron Knott. In this book, which can be seen as a representative, if not truly random, sample of Adventist thought leaders, we are treated to numerous accounts of how God has intervened to help find a spouse, provide money for college, save the author's life, or prevent great harm from befalling him or her. Numerous examples abound, but I'll limit myself to two.

W. G. Nelson, the president of Walla Walla College, tells of driving home from his job in the rugged mountains of northern California one summer, when he heard a voice say, "Don, slow down." Rounding the next corner he found himself facing two huge logging trucks—one passing the other—bearing down on him. Although he admits the "voice" he heard urging him to slow down wasn't actually an audible voice, after telling us about his safe stop, he nonetheless concludes that, "With the extra speed I had been traveling at before I heard the voice, my little car, with me in it, would certainly have been smashed against that big truck. That experience showed me that God is indeed a loving Father meeting our needs. He had truly sent His angel ahead of me to guard the way" (pp. 180, 181).

Floyd Murdoch tells of being lost for 10 desperate days in the jungles of eastern Peru. Finally, on a Sabbath, he heard a *moo*. Correctly concluding that where there was a cow there must be people, he stumbled into an *Adventist* village while the community was at church. He concludes, "Except for the cow, we might still be lost. We had been 'saved' by a one-word 'sermon' from the Sabbath people's cow—*moo*" (pp. 34, 35).

At first blush, such stories seem innocent, even inspirational. After all, why question

someone who "hears a voice," slows down and avoids serious injury? And what should be more inspiring to someone like me, who grew up on a Wisconsin dairy farm, than the story of God saving life through the divine *moo*?

G. A. Bryant recounts how his friend Elaine promised to show him a shorter route home for Thanksgiving/Christmas break. They planned for him to follow her in his own car. However, he encountered car trouble, and was unable to leave. Not wishing to delay her further, he relates that:

Finally I gave up and told Elaine to go on ahead. I'd go the old way, which would take three hours longer. . . . About an hour after they left, my car repair work suddenly came together quickly and smoothly. Soon I was on the road, driving the old route home. . . .

Getting sleepy, however, he stopped to call home to get a relative's phone number.

When the phone was answered, I was greeted by a hysterical voice on the other end. It was my father, and he was frantic, asking where I was and if I was all right.

When he calmed down, he told me that Elaine had been killed in an accident, and several others in her car had been injured. Tears ran down my face. My friend was gone. And I recalled how upset I was with God just a few hours earlier because of the condition of my car. Now I realized that God, in His wisdom, had been looking out for me the whole time (p. 59).

What about this last sentence—"God, in His wisdom, had been looking out for me the whole time"? What about Elaine? Wasn't God looking out for her? Why didn't *she* develop car trouble? Why didn't *her* water pump, or carburetor, or transmission, or *something* go on the fritz and save *her* life? And what about the many good people who've gotten lost in the jungle and died without ever hearing the saving *moo* of God's cow? Were they not as faithful as Floyd? Was their mission not as important?

And what about the cars that *have* crashed head-on into trucks, instantly killing innocent passengers? Where was the warning “voice” for them urging a slower speed? Why were the lives of two of my most promising students, Bob and Elfrieda Oster, tragically ended weeks after their honeymoon, when they collided head-on with a drunk driver who had swerved into their lane? Where was the warning voice telling them to “pull over to the shoulder and wait for the next car to pass”?

I’d like to discuss three major problems with such deliverance stories: probabilities, selective sampling, and linear theories of causality.

Possibilities vs. Probabilities

I recall one of my professors saying, “Children understand the *possibilities*, but not the *probabilities*.” I’ve never forgotten that. Ever had your child engage you in this kind of conversation?

“Dad, could a lion get out of the zoo?”

“Yes, but it’s not very likely.”

“If a lion got out, could he walk as far as our house?”

“Yes, but something like that would probably never happen.”

“But at school our teacher said on the news there was a story ’bout a lion on the freeway.”

“I know, but it doesn’t happen very often.”

“Could a lion eat Taffy (pet Cocker Spaniel) if he got in the yard?”

“I suppose, but a lion isn’t going to get in the yard.”

“But you said a lion could . . .”

In a child’s world, anything is possible. As adults, we automatically temper our view of happenings with projections of probabilities. So even though I know it is *possible* that I will be killed on the highway before this article is published, I nevertheless continue to drive. Accidents are low-probability events. Sometimes when traveling by air, I occasionally find

that as my plane slowly starts down the runway, gunning its engines and gathering speed, I consciously remind myself that this is even *safer* than driving!

Christians, like children, sometimes speak eloquently about God’s limitless power—about the *possibilities*—but seem to forget *probabilities*. Let’s begin with the biblical rescue stories, and remind ourselves that typically there are *hundreds of years* interspersed between most recorded miracles. Even in the Bible, miracles are *low probability, low frequency* events.

In our storybook and children’s Sabbath school versions, it seems that a few years after God created the earth, Noah built the ark and God flooded the planet, people built the tower of Babel, and Moses was born. We seldom reflect on how long all this really took. Noah, for example, was *500 years old* before he even began a family. And it was hundreds of years after the Flood that God parted the waters of the Red Sea for the Exodus.

Although a veritable explosion of miracles accompanied the birth, life, and resurrection of Jesus, even here we lose time perspective, leaping in our minds from one miraculous event to another, as if there were no moments of ordinary living in between.

Historically condensing divine history in our minds, we naturally fit the pieces into the only time frame we understand—our own. And since historians tend to record *events* rather than nothingness, we lose the many moments—even in sacred history—of ordinary, possibly even boring, life. Jesus and his disciples presumably ate, slept, shaved, cleaned their teeth, changed clothing, used the bathroom, polished their sandals, and engaged in a host of *ordinary* events. Even in their lives, miracles weren’t exploding with the pop-pop-pop of popcorn.

Assimilating some 5,000 years of sacred history into our heads and trying to imagine it in our time frame produces “miracle overload.” We feel surrounded by the supernatu-

ral, mired in miracles thick as glue, and that's a distortion. It's especially a distortion when compared to our daily lives, where ordinary events predominate. It's a distortion that we maintain through selective sampling.

Selective Sampling

It is well known among researchers that people are prone to bias in everything from memory to prediction. It's a part of being human to always color perceptions. With respect to deliverance stories, this means that the narrator's recollection may become enhanced as the story is retold, much as family stories often become embellished with details as they are passed down from generation to generation.

But even granting that each narrator is recalling details with reasonable accuracy, there is usually an *institutional bias* in printing any compilation of rescue reports because we do *not* include stories of "failed" miracles. Where is the companion volume to *College Faith* titled *College Reality Check* or *Failures of Faith*? We are not likely to get one of those as the next missionary book of the year. Everyone wants to write and hear about success, not failure. I don't think *The Plague* by Camus or *Nausea* by Sartre would ever have been Pacific Press best sellers. We leave it to pessimistic existentialists to deal with the darker side of life. In the process, we fool ourselves.

Since I've been at Andrews University, nearly every year someone in this community meets an untimely death. A teacher drowned when he jumped off a pier to rescue the family dog. Others have lost their lives in car crashes. I've never seen any books about them, nor do I expect to. Yet most were splendid Christian people, individuals whom we cherished, prayed for, and even anointed. But they died. Where was God? Why no miracle? Finding comfort during the loss of a loved friend is

perhaps enough of a miracle. Under such circumstances, possibly a greater miracle than spectacular healing is a renewed faith in resurrection.

Christians are biased reporters, telling of "miracles" when things turn out in the prayed-for direction, but retreating to a quiet spiritual solace when—*most of the time*—miracles don't happen. We need to write about such things more honestly.

When I was in graduate school, I wanted to be a positive influence on a classmate who came from a Christian background but had abandoned his faith. One day I told him how my bicycle had been stolen from the bike rack in front of the psychology building, and that I'd asked God to help me find it. He laughingly interrupted my story, asking me why I had left it unlocked. But I had the last laugh, because I was able to tell him that a few days later, while driving near an elementary school, I spotted *my bicycle* being ridden by one of the hundreds of students. After retrieving my bike and taking the thief to the principal's office, I



fairly glowed with gratefulness to God and anticipation of how I would “witness” to my friend regarding the miracle of finding my bike among hundreds of school children.

However, in typical Christian fashion, I did *not* witness to him several weeks later when, due to my negligence in leaving it unlocked, my bicycle was again stolen. Although I repeatedly prayed and searched, I never saw my bike again. Of course, the Christian rebuttal might be that God worked a miracle once, but since I was too stupid to learn my lesson, he could not continue to bail me out. This story illustrates what we Christians know privately, but seldom admit publicly. We “witness” about the good events and remain silent when things don’t work out.

Nonlinear Causality

Philosophers of science, social psychologists, and others spend significant efforts analyzing how we arrive at conclusions about what *caused* something to happen. We will not explore a full discussion of causality, but it is necessary to touch on the most important points.

During the heyday of Newtonian physics, scientists thought they understood the universe, viewing it as similar to a giant clock. The celestial clockwork of orbiting planets was analogous, on a grand scale, to the clockwork motion of bodies on earth, circulation of blood, etc. Everything, it was thought, ran in vast harmonious order, following clearly understood laws of motion, thermodynamics, etc. In this milieu it was hardly surprising that God was seen as the divine clock maker, the vast intelligence, the Master Designer behind the scenes—a kind of divine engineer who makes sure all the gears are working. Of course, this picture of God isn’t particularly warm and fuzzy.

Just as Copernicus suggested that the earth

is *not* the center of the universe, Einstein came along and updated Newtonian mechanics and causality with the theory of relativity. Planck, Heisenberg, and Bohr opened things up even more by asserting that it is impossible to measure, predict, or precisely know both the position and momentum of a particle. Known as the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, this suggests that while we may calculate *probabilities* of how things will occur, we can never be certain in the case of an individual electron. This cuts to the very core of the kind of rigorous causality associated with Newtonian physics.

Even Einstein didn’t like this, arguing in his famous phrase that “God does not play dice with the universe.” However, many physicists today would argue that God *does* play with *probabilities*, rather than absolute *certainties*. Many equate quantum theory with the end of causality. Unfortunately, theology and psychology have not kept pace, and many psychologists (especially behaviorists) speak as if behavior always moves forward in time—each action *caused* by discrete prior events. Although this sort of billiard-ball approach to causality (analogous to Newtonian physics) is still prevalent in the behavioral sciences and even theology, newer theories of causality are slowly changing the linear ways in which we’ve thought behavior was caused.

Early Adventists reacted against mechanistic deism by infusing all of nature with God. Kellogg took this to the extreme of *pantheism*, but Ellen White was not far behind with her *vitalism*. And although she reacted strongly against pantheism, her vitalism seems a close cousin to Kellogg’s ideas. Though she did not equate nature with God, she sees God as actively and constantly energizing the system:

It is God’s power continually exercised that keeps the earth in position in its rotation. It is God who causes the sun to rise in the heavens. He opens the windows of heaven and gives rain. . . .

The mechanisms of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God" (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 416, 417).

I would suggest that if we believe God *caused* an event to occur, and we want to share this faith with another, we need to "flavor" our witness with the "spices" of uncertainty: "Do you think *maybe* God helped us out on this one?" "*Could it be possible* that Someone was looking out for us?" "Is there any *chance* we got some help from upstairs?" Far from watering down our witness, such probabilistic nuances would invite discussion and increase the *likelihood* that others might consider an interventionist explanation once in awhile.

Public Relations for God in the Late 20th Century

We still search for and try to find God in our daily lives. Can I not thank God for the blessings of a logical world? Is snow any less a miracle if the flakes form according to principles of crystallization?

Are the snowflakes that provide me cross-country skiing in the pastures surrounding my

house any less "miraculous" than the Israelites' instant-breakfast manna in the wilderness? Is the rainbow I see after a storm less a miracle than the "bow of promise" God gave Noah that he would never again destroy the world with a flood?

When it comes to understanding *if, when, or how* God intervenes in our lives, we must proceed with utmost prudence and respect. Remembering that God's ways are *not* our ways, it might be egocentric, narcissistic, or even arrogant to suggest that we *know* when and how God has intervened on our behalf.

A related point is that we ought to develop pictures of God and models of praise that do not depend on immediate divine intervention on demand. We need to praise God for the orderly universe in which we live, without necessarily assuming that God constantly interrupts his normal ways of acting. This doesn't make our witness less potent, and it makes more sense to our late-20th-century colleagues. I think that *most of the time* God does *not* intervene.

I find comfort in believing that a caring God created the probabilities of the universe. I'm inclined to believe that although the "dice" of the universe usually roll randomly, God *occasionally* "loads" them in my favor. I find it easy to admire a God who designed events to unfold in specifically unpredictable, yet probabilistically lawful ways. When it's all over, I only need *one* miracle; it's known as the resurrection.



The Many Faces Of Adventist Creationism: '80-'95

As the millennium nears, Adventist views get more diverse.

by James L. Hayward

AS ADVENTISTS APPROACH THE 21ST CENTURY, some continue to hold to a literal six-day Creation, though they question the universality of the Flood. Others remain committed to the notion of a universal flood, but believe that life is considerably older than 6,000 years. Still others argue for an extensive and complicated history of life on earth involving considerable change. Adventist creationism wears more faces now than ever before.¹

Adventists have never enjoyed universal agreement on earth history. But by 1980, rumblings from Adventists impressed with evidence for long ages, fossil progression, and biological evolution became even more audible. Church leaders, still reeling from Ford, Davenport, and Rey, responded by installing one of their most effective apologists, Ariel Roth, as director of the Geoscience Research Institute, and another,

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Gerhard Hasel, as dean of the SDA Theological Seminary. Roth and Hasel would shape the conversations of church scientists and theologians on this issue for the next 15 years.

During the second half of 1994, two events upset the uneasy equilibrium that had been established. The first was the death of Gerhard Hasel. Hasel had flown to Ogden, Utah, to present a paper on the days of Creation to the annual Biblical Research Institute Science Council (BRISCO) meetings to be held there. On the afternoon of August 11, the day before the first session, he was killed when his rental car was struck by another vehicle as he attempted to make a left-hand turn. The next day his paper was read to a somber group of creationist scientists and theologians by John Baldwin, but his loss was keenly felt by both friend and foe.²

The other event was Ariel Roth's October 1 retirement as the third director of the Geoscience Research Institute (GRI). The 67-year-old apologist had led GRI almost as long as his two predecessors put together, and had previously served on both their staffs. During his

tenure as director, Roth continued to edit *Origins*, the flagship creationist journal, and he had supervised a complete transformation of GRI's scientific staff. Following retirement, he stayed on to participate in institute activities and to complete a long-awaited book on science and faith. Staff scientist L. James Gibson was appointed as the new director.³

The Roth-Hasel era was an important, contentious, and until now unchronicled period during which official attempts to contain pluralism on the issue of earth history were met with a profusion of Seventh-day Adventist views on the topic. While some church members find the growing diversity of opinion during this era distressing, others see it as compelling evidence that Adventists continue to take the Christian doctrine of Creation seriously.⁴

Ariel Roth and the Geoscience Research Institute

In 1980, Ariel A. Roth became the third director of the church's apologetic think tank for issues related to earth history. Trained as a parasitologist with a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, Roth had chaired the biology departments at both Andrews University and Loma Linda University.

A cautious and intelligent man, Roth had been exposed by Richard Ritland, the first director of GRI, to the problems of earth history and biblical interpretation, but unlike Ritland had remained loyal to Flood geology and a literalist interpretation of Scripture.⁵

From nearly the time of its inception in 1958, the GRI staff had been divided over the issue of how to interpret the past. Frank L. Marsh, Harold G. Coffin, Robert H. Brown, and Roth were biblical literalists who also took the writings of Ellen G. White as authoritative sources on earth history. By contrast, P. Edgar Hare, Harold E. James, Jr., Edward N. Lugen-

beal, and Ritland believed that the earth and life were very old and searched for ways to interpret Scripture in light of this view. Under pressure from church administrators, Hare had resigned in 1964, while Ritland remained until 1971. When physicist Robert H. Brown took over directorship in 1971, the days for progressive thinking at GRI were clearly numbered. Indeed, before passing the cloak to Roth in 1980, Brown had collected resignations from the two remaining staff liberals, James and Lugenbeal. In 1980, for the first time since its formation, the GRI staff was solidly conservative.⁶

Soon after assuming directorship, Roth moved the institute to Loma Linda University, where it could collaborate with the newly created geology program at La Sierra College, a few miles to the southwest. Also, over the next 10 years, he created an entirely new staff. While some diversity of personality and opinion characterized the new GRI, staff members were not as split over fundamental approaches to earth history as they had been during the institute's first two decades.

When Roth assumed GRI directorship in 1980, attempts by creationists to bring their views into the public schools through court action had gained momentum. Indeed, during the 1970s, hardly an issue of *Origins*, the journal published by GRI, had failed to carry a sympathetic news update on this movement. GRI found itself in an awkward position over this issue, given the church's strong historic stand on the strict separation of church and state. Ultimately, however, Adventist antipathy toward evolution and the threat it seemed to pose for the integrity of creation week and the Sabbath drew GRI into the fray.⁷

In March 1981, Roth provided the keynote address to a televised hearing of the Oregon House Education Committee. It was considering a bill to force Oregon's public school teachers to introduce students to the notion of special creation as an alternative to evolution.

In his address, Roth suggested that “science should allow the free examination of all the issues, and that to limit alternatives is to limit truth.”⁸

Later that year, in December 1981, GRI plunged into the now famous Arkansas “Scopes II” trial. Earlier in 1981, Frank White, the governor of Arkansas, signed into law legislation designed to provide public school students with the scientific evidence favoring both Creation and evolution. Predictably, the American Civil Liberties Union challenged the law. It argued that teaching creation science violates the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which requires separation of church and state. The ACLU’s list of witnesses read like a Who’s Who roster—Yale biophysicist Harold J. Morowitz, University of California geneticist Francisco J. Ayala, geologist F. Brent Dalrymple, Harvard paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould, and University of Chicago theologian Langdon B. Gilkey, among others.⁹

Of the 11 witnesses called to testify, three were Seventh-day Adventists: Ariel Roth and Harold Coffin, both of GRI, and maverick physicist Robert V. Gentry, who had taught at Columbia Union College. Roth’s testimony focused on evidence for rapid growth in coral reefs and gaps in the fossil record. Coffin discussed the uniqueness of life, the sudden appearance of complex life forms in the Cambrian rocks, the presumed paucity of evidence for transitional life forms in the past and present, and also explained his Seventh-day Adventist beliefs to Judge Overton and the court. Gentry reviewed his work on polonium radio halos in granites and mica, which to him suggested that these rocks were created re-

cently and instantaneously. Ironically, this interpretation was shared by few other Adventist scientists.¹⁰

In the end, Judge Overton ruled in favor of the prosecution, noting that the “proof in support of creation science consisted almost entirely of efforts to discredit the theory of evolution through a rehash of data and theories which have been before the scientific community for decades.” Some observers, though, saw the testimonies of the three Adventist creationists at the trial to be a direct fulfillment of prophecy. “Does not Ellen White state that God’s people in the last days will

testify about their beliefs in the courtroom?” asked the *Adventist Review*.¹¹

Even more than participating in these legislative and courtroom adventures, GRI seemed concerned with convincing rank-and-file Seventh-day Adventists that a literalist interpretation of Genesis was crucial to

the integrity of Adventist doctrine. Roth took up this internal mission with particular fervor. In a 1988 article in *Adventist Perspectives*, he expressed dismay that “[p]ublished statements by Adventists, seminar discussions, and statements released to the press by Adventists indicate that alternatives to creation are being given serious consideration in some Adventist circles.” These “intermediate views between creation and naturalistic evolution” included the gap theory, progressive creationism, theistic evolutionism, and deism.¹²

By 1995, GRI was one of the few creationist organizations sponsoring “scientific research” as the term is understood in the wider scientific community. Growing numbers of Adventist scientists, however, were becoming wary

Growing numbers of Adventist scientists were becoming wary of the Geoscience Research Institute, but it was receiving strong support from powerful voices in the church’s theological community.

of Roth and his institute, feeling that they consciously overlooked or even misrepresented data from the physical world in order to maintain a literalist view of biblical inspiration. But GRI had little to fear from denominational scientists—it was receiving increasingly strong support from powerful voices in the church’s theological community.

Gerhard F. Hasel and the Adventist Theological Society

If Ariel Roth provided the scientific warp of conservative Adventist creationism during the 1980s and early 1990s, Gerhard F. Hasel wove its biblical woof. Hasel joined the faculty of the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University in 1967 and quickly rose to prominence as a conservative biblical scholar and apologist for his church. In 1976, he assumed directorship of the seminary’s Ph.D. and Th.D. programs, and five years later became dean of the seminary. These positions gave him enormous influence over the training of Adventist pastors and biblical scholars. Considering his leadership in the seminary, his influence with church administrators, his extensive writing, and his widespread public speaking, it would be difficult to overstate Hasel’s impact on the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the latter part of the 20th century.¹³

Hasel championed many causes, but none seemed more dear to him than conservative Adventist creationism. He served as a member of BRISCO for many years, and as an editorial consultant for *Origins* from its first issue in 1974 until his death in 1994. He contributed five feature articles to *Origins* between 1974 and 1980—more than any other author. Three of these essays focused on interpretations of the Genesis flood narratives, while the remaining two called for a literalistic interpretation of the genealogies of Genesis chapters 5 and 11, which he called “chronogenealogies.”¹⁴

Hasel fashioned “a powerful coalition of conservative thinkers and wealthy and generous Adventist entrepreneurs” from which, in 1989, emerged the controversial Adventist Theological Society. Membership in the new society was open to anyone nominated by two existing members and willing to sign a “Membership Affirmation,” which included as one of its seven tenets:

We affirm the literal reading and meaning of Genesis 1-11 as an objective, factual account of earth’s origin and early history; and that the world was created in six literal, consecutive 24-hour days; that the entire earth was subsequently devastated by a literal worldwide flood, and that the time elapsed since creation week is to be measured in terms of “about 6,000 years.”

Words like *literal*, *objective*, and *factual* discouraged application by anyone tempted to interpret the church’s statement of belief on Creation too loosely. Moreover, inclusion of Ellen White’s “about 6,000 years” phraseology underscored ATS’s acceptance of her Spirit of Prophecy writings as authoritative on matters of earth history and warned members that only minor disagreement with Archbishop James Ussher’s 17th-century chronology for the world would be tolerated.¹⁵

The Journal of the Adventist Theological Society (JATS), launched in 1990, provided conservative Adventists with a formal outlet for their traditional creationist views. For example, in 1992 E. Edward Zinke, an ATS vice-president who, with Hasel, had been an editorial board member for *Origins* since 1974, confessed in *JATS* that he had once accepted a six-day creation and short chronology for the world through rational consideration of the evidence, not as a result of an abiding faith in the authority of Scripture. He came to see that “divine revelation as identified with Scripture has priority and must function as the foundation of all knowledge, even revelation found in nature.”¹⁶

John T. Baldwin, who at Gerhard Hasel's invitation had joined the seminary faculty in 1988, was a frequent contributor to *JATS* and an increasingly significant voice for conservative Adventist creationism. Baldwin had completed his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago under theologian Langdon Gilkey, and like Gilkey displayed a strong interest in the theology of creation, albeit from a decidedly more conservative perspective. In a critique of progressive creationism and theistic evolution, Baldwin suggested in a *JATS* article that by accepting the notion "that death existed prior to Adam for long ages," one would begin to discount everything from the occurrence of a "universal 'wet flood'" to the importance of the Sabbath and the promise of Christ's return. In a second article, Baldwin opined that Adventists needed to remain "fully and dynamically concordist with respect to the relation of science and religion." Thus the first 11 chapters of Genesis are "not merely to be taken *seriously*, but *historically*." Biblical history, not natural history, should exert ultimate control over how Adventists interpret the past.¹⁷

In yet a third *JATS* article on the topic, Baldwin suggested that:

Responsible strict concordist scholars willing to risk the whitewater ride through the spray-filled canyons of the creation texts and nature itself will surely discover additional new harmonies between Scripture and science about which to write, not only as it were with breathless excitement but above all with deeply compelling academic power. This effort can continue to show that concordism is not an anachronistic effort, but is very relevant indeed in the post-Darwinism age . . . Now is the time to tremble at the words of the God of Israel, particularly in the creation and flood narratives, and not to tremble at the words of Darwin whose theory is in crisis. Strict concordism's day in court may have come.¹⁸

George McCready Price could not have articulated the hopes of conservative Adventist creationism with more style or optimism than this. Of course, never before could tradi-

tionalist-minded Adventist creationists claim, as they could now, a growing coterie of properly credentialed, well-funded scholars willing to voice their views so openly and persuasively.

Adventist Academia

Under pressure from church leadership for his liberal views, Harvard-trained paleontologist Richard M. Ritland had resigned from directorship of Geoscience Research Institute in 1971 to join the biology department at Andrews University. General Conference officials hoped this move would curb Ritland's growing influence on the church at large. But much to the chagrin of his critics, Ritland continued his proselytizing, this time among biology graduate students.¹⁹

In 1978, one of Ritland's colleagues in the biology department discussed, with Ariel Roth, Ritland's influence on students. Roth suggested that Andrews contact a former Loma Linda University graduate student, W. William Hughes, who would serve as an ideal counterpoint to Ritland. Gregarious and charismatic, Hughes was completing a post-doctoral fellowship with the prominent geophysicist S. K. Runcorn at the University of Newcastle. Most importantly, he was committed to a short-term chronology.²⁰

Roth's proposal impressed the Andrews University administration, and Hughes was courted for a faculty position in the biology department. He accepted, but only to discover later that his appointment had been arranged without knowledge of Ritland's friend and biology department chair, Asa C. Thoresen. Nevertheless, once the gentle-spirited Thoresen learned of the hiring, he set aside his dismay at this breach of protocol and collegiality, and did what he could to make Hughes feel welcome.²¹

For the first few months after Hughes ar-

rived in 1979, he and Ritland remained cordial yet wary of one another. Soon, however, Ritland invited Hughes to join him on a paleontological field trip to Indiana, Ohio, and northern Kentucky. Ritland showed him evidence for multiple levels of *in situ* fossil reefs with delicate preservation of crinoids, bryozoans, and other ancient reef denizens. This evidence, along with extensive discussions with Ritland and others on theology and biblical exegesis, convinced Hughes that traditional Adventist interpretations, such as those promoted by Roth, were untenable.²²

The attempt to balance Ritland's influence had backfired—now Andrews University was saddled with two old-earth paleontologists instead of one. Moreover, Hughes was less subtle about his newfound views than Ritland. Hughes wrote an essay for the university newspaper, *Student Movement*, in the fall of 1982, entitled, "Darwin: 100 Years On," commemorating the centennial anniversary of the evolutionist's death. The article itself was relatively innocuous but, unfortunately for Hughes, was accompanied by a portrait of Darwin and a drawing that depicted the descent of humans from ape-like ancestors. A concerned parent of an Andrews University student sent a copy of Hughes' essay to General Conference officials, who were unhappy with what they saw.²³

In subsequent years, when Hughes applied for "continuous appointment" status and then full professorship, he faced opposition from university administrators. The battle-weary Hughes eventually won his advancement, but in 1989 he applied for, and was granted, a two-year leave of absence, after which he chose not to return to Andrews.²⁴

Southern California was the site of the church's other center of creationist activity, Loma Linda University. Not only had GRI moved there from Berrien Springs by 1981, but this was also home to the denomination's only Ph.D. program in biology and its only

degree program in geology. GRI and the two academic programs developed close ties. Beyond the convenience of their proximity, all three had been organized around common assumptions regarding earth history, and both GRI and the biology department had experienced the leadership and vision of Roth.²⁵

The geology department had been organized in 1980, by the charismatic Lanny Fisk, with the goal of producing Adventist geologists who could work in industry as well as teach in denominational schools. Fisk had earned his Ph.D. in biology at Loma Linda University during the early 1970s, and during the latter part of the decade entered the doctoral program in geology at Michigan State University.²⁶

Unfortunately, the three-faculty geology program never took off. Few Adventist students had any background or interest in geology, and by 1984 the job market for geologists had plummeted. So, by 1989, the Loma Linda University administration felt it could no longer afford to support the geologists. One accepted a position in Loma Linda University's biology department. Fisk, how-

"Says the Lord: Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool" (Isaiah 66:1). The following illustrations, unless otherwise noted, are adapted from the work of an anonymous 15th-century German illustrator of Petrus Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*.



ever, felt betrayed by closure of the department he had worked so hard to establish, and moved to Oregon, where he began an oil-exploration business.²⁷

Back at Andrews University, several faculty at the SDA Theological Seminary brought a deep interest in creationism to their research and teaching. A young archaeologist, Randall W. Younker, joined the seminary faculty in 1988. Younker, who was completing a Ph.D. in archaeology at the University of Arizona, had earned a master's degree in biology from Pacific Union College. He and John Baldwin teamed up to teach a required course for the Master of Divinity students called "Issues in Origins" for which they flew in several GRI lecturers from California each year. Richard Davidson, a former Th.D. student under Hasel, was an Old Testament scholar who displayed a strong commitment to traditional Adventist creationism. Davidson and Younker, along with Baldwin and Hasel, were all members of the Adventist Theological Society.²⁸

To these Andrews Seminary faculty, the biggest problem with taking the fossil record at face value was the apparent need to assume that animal death occurred before the appearance of humans and the Fall. If death had occurred before sin, the apostle Paul's statement that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Romans 5:12, KJV) lost significance and the whole economy of Adventist Christianity seemed to vanish. In the face of this prospect, no scientific evidence favoring the appearance of humans after millions of years of animal death could be taken

seriously.²⁹

One solution to this knotty problem was proposed by Loma Linda University's theologian and physician Jack Provonsha, who believed that the very foundation of Adventist belief was "placed in jeopardy by this issue." Unlike his Andrews' colleagues, however, Provonsha was unwilling to skim over the implications of the bulk of scientific data. Instead, he resurrected the once-popular "ruin and restoration" theory, suggesting that when Lucifer was cast to earth from heaven he was given "a long period of time" to work out his

principles. This included genetic experimentation resulting in the evolutionary process which ultimately led to the development of human-like apes. At some more recent time, Provonsha suggested, God stepped in and created the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve.³⁰

Outside of Flood geology, which many Adventist scientists found increasingly irrelevant, Provonsha's model was the most serious attempt to take both conservative Adventist theology and scientific data seriously. His effort, however, was met with little enthusiasm on the part of progressives who saw too much evidence for continuity in the history of life. Where in the fossil record or among extant living things, for example, did one find evidence for two creations, one demonic and the other divine? All life, human and nonhuman, seemed to operate by the same rules and was subject to the same limitations.

Conservatives, for their part, were even less impressed with Provonsha's brainchild. Not

By the end of 1995, Adventist creationism stood at an important crossroad. Leadership could encourage open and honest discussion of evidence. As it approached the new millennium, Adventist creationism would be reshaped by an ever more diverse army of practitioners.

only was God excluded as “the all-inclusive Creator,” but the devil was given too much power. Moreover, there was no mention in Scripture of any such devilish creation. The solution to the geological riddle, it seemed to them, must be found in Flood geology.³¹

But if Provonsha’s model was rejected and Flood geology accepted as the answer, which of its many versions should be embraced? George McCready Price had provided the early “scientific” inspiration for Adventist Flood geology, but some of his extremist views had been jettisoned by thoughtful Adventists when Harold W. Clark’s “new diluvialism” appeared in the 1940s. Clark had proposed that the rising Flood waters had wiped out successive ecological zones, which were now preserved as the organized layers of the geologic column. His ingenious model had provided a working hypothesis for Adventist apologists for nearly half a century. By the 1980s, however, his “ecological zonation theory” had sustained so many blows that it was rapidly fading into the background. While conservative Adventist scientists remained conceptually committed to Flood geology, they did so without a generally agreed-upon substitute for Clark’s model.³²

A second nagging problem involved the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. These had long formed the framework for traditional Christian chronologies of prehistory. Though many Christians had come to view these genealogies as highly stylized texts, Adventist biblical literalists, including Gerhard Hasel, continued to insist that they had chronological significance. During the early 1980s, Hasel asked Colin House, an Australian Ph.D. student at the seminary, to critique a *Ministry* article by Warren H. Johns on the topic. Johns had hinted that the genealogies were somewhat stylized. After a time, House began to side with Johns’ view—and soon began to feel unwelcome in Seminary Hall. His Andrews

University education was salvaged by a switch to the religious-education program in the School of Education. House’s dissertation, completed in 1988, provided an exhaustive numerical analysis of the Genesis genealogies. According to House, Genesis 5 and 11 could not provide a chronological framework for the history of the earth.³³

In contrast to House’s study, several Adventists engaged in creationist-inspired research projects that seemed to support the traditional Adventist paradigm of a young earth and universal flood. Some of this research was eventually published in peer-reviewed journals. Harold Coffin, for example, published his finding that some of the trees blown into Spirit Lake during Mount St. Helens’ 1980 eruption ended up at the bottom of the lake in an upright position; thus, he opined, not all upright fossil trees are in position of growth and may have floated into position before fossilization. An article by Lance T. Hodges and Ariel Roth provided data to suggest that at least some reef deposits in the fossil record had been transported into place by “storm action.” Leonard Brand and Thu Tan provided experimental support for his view that many fossil footprints were made by animals running on a water-submerged substrate, and that many of these animals were moving uphill. None of these papers contained overt references to creationist philosophy or Flood geology, but they demonstrated that young-earth creationists were capable of asking interesting questions and of doing publishable research.³⁴

Many Adventist academicians, however, seemed unaffected by the views of their more activist creationist colleagues. Indeed, several Adventists, active in their local congregations, were making contributions to science with conclusions that were decidedly out of step with traditional Adventist views. For example, Ervin Taylor, a radiocarbon expert at the University of California, Riverside, published a

significant volume discussing applications of radiocarbon dating to archaeological research; and P. Edgar Hare, staff scientist at Carnegie Geophysical Laboratory, was using his amino acid racimization dating technique to provide a temporal framework for prehistoric human artifacts. Most Adventist scientists busied themselves with answering safer, more functional questions about nature.³⁵

Field Conferences and Publications

Conservatives and progressives seemed to agree on one thing during the 1980s and early 1990s: Both publications and field conferences were crucial means of educating the masses. Numerous articles appeared in Adventist periodicals during this period addressing a variety of issues impinging on earth history. Moreover, field trips, usually held in connection with conferences, were commonly arranged events.

The most regularly scheduled conference and field trip was the annual BRISCO meeting sponsored by the General Conference. In addition to regular BRISCO members, interested scientists and biblical scholars from denominational institutions as well as other individuals were invited to attend the meetings and to present papers. The Geoscience Research Institute coordinated these forays. GRI's paradigm of Flood geology and short-term chronology provided the framework for presentations and discussions, though in later years considerable diversity of opinion on geology and time was openly expressed.³⁶

Several recurrent topics dominated the discussions at BRISCO. Biblical scholars such as Gerhard Hasel and William Shea often presented exegetical treatments of the Genesis creation and flood accounts, attempting to demonstrate that the meaning of the Hebrew words supported traditional Adventist inter-

pretations. Many papers wrestled with the issue of time and the geologic column, with considerable effort devoted to identifying levels in the column where the Flood left its mark.

Particularly contentious were arguments over ancient "lakebed sediments" in southwestern Wyoming. H. Paul Buchheim, a Loma Linda University geologist, had found what he considered to be incontrovertible evidence that these were true lakebed deposits laid down over many seasons. However, given their intermediate position in the geologic column, others preferred to assume these sediments had resulted from late paroxysms of the Flood. Meetings also featured periodic updates on a "paleocurrent" model under long-term development by Southwestern Adventist College biologist Arthur V. Chadwick. Chadwick had expended enormous energy to develop a computer simulation of the predominant orientations of water currents at various levels of the geologic column. The remarkable consistency of these orientations at each level he interpreted as evidence for the ebb and flow of the Genesis flood waters.³⁷

One member of BRISCO, Warren H. Johns, represented a minority of Adventists formally schooled in both science and theology. After seminary training and a brief stint as a pastor, Johns completed a master's degree in paleontology at Michigan State University before assuming associate editorship of *Ministry* magazine. After four years at *Ministry*, he entered the Ph.D. program in theology at Andrews University, while at the same time serving as seminary librarian. Johns, a conservative by nature who assiduously trawled the scientific, theological, and creationist literature, brought a sense of realism to Adventist creationism. In papers presented at BRISCO, he cautioned participants to read both science and Scripture carefully to look for actual, rather than contrived, harmonies. During the early 1990s, he coordinated an annual field trip to southern Indiana where participants, mostly

from Andrews University, inspected Pennsylvania rocks containing at least six years' worth of tidal cycle activity. Adventists usually thought that Pennsylvania coal-bearing rocks were laid down during the year of the Genesis flood, but according to Johns, these preserved tidal cycles suggested that the Flood deposits must occur either above or below this level.³⁸

In addition to BRISCO, the Geoscience Research Institute coordinated other tours and conferences in North America, Europe, and Australia. Participants were often pastors, secondary-level science teachers, and church administrators. GRI speakers pointed out problems with standard evolutionary interpretations of geologic formations and in their place offered Flood-based explanations. One such conference was held in the summer of 1991 for North American Division college and union conference presidents. Even newly elected General Conference President Robert S. Folkenberg and his predecessor Neal Wilson attended. Roth took the occasion to inform the new president and other participants that large numbers of Adventist scientists had become evolutionists. After the meetings, alarmed administrators returned to their posts wondering how to deal with the problem at their institutions.³⁹

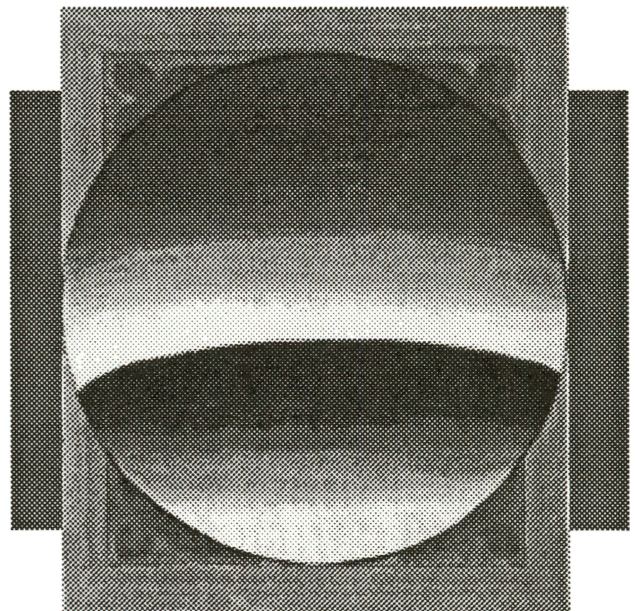
In 1985, the Association of Adventist Forums conducted a geology field conference in the Wyoming Rockies. Modeled after GRI field conferences held before GRI's "conservative restoration," the event was led by former GRI director Richard Ritland and fellow revisionist colleagues P. Edgar Hare, Edward Lugenbeal, and Bill Hughes. A few attendees like Hughes were regular BRISCO participants, but the overlap was minimal. The 104 registrants participated in one of two field trips and an intervening five-day conference.

Conference presenters dealt with three themes: earth history, the biblical record, and responses by Christians seeking to reconcile

their faith with the evidence from science. The field trips featured some of the classic geologic sites in the Rockies, including the Cretaceous coal seams of Price, Utah, the Green River Formation of Wyoming, the spectacular Wind River Mountain deposits, and Yellowstone's fossil forests. As Karen Bottomley reported in *Spectrum*, "The conference generated some feelings of apprehension, partly because not all of the familiar answers seem adequate to explain what we saw, and because participants were concerned that the issue of origins might be divisive for the Adventist Church." But it also generated "excitement and spiritual commitment" in the context of the "Adventist tradition of progressive truth."⁴⁰

While field conferences provided participants with firsthand exposure to the evidence and opportunities to discuss issues with the experts, publications reached a wider audience and established a more permanent record of thought and activity. *Origins*, published by GRI, devoted itself completely to the topic of earth history and the Creation/evolution controversy. *Origins* made its debut in 1974 with Roth as its editor. From its first issue, the masthead carried an impressive roster of pro-

From *Historia Scholastica*: "God Separated the light from the darkness . . . the first day" (Genesis 1:4).



duction personnel, board members, and consultants, nearly all with “Ph.D.” appended to their names. The journal was well edited and carried articles on topics ranging from the significance of cruelty in nature to the cosmological implications of data from Jupiter and Venus. While articles were generally supportive of conservative creationism, several pieces debunked some of the more egregious creationist claims. For example, in 1981, Arthur Chadwick tried to lay to rest the recurring but false creationist assertion that pollen grains had been found in the Precambrian rocks of the Grand Canyon. In the same year, Richard Ritland countered the creationist perception that the geologic column was the concoction of infidel geologists intent on propping up the theory of evolution.⁴¹

While GRI focused primarily on geology, paleontology, and geochronology, topics of biological interest also appeared in *Origins*. Two such articles were particularly noteworthy for breaking new ground in the official Adventist press. The first, coauthored

From *Historia Scholastica*: “God made two great lights . . . and the stars . . . the fourth day” (Genesis 1:14-19).



by Leonard R. Brand and Ronald L. Carter, both of Loma Linda University, argued in print what several Adventist biologists had been teaching for some time: that both animal and human social behavior is under the influence of Darwinian natural selection. The implications of this notion for concepts of human sin, free will, and judgment were, of course, enormous; but, ironically, the article generated little discussion. The second article, co-authored by Brand and L. J. Gibson, provided a creationist rationale for accepting not only natural selection, but also the possibility of some biological change at the macroevolutionary level. Previous comments on the extent of change in the official church press generally embraced microevolutionary change, but balked at anything termed macroevolution. Now, even traditionalists within the church were beginning to push for higher levels of biological change.⁴²

Spectrum, which had, during the 1970s, catalyzed a shift in the views of its readership on issues related to earth history, carried fewer articles on the topic during the 1980s and early 1990s. Nonetheless, several significant contributions appeared. Gordon Shigley provided a historical analysis of the intended meaning and subsequent interpretations of Ellen White’s ambiguous “amalgamation of man and beast” statements. Both F. E. J. Harder and Larry G. Herr sought to bring readers beyond an elementary reading of the Genesis creation account toward a grander view of the doctrine of Creation. By comparing the 1953 and 1978 editions of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Bill Hughes documented a significant shift in Adventist views from Price’s unyielding Flood geology to Harold W. Clark’s more accommodating “new diluvialism.” Fritz Guy reminded readers that when it comes to paradigms of earth history, there is no free lunch—each requires some form of compromise. Gary Gilbert shocked even some of his more liberal readers with the suggestion that

genetic evidence strongly favors a common ancestry for chimpanzees and humans. James Hayward argued that Adventists need to consider a broader spectrum of biological evidence than is customary when they attempt to model the past, and examined the history of Adventist interpretations of dinosaurs. John Baldwin dusted off William Paley's "argument from design" and brought it center stage to the Adventist Creation/evolution debate.⁴³

The *Adventist Review*, official organ of the church, contained several informative and thought-provoking pieces on the topic of faith and the natural world. During the summer of 1993, for example, when excitement over the movie *Jurassic Park* had reached fever-pitch levels, the *Review* commissioned an article on dinosaurs. When printed, it was accompanied by a flashy color illustration of the prehistoric creatures on the cover. "Dinomania has hit the *Adventist Review*!" one pastor responded. "And why not, if you can deal with it in such a forthright and balanced manner?" But another pastor pled instead for "more covers of Jesus, the ministering church, His body, and people taking their stand for the Lord."⁴⁴

Thus, through field conferences and publications, Adventist creationism influenced many people in many different ways. That influence was never greater, however, than it was on Seventh-day Adventist church administrator Richard L. Hammill.

The Journey of Richard L. Hammill

Richard L. Hammill completed a 44-year tour of duty in denominational service in 1980, retiring as a general vice-president of the General Conference. As a theology major at Walla Walla College, he said he had learned "progressive Adventism" from William Landeen, Frederick Schilling, and George McCready Price. Doctoral studies in Middle

Eastern studies at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute had made him aware of problems facing Adventists hoping to cling to Ussher's chronology. After completing his Ph.D., however, he soon became absorbed with church and academic administrative responsibilities and for many years was unable to pursue this interest.⁴⁵

In the late 1950s, when he was with the Department of Education at the General Conference, Hammill had lobbied for a church-sponsored program to help Adventist science teachers deal with issues of earth history. As a result, the Committee on the Teaching of Geology and Paleontology was established which, in 1958, gave birth to the Geoscience Research Institute. Hammill took great personal interest in GRI—he sat on its board of directors until his 1980 retirement, participated in most of its earlier field trips, and poured over staff-member reports.⁴⁶

When, in the fall of 1980, Hammill drove out of Washington, D.C. and into retirement—"singing at the top of my voice"—he headed west and soon found himself reading the earth history he had reluctantly set aside following his Chicago days. He used his time to re-evaluate the theories of continental drift and plate tectonics, to reconsider human history in light of the Pleistocene fossil record, and to troll the literature on radioactive isotope dating.⁴⁷

Nine years later, the septuagenarian scholar would report his conclusion that

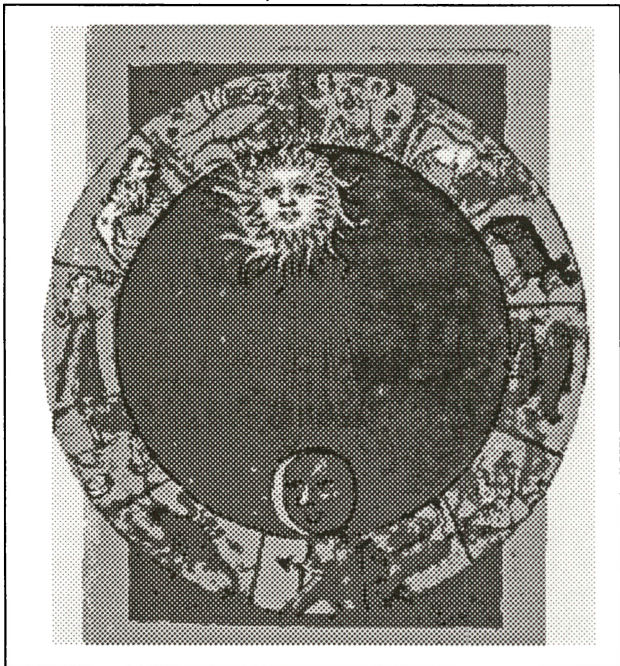
animals [were] living in the earth . . . millions of years ago before these [continental] plates separated. And, moreover, as I got to looking into the geologic column, I had to recognize . . . that the geologic column is valid, that some forms of life were extinct before other forms of life came into existence. I had to recognize that the forms of life that we are acquainted with mostly, like the ungulate hoof animals, the primates, man himself, exist only in the very top little thin layer of the Holocene, and that many forms of life were extinct before these ever came in, which, of course, is a big step for a Seventh-day Adventist

when you are taught that every form of life came into existence in six days. . . . I had felt it for many, many years, but finally there in about 1983 I had to say to myself, That's right. The steadily accumulating evidence in the natural world has forced a reevaluation in the way that I look and understand and interpret parts of the Bible.

Hammill said he hadn't turned into an evolutionist, though he thought that "evolutionists have a lot of things on their side. . . . I am what people would call a progressive creationist. I do believe that all forms of life came into existence by the creative power of God."⁴⁸

Hammill's about-face was met with horror on the part of church conservatives. Progressives, on the other hand, could scarcely control their glee over Hammill's shift. When Lawrence Geraty introduced Hammill to an Association of Adventist Forums group in Seattle in 1989, he recalled how, during the 1960s and 1970s, he had, as a young seminary professor at Andrews, chafed under then-President Hammill's efforts to rein him in. "In those days I could hardly have imagined inviting our speaker to share his testimony on

From *Historia Scholastica*: "God created . . . every living creature that moves . . . the fifth day" (Genesis 1:20-25).



his journey as a progressive believer," confessed Geraty, "but to his credit he is one of the few converts to Adventism that I know who, after his retirement, has truly made a transition to a progressive faith."⁴⁹

Spectrum and *Adventist Today* ran articles in which Hammill reviewed his history within Adventist creationism and chronicled the shift in his thinking. In 1992, Andrews University Press published his memoirs, noting on the dust cover that, "because of its openness, *Pilgrimage* breaks new ground in the field of Adventist autobiography."⁵⁰

Hammill remained faithful to the Adventist Church, though admitting that he felt "most at home with committed, loyal Adventists who like to investigate new ideas." In his "spiritual pilgrimage," he had

sought through the years to grow in my understanding of God, of Biblical teachings, of the universe, and of the marvelous and complex environment, physical and social, in which God has placed us. This search for ever-increasing truth was carried on within the freedom, the nurture and the context of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and, I believe, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of God.⁵¹

Ironically, the freedom and nurture that sustained Hammill during his quest for truth would soon be challenged at the highest level of church administration.

1994 Panel Discussion at Loma Linda University

Raymond F. Cottrell, following a distinguished career as a member of the church's "Daniel Committee" and associate editor of *Adventist Review* and *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, in 1993 became founding editor of *Adventist Today*, an independent, bimonthly periodical devoted to "news, analysis, and opinion." On April 2, 1994, *Adventist Today* sponsored a panel discussion on Ad-

ventist creationism, moderated by Cottrell, in the Loma Linda University Church youth chapel. Attended by an overflow crowd, the event would send shock waves through the world church.⁵²

Though billed as a panel discussion, the interaction functioned more like a debate. Sitting at Cottrell's right were Ariel Roth, Robert Brown, and Clyde Webster, of the Geoscience Research Institute. Seated to his left were Richard Hammill, Ervin Taylor, and P. Edgar Hare. Taylor, professor and chair of the department of anthropology, University of California, Riverside, and an expert on radio-carbon dating, had long been a critic of GRI. Hare, a staff scientist at Carnegie Institution's Geophysical Laboratory in Washington, D.C., was an original member of the Geoscience Research Institute team and had pioneered the development of the amino acid dating technique.⁵³

Hammill, Hare, and Taylor had been assigned to "present problems," while Roth, Brown, and Webster were charged with explaining "what the church has done and is doing" about these problems. Hammill began by recounting how GRI had been established to "deal adequately with the problem" of geochronology in relation to the Adventist understanding of scriptural history. "The book of Genesis correctly describes events in the development of human culture but telescopes or foreshortens the time factor," he said.⁵⁴

Hare explained that fossils of different organisms appeared at different levels of the geologic column, with the earliest appearing in rocks about three billion years old. He reviewed the evidence for continental drift and changes in climate indicated by the Greenland ice core and deep sea cores. He concluded that "mod-

ern humans are a very recent life form on earth," and that "most fossils and geologic activity are not the result of a single event."⁵⁵

Taylor argued that not only should the time frame for the fossil record be "measured in hundreds of millions of years," but that human-like fossils extend the record of our own ancestry "back hundreds of thousands and even several million years." He opined that GRI's "attempt to gather information that refutes the mass of existing scientific data concerning the vast age of the fossil and archaeological record" was "reminiscent of tobacco interests which seek to discredit evidence that the use of tobacco causes lung cancer."⁵⁶

Brown initiated the conservative response by reaffirming his belief that the Bible is "the ultimate means for understanding the past," and that "the testimony of the Bible can be validated by scientific enterprise, if conducted correctly." He said that Jesus' "conversion of about 150 gallons of water into choice grape juice" and his feeding of "over 10,000 hungry people" with the five loaves and two fish show that God intervenes in the normal course of events. "The challenge before us today is not to explain these events but to accept the divinely-attested historical records of their

Adapted from an early 16th-century German engraving.



occurrence. . . . There is no need to prove that a man might survive three days in the stomach of a whale. The need is to . . . recognize that God could create an animal, or miniature submarine, specifically designed to preserve Jonah's life."⁵⁷

Roth contrasted the variety of views of earth history with the "biblical model of creation by one God in six days." For example, "it would be a strange God who would create varied forms of life over billions of years and then ask us . . . to keep the Sabbath because he created all in six days." Moreover, belief in the occurrence of death and evil before the origin of humans "challenges the story of the fall and its consequences on nature." Rather than drifting toward evolutionism, said Roth, we should note that "the rapidly growing churches in the United States are those with firm beliefs," and that we should do all we can "to bring salvation to as many as we can."⁵⁸

For information on how God created and interacts with the world, Clyde Webster said he looked to "Scripture, not science." The "standard interpretation of the fossil record found within the geologic column" needs reinterpretation in light of the progressively older radiometric dates obtained for progressively lower rocks in the earth's crust. But according to Webster, there was reason to hope this problem could be resolved in a way consistent with the belief in a recent six-day creation and subsequent worldwide flood.⁵⁹

After time for rebuttal on both sides, the panel fielded questions from the audience. Hammill found opportunity to comment extensively on appropriate and inappropriate uses of Scripture, as well as the nature of evidence for an old earth. As far as he was concerned, he said, the battle for a short chronology "is already over." Taylor and Brown got into several verbal tussles over the accuracy of radiometric dating versus a Flood-

based chronology, with an exasperated Brown finally losing his composure:

Well, the question is, Do you want to believe in the flood? Believe in it! If you don't, don't believe in it! That's your choice. . . . I choose to place my faith on taking the Bible straightforward in the way it reads. I may be wrong in doing that, but I think the risk is much less that way than any other way I could go.⁶⁰

Cottrell had given listeners two opportunities to leave during the afternoon, but three hours into the meeting most of the audience remained, mesmerized. The fact that revisionist comments, particularly those of Hammill, had generated the most applause gave reason for hope to some, but to others gave cause for alarm.

President Folkenberg Reacts

It did not take long for an official reaction. On April 4, church president Robert S. Folkenberg, though not personally present at the Loma Linda discussion, reported to Adventist leaders throughout the world, in his "From the GC President" newsletter, that the

historicity of the Scripture and the Genesis account of creation came under attack last Sabbath afternoon, not by secular forces but by two retired church workers, Raymond Cottrell [sic] (retired associate editor of the *Adventist Review*) and Richard Hammill (retired vice-president of the General Conference and former president of Andrews University), during a panel debate in California.

Folkenberg then noted that Roth and his colleagues from GRI had "pointed out that interpretation of frequently-conflicting data can vary widely, depending on the presuppositions of the scientist."⁶¹

Two weeks later, Folkenberg devoted the entire issue of his newsletter to the topic of "creation/evolution."

We believe that God created life on this earth in six literal days, just a few thousand years ago. . . .

Some Seventh-day Adventist theologians debate the historicity of Scripture and its inspiration. To accept the Scripture as authoritative means accepting the reality of creation and the flood as described in the first eleven chapters of Genesis. Seventh-day Adventist scientists, on the other hand, must struggle with the tension between “scientific integrity” . . . and “theological integrity.” Is it possible to be a Seventh-day Adventist (creationist) and a scientist? There seems [sic] to be two likely outcomes.

The first, hoped-for outcome, wrote Folkenberg, would be a scientist who “searches for that which supports (a) a short chronology (thousands versus millions of years), and (b) Catastrophism versus the gradual or uniformitarian deposition of the geologic column, or which (c) demonstrates weaknesses in the evolutionary arguments.” “Evidence is growing,” he wrote, “that [a] second outcome is increasingly common in several divisions of our world church.” This “accommodationist” outcome results in the scientist trying to “reconcile the Bible to contemporary scientific interpretations” including the reinterpretation of “the six days of creation to represent millions of years. . . . Of these the questions can legitimately be asked, are they really creationists, as Seventh-day Adventists understand that term to mean?”⁶²

In the aftermath of the April 2 meeting, *Adventist Today* published the results of a 1994 survey it commissioned of science faculties at Adventist colleges and universities in North America. Of 121 respondents, 92.6 percent held that the “Bible is God’s word with human thought forms and perspectives,” 64.5 percent accepted the notion that “most fossils result from the worldwide, Bible flood,” and 43 percent believed that “God created live organisms during six days less than 10,000 years ago.” But a troubling 28.1 percent of the respondents favored some form of progressive creation or the evolution of life over extended periods of time. “Perhaps the biblical account of so momentous

an event as creation is purposefully brief, allowing us the freedom to struggle over a universal reality,” wrote Loma Linda University’s Floyd Petersen, the biostatistician who assembled the report. “We might all be surprised when someday we hear the details explained by The One who was there.”⁶³

Folkenberg, however, hoped for an earlier, more earthly resolution. As a result of his concern, a blue-ribbon panel of Adventist scientists was established by early 1995 to study the problem; moreover, John Baldwin was invited to make a presentation at the 1995 Autumn Council on Adventist worldviews related to science and faith. For his part, Folkenberg was touring North American churches and institutions, questioning the loyalty of anyone who felt free to stray from an historic Adventist faith. “Nurture,” which presumably allowed for such freedom, he declared, was a “four-letter word.”⁶⁴

By the end of 1995, Adventist creationism stood at an important crossroad. Earlier voices were fading. A larger and more diverse generation of scientists and theologians was setting the terms of conversation now than in 1980. Indeed, the Loma Linda panel discussion, and articles in independent Adventist publications, showed just how variant Adventist views on earth history had become. Church administrators could attempt to contain the growing diversity of opinion by intimidation or force—counterproductive and ineffective approaches, given the complexity of the issues involved. By contrast, leadership could encourage open and honest discussion of evidence from as many sources and perspectives as possible in the traditional Adventist belief that truth will endure scrutiny. Either way, as it approached the new millennium, Adventist creationism would continue to be reshaped by an ever-growing and ever more-diverse army of practitioners.

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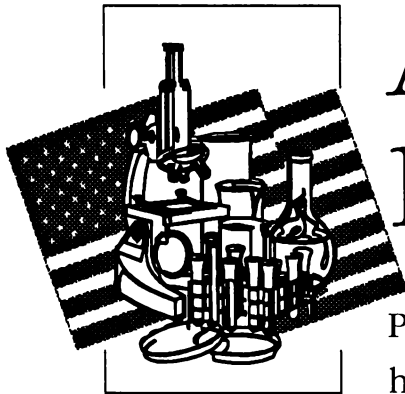
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Adventists and Biological Warfare

Project Whitecoat enlisted hundreds of U.S. Adventists into hazardous biological experiments for the good of the country.

by Krista Thompson Smith

FOR 20 YEARS, SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST NON-combatant servicemen participated in defensive biological warfare research for the United States Army. The program, based at Fort Detrick, Maryland, was known as Project Whitecoat. Approximately 2,200 Adventists volunteered for medical research experiments. Another 800 assisted in the program as laboratory technicians, ward attendants, and clerks.¹

Both the Adventist Church and the Army praised this project highly. Members of Congress, scientists, and the press criticized the Adventist Church's involvement. Some of the questions raised about this largely forgotten project remain unanswered. Was Project Whitecoat a humanitarian program, devoted solely to the development of vaccines and treatment for disease? Or were critics correct when they charged that the Adventist Church collaborated with the U.S. Army, risked the

health of its members, and even supported the development of offensive weapons for conducting germ warfare? Project Whitecoat continues to raise concretely the issue of how the Adventist Church should relate to government and its use of science.

In 1953 and 1954, human volunteers participated in a study of Q-fever, known as the CD-22 program. The success of this project, and the authorization to use volunteers for defensive studies, cleared the way for the establishment of Project Whitecoat. The exact origin of the name is unclear, but the first research project, using specifically Whitecoat volunteers, began in 1958, with the goal of identifying the infectious dosage of *P. Tularensis*. In 1964, Whitecoat volunteers also began participating in studies involving immunizations for both tularemia and Venezuelan Equine Encephalomyelitis (VEE).² By the time Project Whitecoat ended in 1973, with the discontinuation of the draft, volunteers had also participated in research involving Eastern and Western Equine Encephalomyelitis, sand fly fever, yellow fever, typhoid fever, Rocky

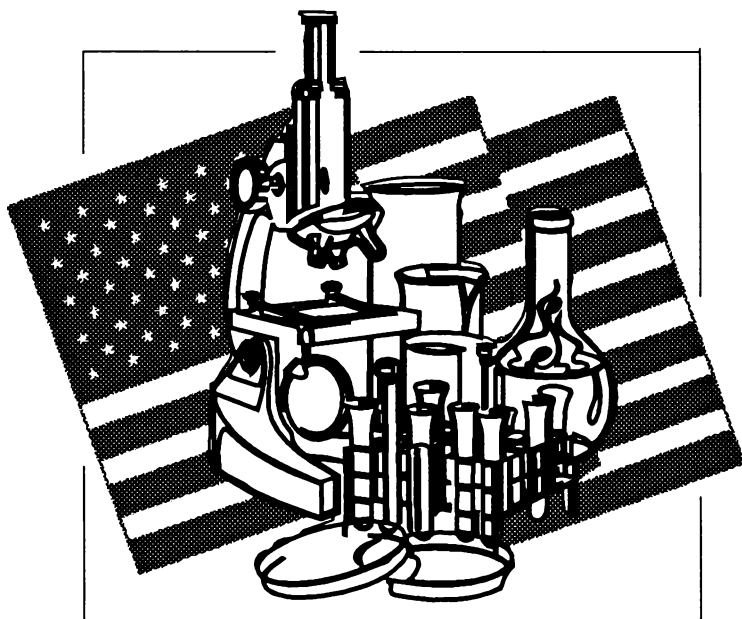
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Mountain spotted fever, Rift Valley Fever, and several other diseases. In addition, Whitecoat men were used to compare gas masks and test isolation suits for astronauts, and participated in numerous other experiments that used both men and animals as subjects.³

Adventists Join Whitecoat

The involvement of Seventh-day Adventists in Project Whitecoat began in October 1954, when George E. Armstrong, U.S. Army Surgeon General, contacted Theodore R. Flaiz, secretary of the Medical Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Armstrong wished to obtain church approval for the Army to approach Adventist draftees about volunteering for a research program that would contribute significantly to the nation's health and security.

Church and military leaders gave various reasons for the Army's choice of Seventh-day Adventist men, ranging from the "well-known humanitarian ideals" of the Adventist Church⁴ to the basic need to narrow the pool of candidates. Although not all volunteers were vegetarians, nondrinkers, and nonsmokers,



Adventists did provide a fairly homogeneous group of research subjects. Col. Dan Crozier, commanding officer of Project Whitecoat after 1961, explained, "Because of high principles and temperate living, Adventist men are more nearly uniform in physical fitness and mental outlook. We find the soldiers to be cooperative and willing to serve."⁵

The Adventist Church had previously demonstrated a strong record of cooperation with the military, illustrated by the formation of the Medical Cadet Corps. Also, many Adventist physicians, with the full support of the church, attended medical school on government stipends. In World War II, Adventist doctors and nurses from the White Memorial Hospital staffed the 47th Army General Hospital (reportedly with the best dance band in the Pacific Theater).⁶ As J. R. Nelson expressed it, "Adventists, even though considered non-combatant, are willing to serve their country in time of war."⁷

Church leaders praised Adventist war heroes from World War II, giving special attention to the accomplishments of Corporal Desmond Doss, a noncombatant medic. Doss, who in 1945 saved the lives of more than 75 men in one battle on Okinawa, received the Congressional Medal of Honor. Several years later, the Adventist War Services Commission established a training camp for the Medical Cadet Corps, and named it Camp Desmond T. Doss.⁸

With such events in mind, Flaiz responded positively to Armstrong's proposal. Flaiz wrote that "if anyone should recognize a debt of loyalty and service for the many courtesies and considerations received from the Department of Defense, we, as Adventists, are in a position to feel a debt of gratitude for these kind considerations."⁹

These considerations were most likely related to Sabbathkeeping problems encountered by Adventists in the service. To maintain a positive relationship with the Army, some

measure of participation was expected. As one denominational leader expressed it, "The MCC [Medical Cadet Corps] was set up to help the youth to be partially trained in medical military matters as noncombatants so they could be assigned to the medical service where the problems of Sabbath observance are much simplified."¹⁰ In part, the church supported Project Whitecoat for the same reason.¹¹ One critic of church policy, in a poem about the project, wrote, "We're trained to serve, not think. . . . Our country right or wrong, we say—/Just let us keep our holy day."¹²

Conscientious Cooperators

In the United States, most healthy males registered 1-A, for regular combat duty, while conscientious objectors, who totally opposed war and refused military service of any type, chose the 1-O option. The Adventist Church recommended filing for the compromise status of 1-A-O: conscientious objectors who would enter the military as noncombatants. Noncombatants would serve as medics, but would not bear arms.

The church found ways to support the government while it waged war. On numerous occasions, church leaders equated the 1-A-O position with "conscientious cooperation." Clark Smith explained,

. . . we are not a pacifist church in the technical sense of the way the word is used. Certainly we abhor war. However, war is in the realm of the political rather than the religious and is a matter which we as a church have felt that it is inadvisable to comment as to whether or not the government should wage that war.¹³

In spite of this seemingly neutral position, the church strongly encouraged its young men to register as 1-A-O.¹⁴ A number of men who wished to receive 1-O (conscientious objec-

tor) status felt that the church did not support their decision. The 1969 Autumn Council voted to recommend that young men first consider the 1-A-O classification, but that anyone who made the personal choice of 1-O would also receive the support of the church.¹⁵ Even after this, however, it was sometimes difficult to obtain support for a 1-O position.¹⁶

By advocating the 1-A-O draft position, denominational leaders presented the church in a positive light to the Army. The resulting relationship between the Adventist Church and the U.S. Army Medical Unit (USAMU, later USAMRIID—U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease) lasted 20 years (1954 to 1973). Army personnel selected Project Whitecoat volunteers twice a year from non-combatant servicemen completing Basic and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

To be considered for the project, the men had to have a 1-A-O draft status and indicate the Seventh-day Adventist church as their religious preference.¹⁷ The official Whitecoat recruiters were the commanding officer and detachment commander, USAMRIID. The Director of the National Service Organization (NSO) of the General Conference accompanied these Army officials to Fort Sam Houston.¹⁸ The General Conference official was present to answer questions, and to ensure that there was no coercion on the part of Army recruiters. Eligible individuals received a complete explanation of the project, including discussion of the risks involved. Additional opportunity for the men to question the Army officials was provided the next day, following individual interviews. At that point, those who wished to volunteer for the program signed a consent statement with the understanding that "volunteers may become ill and that the program is not without hazard."¹⁹

Project Whitecoat became especially attractive in the mid-1960s, when the majority of draftees received assignments to Vietnam.

Despite the lofty ideals of service proclaimed by some volunteers, the majority of Adventists volunteered for medical research for more pragmatic reasons—primarily the desire to stay in the United States. Others wished to further their medical knowledge or avoid Sabbath confrontations, while some were encouraged to join by friends and family.²⁰ Some of the participants were selected because of their athletic ability, since the project's commanding officer liked to have a good baseball team.²¹

Some participants say the program was well-known for its easy life-style. If the volunteers were not ill while on projects, they watched TV, played volleyball, horseshoes, and croquet, and worked on hobbies and crafts.²² Cooperators received promotions quickly. In addition, the Army paid volunteers for blood "donated" for research.²³ Some military personnel who did not qualify for the program tried to discredit the project out of jealousy.

Entering the Experiments

Upon arrival at Fort Detrick, Whitecoat volunteers underwent complete medical examinations. If health problems were discovered, volunteers were dismissed as research subjects.

All personnel then received regular assignments as lab technicians, animal caretakers, or office clerks. When a research project had reached the level that the directors felt was safe enough to involve human volunteers, the commanding officer summoned the Whitecoat members. He described the proposed experiment, including the purpose and risk involved, and then allowed the potential subjects to ask questions. Each member could then choose to volunteer for that particular project. After volunteering for each project, participants (with two witnesses) signed a release statement. During their term of duty,

Promises Betrayed: One Whitecoat's Experience

by Doug Morgan

In 1963, Arthur R. Torres, now senior pastor of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist church, was a medical student at the University of Mexico in Mexico City, unaware that he had committed a felony by leaving the country without receiving permission from the draft board. Upon learning of his status, he voluntarily returned and, along with other Adventist draftees claiming 1-A-O status, was stationed at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. There he was

*Doug Morgan, assistant professor of history at Columbia Union College, is a graduate of Union College. He received a doctorate in American religious history from the University of Chicago; his dissertation, *The Remnant and the Republic*, will be published by Indiana University Press.*

introduced to Project Whitecoat—an alternative form of service with advantages both practical and idealistic. However, the experiences would belie much of the promised advantages.

An assignment stateside is the first practical advantage Torres cites. It guaranteed that one would not be sent to Vietnam or even to field service in Europe. The project offered very good duty—working in a laboratory. Moreover, one would be near the world church headquarters and Columbia Union College, and enjoy abundant dating opportunities.

Torres recalls that a General Conference representative who accompanied Col. Crozier of Fort Detrick in a recruiting trip to Fort Sam Houston also employed an idealistic appeal in very strongly encouraging

participation in the program. He depicted Project Whitecoat as "a wonderful opportunity to serve the Adventist Church *and* your country." Additionally, church representatives conveyed the sense that those selected to participate constituted a kind of Adventist elite. The project was primarily carried out by soldiers who were members of the Adventist Church in good and regular standing. The Adventist chaplain at Fort Sam Houston screened out Adventist applicants known to be smoking, drinking, or not keeping the Sabbath. "It became a badge of honor to be selected," observes Torres.

Volunteers were assured, says Torres, that the project served *only* to help develop defense against biological warfare. "What they didn't tell us," he adds, "is that we would also be supporting the cultivation of

most Whitecoat members participated in one or two experiments. A few volunteered for five or six.²⁴ After admission to the research ward, volunteers received another thorough medical examination before experimentation began.

In addition to the Adventist volunteers, early experiments involved inmates from the Ohio State Penitentiary. However, the arrangement was not made public to prevent identification of the patriotic Adventist soldiers with prisoners.²⁵

Medical research at Fort Detrick fell into three general categories. The first sort of experiment studied the basic nature of disease-producing microorganisms. Researchers examined the effects of diseases introduced by unnatural methods, such as spreading infectious agents through aerosol sprays. In a biological warfare attack, microorganisms would most likely be released in an aerosol

cloud from an airplane, allowing the disease-producing agents to enter the body through the lungs. Pulmonary diseases generally progress more rapidly and are more difficult to treat than other types.²⁶

The second kind of experiment studied ways to avoid and treat infectious diseases. The major focus was developing vaccines to combat potential biological warfare agents.

The third research category involved developing means to diagnose infection within the shortest possible time. Obviously, more lives could be saved if a disease were identified and treated before the onset of clinical symptoms.

Fort Detrick maintained one of the largest animal farms in the nation. Experiments there used more than half a million animals a year.²⁷ Before exposing any human volunteers to a disease, researchers performed experiments on mice and guinea pigs, then rhesus monkeys. At the point where animal

all sorts of toxins—anthrax and other viral and bacterial strains.” Torres explains that toxins milked from organisms in the research conducted in the Project Whitecoat section of Fort Detrick were transferred to another section of the fort, beyond a fence, called the “hot area,” for use in chemical warfare. Torres himself frequently carried anthrax to the hot area in an extremely secure container, a task for which “top secret” clearance was required. “We were told,” he reports, “that this toxin is so virulent that just two or three ounces could destroy a city of 100,000 if it got into the water supply.” He questioned his commanding officer, Col. Martha Ward, but continued to receive assurances that their project was for defensive purposes only. “And yet,” he observes, “all the time I was carrying this toxin over to the hot area”—the side of Fort Detrick dedicated to chemical warfare.

“My difficulty with the whole thing,” says Torres, “is that I went in really thinking that I was going to be helping God and country, that I was going to be a human subject in a voluntary medical, experimental project that was going to yield information to the United States that would help defend us in the event that some mad person started a biological war with us. So I said, ‘Yes, this is something I as a Christian can support, because this is healing.’” That Project Whitecoat resources would be used to create a toxin of such virulence and massive destructive capability represents, for him, a betrayal of the spiritual values that in part prompted him to volunteer.

Not only were participants not fully informed about the true purposes of their work, but Torres also believes “informed consent” concerning the impact of the experiments on the health of volunteers was not achieved. “In one particular

area,” he says, “I believe that seven out of the 10 died within five years after they got out of the service.” Others, he says, have had long-term difficulties such as kidney and liver problems. He acknowledges that the cause-to-effect relationship between Project Whitecoat and these deaths and illnesses has never been established, but adds that the relationship seems “more than coincidental.”

The implications of Project Whitecoat for the relationship between church and state also trouble Torres. “It was obvious that the Adventist Church and the United States Army were in partnership trying to find volunteers,” he says. That partnership sought volunteers for a project which, though frequently billed as a humanitarian endeavor, apparently supported, at least indirectly, development of chemical weaponry with horrifying destructive capacity.

experiments could not be extrapolated to humans, and Army investigators believed the project to be safe, human volunteers could be used to test defensive measures against the disease.

The Military Praises Adventists

The General Conference proclaimed this research to be humanitarian and worth the risk, while saying that the church did not “support” Project Whitecoat—joining it was entirely an individual decision. The official position of the church was that it merely had no objection to its members participating. From the beginning, however, denominational leaders praised the program highly. In the 1955 “Statement of Attitude Regarding Volunteering for Medical Research,” W. R. Beach, secretary of the General Conference, said:

There are still conspicuous blank spaces in our knowledge of disease and its treatment. Research in these areas calls for some of the same selfless devotion in the search for lifesaving knowledge as was manifest by the pioneers of modern medicine.

It is the attitude of Seventh-day Adventists that any service rendered voluntarily by whomsoever in the useful necessary research into the cause and the treatment of disabling disease is a legitimate and laudable contribution to the success of our nation and to the health and comfort of our fellow men.²⁸

In the fall of 1966, a denominational representative at Whitecoat selection gave the required statement that the Seventh-day Adventist Church “has investigated the Project Whitecoat and feels that this activity would be in the best Christian tradition.” He then assured the volunteers that “your church feels that you are doing a very commendable thing”²⁹ and gave the usual list of advantages to joining Project Whitecoat.

The Army also seemed to be under the impression that the General Conference favored the program. Military officials often praised both the volunteers and the church for assisting with valuable research. In a letter from S. B. Hays to the chairman of the SDA War Service Commission, the army surgeon general mentioned that “we have had the active support of several members of the General Conference.”³⁰ And in a recorded speech addressed to a 1965 youth congress, Col. Dan Crozier gave the names of a number of church leaders who “have all been active in this project and have played a significant role in its continuing success.” The names included Joseph R. Nelson, National Service Organization director; Clark Smith, National Service Organization associate director; and Thomas Green, civilian chaplain for the Washington, D.C., area.³¹

For a number of years, the Army paid Clark Smith’s expenses to travel with the Whitecoat recruiters³² to explain the church position and ensure that all questions were answered. In 1973, Col. Crozier presented Smith with an Army award—the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal—for his work as associate and then director of the NSO, praising him for “distinguishing himself by outstanding service to the U.S. Army.”³³

The level of General Conference support varied through the years. Some prospective volunteers reported feeling no church urging at all,³⁴ while others felt strongly encouraged to join the research program.³⁵ But even if the General Conference did not always specifically urge Adventist draftees to join Whitecoat at recruiting sessions, it certainly came close to doing so in church publications. There, the enthusiastic praise is in black and white. A *Review and Herald* article in November 1955 stated:

It is with pride in the courage and unselfish devotion of the men who participated in this project that we indicate that they properly belong

in the ranks of those who have gone “above and beyond the call of duty.”

Sustain these men with your letters and your prayers as they carry on for God and Country.³⁶

A later article called the program “humanitarian service of the highest type.”³⁷

The General Conference National Service Organization printed a pamphlet for prospective Whitecoat volunteers, which also painted the program in glowing colors. The pamphlet, written by chaplain Thomas Green, glossed over many negative aspects of the program. Instead, Green listed some of the benefits of being stationed at Fort Detrick: knowledge of assignment location, variety of job opportunities, fellowship with other Adventists, and being near the General Conference headquarters and Columbia Union College.

He then addressed the disadvantages. To those who complained that they missed their chance to go overseas, Green replied, “Some have used leave time, however, to take trips overseas in military aircraft.” To those who were unhappy with their jobs, or did not get along with their associates, he said that such problems could happen anywhere. The most serious objection involved risking one’s health. Green stated that of the more than 1,000 Adventists participants, only a half-dozen had felt that their health had been damaged. He concluded that “most feel they have benefited by the very thorough physical examinations they have undergone upon arrival in the unit.”³⁸

Despite such defenses, criticism of the church’s involvement in Project Whitecoat intensified. National Service Organization leaders claimed that the church was not involved: “This is a project of the United States Army and each person engaged in the project makes a personal decision as to whether or not he will volunteer for it.”³⁹

Even when an Adventist official told the men to make their own decisions, having a Na-

tional Service Organization official from the General Conference present during the recruitment certainly made Adventist draftees conclude that the church supported the program. One volunteer said that he joined the program in 1955 because he was naive and easily influenced, assured by the mere presence of G. W. Chambers that Project Whitecoat was perfectly acceptable.⁴⁰

Adventists Involved in Making Biological Warfare Weapons?

Chemical and biological warfare research received increasing coverage in the press. Both the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) aired programs early in 1969. The networks linked Project Whitecoat with development of offensive biological weapons.⁴¹ Many newspaper and magazine articles appeared as well, some without adequate background study.

Seymour Hersh, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author of a well-documented book on chemical and biological weapons,⁴² published an article on biological warfare in the *New York Times Magazine*⁴³ that referred to Adventist involvement. A few months later, Hersh published an exposé in *Ramparts*. “Adventist leadership,” he said, “has elevated service in Project Whitecoat almost to an act of faith.” Hersh proceeded to accuse the church of being “content with a morality of form without substance, one in which the arts of disease can be presented as the healing arts, and in which germ warfare can be embraced in pious obedience to a divine injunction against death.”⁴⁴

Hersh, an otherwise reputable journalist, failed to contact Fort Detrick before writing about Project Whitecoat. He believed that Project Whitecoat was classified, and that he would therefore receive no information. To

his credit, Hersh did contact the Adventist Church.⁴⁵

In both the *New York Times Magazine* and *Ramparts*, Hersh included a description of symptoms an anonymous Whitecoat participant claimed to experience after being injected with an endotoxin: "Within an hour, the top of my head felt like all the gremlins in Hades were inside trying to emerge by hitting the underside of my skull with sledge hammers."

This quote also appeared about the same time in the *National Examiner*—in a first-person narrative account written by Steven Heczke. Heczke claimed that three of his friends in Project Whitecoat died "horrifying deaths" from anthrax. He himself eventually recovered, received \$50, and was free to leave. If he "breathed a word of the experiment," Heczke was told, he would be "held for breach of defense secrets."⁴⁶

Col. Crozier responded to the *National Examiner* article, stating that none of the four draftees mentioned had ever participated in any Whitecoat experiment, nor had anyone died as a result of experiments at the unit. Crozier concluded, "There are so many errors and falsifications in this article that further detailed refutation is not considered necessary."⁴⁷

Nevertheless, the amount of negative publicity that Project Whitecoat received led many Adventists to question the involvement of their church in the program. Martin Turner, a leading critic of church participation, wrote:

Even if none of the allegations by NBC, CBS, and Mr. Hersh are, in fact, true, the fact remains that the church, rightly or wrongly, has reaped a significant amount of unfavorable publicity from its involvement at Fort Detrick. This hardly seems in line with the instruction to "avoid even the appearances of evil." Even if the Whitecoats are morally just that—lily white—the appearances have been such that two major networks and the author of a well-documented book have been misled.⁴⁸

Finally, in 1969, the General Conference acknowledged the need to examine the project

more closely. Chair of the nine-person Whitecoat Study Committee was Neal Wilson.⁴⁹ Although none of the committee members was an avowed opponent of Project Whitecoat, several did have reservations about the church's involvement. After a two-hour interview with Col. Crozier, head of Fort Detrick, each member of the committee was invited to ask additional questions. The minutes report that the committee "indicated a complete satisfaction with answers given by Col. Crozier and a unanimous agreement with the program now being carried on." The committee then recommended that an article appear in the *Review and Herald*, "as clearly and completely as possible emphasizing the positive aspects of this humanitarian program."⁵⁰

General Conference officials also explained Adventist participation on the basis that Whitecoats engaged in only defensive research—treatment of communicable diseases. However, both the offensive and defensive branches of CBW research were located at Fort Detrick. Furthermore, funding for offensive and defensive research came from different sources, but the two facilities were kept together to enable them to share certain equipment.⁵¹ Whitecoat members did participate in some experiments in the "hot" area, however, so all were required to have a security clearance.

At the end of this fateful year, President Richard Nixon announced on November 25, 1969, that he would submit to Congress for ratification a ban of chemical and biological warfare. Nixon stated that the United States would renounce the use of chemical and biological weapons and destroy current stockpiles. However, this did not have a great effect on Fort Detrick. There was some pressure to demilitarize the institution and reassign the study of infectious diseases to the National Institutes of Health, or some other similar organization,⁵² but the defensive research remained unaffected by any new policies.

Adventists Linked to *Offensive* Biological Weapons

The announcement regarding the end of offensive chemical and biological warfare experimentation did not end the controversy over Project Whitecoat. Skeptics claimed that a mere public statement by the Army regarding a change in intent would not necessarily involve any real revisions in procedure. Congressman Richard McCarthy, a New York Democrat leader in the campaign against chemical and biological warfare, studied government policies and came to the conclusion that Project Whitecoat was “offensive, not defensive, and that the Seventh-day Adventists are being duped.”⁵³

At first, church leaders seemed unwilling to admit that the line between offensive and defensive research is hazy. Pure research in and of itself is neither good nor bad; the results can always be used to help or harm others. Once results are published, it is difficult to prevent misuse or misapplication. And any discoveries made in defensive research laboratories will most likely be adapted for offensive purposes.

Indeed, some critics believed that Project Whitecoat experiments were primarily intended for offensive purposes. The program came under suspicion for several reasons. First, vaccines must be available for one's own troops before it is safe to use any given agent in germ warfare. The Army claimed that having a known immunization for a disease would remove that microorganism from the world's biological weapons arsenal, but as Elinor Langer expressed it,

In the context of biological warfare even life-saving techniques such as immunization take on a strange aspect: immunity among one's own population and troops is a prerequisite to the initiation of disease by our own forces, as well as a precaution against its initiation by others. Some diseases are currently excluded from active consideration as BW [biological warfare] agents chiefly because no vaccines against them have yet been developed.⁵⁴

To be a serious threat as a biological weapon, an organism must be highly infectious, producible in quantity, stable, suitable for aerosolization, and, of course, applicable to the mission. Although these criteria limit the po-

Adventist volunteers for Project Whitecoat. Left to right, FRONT ROW: Harry Galland, David Ludwig, Galen Carruth, Ronald Kwakenat, Fredrick Murray, Albert Wear, Russell Friend, and Carlos Olivares. BACK ROW: Joseph Calvert, Shannon Goodwin, Gary Norman, Terry Carlisle, John Morris, Robert Read, Charles Creech, Kenneth Thompson, David Green, and Dennis Gustafson. Photograph courtesy of General Conference Archives.



tential chemical and biological warfare arsenal to some degree, enemy forces could still use variable strains of familiar microorganisms that would be more resistant or would produce slightly different symptoms than the target population expected.⁵⁵

The primary use of the research done at Fort Detrick was for the military. And because the majority of the diseases researched were tropical, it seemed likely that the Army was planning for the safety of its troops overseas. The program had begun with an emphasis on developing vaccines, but by the late 1960s, Army officials had realized the impracticality of full-scale immunization (even for the military) and had shifted the focus to finding more effective means of diagnosis and treatment.⁵⁶

The research actually did benefit the public as well as the military. Col. W. D. Tigertt, commanding officer of Project Whitecoat before Crozier, stated in 1961 that despite the risk involved, the program would have benefits: "The results obtained will be applicable to the control of disease, whether or not use of biological weapons ever becomes a reality."⁵⁷ Fort Detrick published much of its work, and several of the vaccines developed controlled serious epidemics of disease. For example, a 1969 outbreak of VEE in Ecuador traveled north and reached Texas by 1971. Thousands of horses were immunized, 85 to 90 percent of which would have died without the vaccine.⁵⁸

Publication of research results calmed some fears that Whitecoat members were engaging

A Brief History of Fort Detrick

At Camp Detrick, during World War II, scientists initially carried out research on animals, believing that livestock might be the prime target of a biological warfare attack. Army researchers developed several vaccines before turning the program over to the Department of Agriculture in 1954.¹

During the Korean War, many more soldiers died of infectious diseases than from wounds. Because most American servicemen had never been exposed to such diseases, they had no natural resistance. Not only were soldiers susceptible overseas, but such diseases might also be used in biological warfare against the United States. No programs to develop immunizations for such diseases were underway, so the Army established the forerunners of Project Whitecoat. The program had a dual purpose: defense against naturally acquired diseases and protection from microorganisms used in biological warfare.

The authorization to use volun-

teers in the defensive biological warfare project came in 1955. The program was required to follow the criteria for medical research established at the Nuremberg Military Tribunal following World War II. These requirements included voluntary consent, no human experimentation that could "predictably lead to death or permanent disabling injury," and adequate medical care. The experiments had to be of value to society, the results of which would be unavailable otherwise. All unnecessary suffering must be avoided, and risks should never exceed the potential benefits. Volunteers could withdraw at any time from experiments taking them beyond the limits of their physical or mental endurance.²

In 1956, the Army organized and activated the U.S. Army Medical Unit (USAMU) at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland. It was administratively attached to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C. USAMU would be responsible for conducting research and develop-

ment in defensive biological warfare.³ The following year, Ward 200 was established at Fort Detrick to provide medical treatment for military personnel in the program. In 1969, the government redesignated the USAMU as the United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID). Its mission statement said its purpose was to conduct "studies related to medical defensive aspects of biological warfare" and to develop "appropriate biological protective measures, diagnostic procedures, and therapeutic methods."⁴

1. Richard M. Clendenin, *Science and Technology at Fort Detrick: 1943-1968* (Frederick, Md.: Fort Detrick Technical Information Division, 1968), p. 30.

2. United States Army, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, "Project Whitecoat: A History," February 14, 1974, p. 2.

3. Clendenin, p. 34.

4. United States Army, USAMRIID, "Mission Statement: U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases," n.d.

in secret offensive experiments. Others, however, felt that the Army was still capable of hiding the truth. Part of the controversy stemmed from questions about whether or not Project Whitecoat research was classified.

A 1967 article in *Science* explained part of the reason that Whitecoat research was not given more publicity:

The chemical and biological weapons program is one of the most secret of all U.S. military efforts—not because it is the most important of our military R&D activities, but because the Pentagon believes it is the most easily misunderstood and because it provokes the most emotional distress and moral turbulence.⁵⁹

This perceived secrecy contributed to the conspiracy theories in circulation.

A military fact sheet about Project Whitecoat defended the program as follows:

The entire research program of this organization is unclassified and all information accruing from these studies is reported, if appropriate, in the medical literature. Thus the results of the total effort in the Army research program in medical defenses against biological weapons is made available to the scientific world.⁶⁰

Clark Smith reported Col. Crozier as saying that only one project had been classified during the whole history of Project Whitecoat, and that this project was “strictly medicinal in nature,” having “nothing to do with offensive warfare.”⁶¹ Not all of the experiments resulted in published articles because many were either still incomplete or too inconclusive to be of value to others. Crozier further explained that all of the clerks in the office who kept records and typed up research reports were Adventists, so there was nothing secretive about the project; the Army was not hiding anything from the church.

However, Martin Turner and Emanuel Fenz also talked with Col. Crozier, and were told that some of the early Whitecoat research

(before Crozier arrived) had indeed been classified. In addition, Crozier said that 73 volunteers had participated in another series of classified experiments in the mid-1960s. Turner and Fenz reported their findings in a letter to the editor of the *Review and Herald*.⁶²

In this letter, Turner and Fenz confronted several other issues as well, including the fact that of the 160 articles and reports that had been published by USAMRIID, only 23 dealt with Project Whitecoat volunteers, and only five had been published during the first 12 years of the program. Although a number of university campuses tried to deny any connection to chemical and biological warfare,⁶³ many of the medical research institutions furnished with vaccines from USAMRIID were universities and private laboratories that held contracts to conduct biological warfare research for Fort Detrick.

One member of the General Conference study committee had stated that “none of the work of this organization [Project Whitecoat] is used directly or indirectly to improve bacteriological weapons of the United States,” and that the offensive and defensive branches were “in no way related.”⁶⁴ But in reality, the separation of the offensive and defensive areas was less complete. Crozier told Turner and Fenz that some defensive projects were done in the high security area, while offensive research was also done “outside the fence.” Researchers in both programs exchanged technical information and coordinated research.⁶⁵

However, the letter from Turner and Fenz was not published in the *Review* because the editor felt that “very few, if any, *Review* readers have sufficient information to be able to discuss the question intelligently.” Turner then wrote to Theodore Carcich, vice-president of the General Conference, expressing concern that the National Service Organization defended the church position on the basis that joining Project Whitecoat was an individual decision; in fact, Turner said, the church

wouldn't allow opposing viewpoints to be heard.⁶⁶

Even unclassified Whitecoat research was not above suspicion. Dr. Matthew Meselson, microbiologist at Harvard University and consultant to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the area of chemical and biological warfare, examined the published documents and stated that about 90 percent of the articles represented research for offensive purposes.⁶⁷

Dr. Alvin Kwiram, then chemistry professor at Harvard University, also questioned the purpose of Whitecoat research. He examined several published articles, showing how the research reported could be used offensively, and how difficult it is to separate offensive from defensive studies. Kwiram concluded that, in actual practice, the best defense against germ warfare agents is a gas mask, as stated in the July 1969 United Nations report on chemical and biological warfare. Most of the diseases likely to be used would be viral, without a known cure.⁶⁸ Regardless of the precautions taken, the results of chemical or biological warfare would be unpredictable. In Kwiram's words,

It could be a disaster of unparalleled proportions, which every sane person should do everything in his power to work against. Again it is particularly important that the Adventist Church as a church not be found working in close collaboration with the military.⁶⁹

Part of the problem was the question of whether or not the military could be trusted to tell the truth about its programs. In March 1968, for example, 6,400 sheep in Skull Valley, Utah, died when a cloud of nerve gas drifted 45 miles from the Army's Dugway Proving Grounds. The Army initially denied responsibility.⁷⁰

In other cases, the Army conducted secret germ-warfare tests over populated areas, assuming the simulants used were totally safe.

Between 1949 and 1969, various types of bacteria were released over 239 populated areas. No monitoring of public health took place during or after the experiments, and Army officials denied that increased health problems in the areas had anything to do with government tests.⁷¹

The Army's questionable record of honesty also brought up the issue of the health risks involved in Project Whitecoat. Some participants felt that the Army gave the misleading impression that the risk was minimal or non-existent.⁷² Others said that although the recruiters were straightforward, officers intimidated the newly enlisted men, preventing them from asking many questions about the program.⁷³

Some Adventists believed that it was noble to risk one's life for the sake of medical science, but others felt that one's body should be treated as the temple of God, and that knowingly taking in disease-producing agents was not only dangerous but wrong. As one concerned Adventist wrote to the General Conference president, "We believe that by maintaining good health we are helping to maintain clear channels of communion with God, and yet these boys are being encouraged to join Operation Whitecoat which demands that one expose himself to man-made diseases."⁷⁴

Clark Smith acknowledged the risks:

Though no human subject is ever knowingly exposed to an infectious disease-producing agent unless it is known that the vaccine, drug, or method of treatment under study is adequate to effect a cure or that the disease is self-limiting, nevertheless it requires courage of a high type to accept willingly such disease-producing agents into one's body.⁷⁵

Col. Crozier, who took almost all of the vaccines himself before allowing them to be tested on his men, said, "Our boys are soldiers, and they're darn good soldiers. They know that the only promise I make is if they come

here, they'll get sick."⁷⁶ On recruiting trips, Crozier met with prospective volunteers to answer questions, and one of the most frequent concerns was whether or not there would be any aftereffects. "Of course, we can't give them a definite answer on that question," he said, "because if we knew the results of what we are doing, we wouldn't need them as volunteers."⁷⁷

Ultimately, any vaccine or treatment developed must be tested on humans. The Fort Detrick protocol, if followed, provided reasonable safety precautions. Even so, it would be unusual if none of the 2,200 Adventist participants had any long-term problems.

One early Whitecoat member said that although he had had some health problems after participating in Q-fever experiments, nothing could be directly linked to his time at Fort Detrick. He was unable to receive Veterans Administration benefits because his records had been sealed.⁷⁸ Another volunteer, who was exposed to Q-fever and observed for several weeks before being treated, experienced severe pain and stated that he would not have subjected himself to the organisms if he had known how severe the symptoms would be. The experience was frightening because he had no way of knowing at the time if the effects would be permanent.⁷⁹

A later participant said that there could be more health problems than were reported, because Project Whitecoat volunteers had to sign a release form before leaving the service, stating that they would not hold the Army responsible for any medical complications

that might arise later.⁸⁰ He explained that the risk involved was not only from diseases given intentionally, but from accidents in the lab. Those volunteers dealing with animal research, for example, had more opportunity for contact with dangerous microorganisms. Sometimes, patients would arrive on Ward 200 from behind the "hot" offensive area, and no one knew what they had been exposed to—often a virus or chemical without a known antidote.⁸¹ Both intentional and accidental infections resulted in unexpected medical problems that were never reported.

In 1966, Fort Detrick's Public Information Office reported that since 1950 there had been 292 accidental infections which resulted in illness, and three deaths. A 1965 study by Fort Detrick's safety office, however, recorded 3,330 laboratory accidents between 1954 and 1962, one-sixth of which resulted in infections serious enough

to make employees too ill to work. The study reported 9.06 laboratory infections per million man-hours of labor during those years, considerably higher than the National Institutes of Health, which ranked second with 3.41. New laboratories and improved equipment lowered accidental infection rates substantially, from 11.31 accidents per million man-hours in 1959 to 3.16 in 1962.⁸²

Public Health Service officials agreed, on the basis of obligations to national security, not to announce infection cases unless an "epidemic hazard" existed. Doctors did not report some diseases, such as pneumonic plague, because the Army did not want to alarm anyone.⁸³

Military officials believed that Fort Detrick's

Col. Crozier, who took almost all of the vaccines himself before allowing them to be tested on his men, said, "Our boys are soldiers, and they're darn good soldiers. They know that the only promise I make is if they come here, they'll get sick."

excellent hospital facilities and first-rate physicians were qualified to handle any medical emergencies that might arise. And this may have been true. If the Army followed all of its published safety regulations, the risk involved in Project Whitecoat research was probably reasonably low—at least when compared to the dangers of service in Vietnam. Also, the experiments may not have been as sinister as Project Whitecoat's detractors made them out to be.

Lessons to Be Learned

In light of Seventh-day Adventist views on the separation of church and state, perhaps church officials should have been more cautious in their patriotism. The project seemed to present the denomination as an “American” church, willing to cooperate with anything unless the commandments were directly broken. This position failed to take into account the potential results of individual actions. Emphasizing the value of individual thinking would have discouraged the blind acceptance of church positions on both Project Whitecoat and the draft status. Such an attitude on the part of the General Conference officials would have led to a more objective presentation of Project Whitecoat, and an earlier change in the

church position on the draft status—allowing for full support of any decision based on honest conviction.

Although both the church and the Army may have been completely honest and sincere throughout the relationship, the General Conference praise of Project Whitecoat was probably a bit excessive. Denominational leaders should have been more willing to acknowledge the possibility of error: either that church officials in the 1950s may have been too hasty in their initial approval of the project, or that the nature of this important military program might have changed after it began.

Denominational leaders can be praised for trying to find Adventist draftees an acceptable means of avoiding both combat duty and Sabbath conflicts. However, if church officials had investigated the project more thoroughly in the beginning, they would have admitted that there were moral and philosophical gray areas involved—such as the health risks and possible offensive uses of research results. These ethical issues could then have been discussed publicly. The Seventh-day Adventist Church could have kept its reputation clear by allowing all prospective Whitecoat volunteers to hear both sides of the argument and by supporting those volunteers neither more nor less than those who served as medics or went into regular combat duty.

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45. Clark Smith to Vinson Bushnell, October 24, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

46. Steven Heczke, "I Was a Guinea Pig for Army Germ Test," *National Examiner* (December 1, 1969), p. 4.

47. Dan Crozier to Commanding Officer, U.S. Army Research and Development Command, November 26, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

48. Martin Turner to Clark Smith, September 10, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

49. The group consisted of W. H. Beaven, president of Columbia Union College; Stuart Nelson, M.D., a Takoma Park physician; and several General Conference personnel: T. S. Geraty; D. W. Hunter; L. C. Kozel; C. D. Martin; Philip S. Nelson, M.D.; and Clark Smith.

50. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Project Whitecoat Study Committee Minutes, October 2, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA. The article that resulted was an interview with Clark Smith, published in the November 27, 1969, *Review and Herald*.

51. Clark Smith to Vinson Bushnell, October 24, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

52. Malcolm Russell, "Civil Control May Supply the Answer," *Sligonian* (January 29, 1970), p. 1.

53. Richard McCarthy, "Response of Congressman Richard McCarthy to a Question About Project Whitecoat," Typescript, December 13, 1969.

54. Elinor Langer, "Chemical and Biological Warfare (I): The Research Program," *Science* 155 (January 13, 1967), p. 175.

55. Dan Crozier, "The Threat of Biological Weapons Attack," *Military Medicine* (February 1963), pp. 82, 83.

56. Dan Crozier, Transcript of interview by Emanuel Fenz and Martin Turner, November 17, 1969.

57. W. D. Tigertt, "Defensive Aspects of Biological Weapons Use," *Military Medicine* 126 (1961), p. 508.

58. Jane Allen, "Army Vaccine Helps Fight Sleeping Sickness," Bureau of Public Relations, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, n.d., unpublished as of November 30, 1971, Whitecoat File, GCA.

59. Elinor Langer, "Chemical and Biological Warfare (I): The Research Program," *Science* 155 (January 13, 1967), p. 174.

60. United States Army, USAMRIID, "Fact Sheet," n.d.

61. Clark Smith to Martin Turner, May 14, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

62. Martin Turner and Emanuel Fenz to Editor, *Review and Herald* (December 16, 1969), Whitecoat File, GCA.

63. Seymour Hersh, "Gas and Germ Warfare: The Controversy Over Campus Research Contracts," *The New Republic* (July 1, 1967), pp. 12-14.

64. Winton Beaven to Editors, SDA College Newspapers, October 13, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

65. Martin Turner and Emanuel Fenz to Editor, *Review and Herald* (December 16, 1969), Whitecoat File, GCA.

66. In his letter, Turner wrote, "But this is precisely

where the problem lies because the Church openly and actively supports recruitment for the project, and does not allow conflicting evidence to be heard, thus denying the individual access to the information which he must have as a basis for his decision. . . . The facts will be known, whether through official channels or not. But if unofficial means must be used, the process will take longer and many men will continue to lack the information they need when the time comes for them to make a decision. But perhaps even more important than that, if the youth of this church come to feel that their leaders do not give them straight information, the results will be much more far-reaching than Project Whitecoat" (Martin Turner to Theodore Carcich, January 29, 1970, Whitecoat File, GCA).

67. Adventist Laymen Concerned About Project Whitecoat, "Facts About Project Whitecoat," From Emanuel G. Fenz, Martin Turner, and John Matthews to the delegates to the June 1970 meeting of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (May 1970), Whitecoat File, GCA.

68. Alvin L. Kwiram, "Chemical and Biological Warfare," unpublished, n.d., pp. 8, 10, Whitecoat File, GCA.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

70. Gerald Astor, "A Killing Shame," *Look* (December 16, 1969), p. 67.

71. Leonard Cole, *Clouds of Secrecy: The Army's Germ Warfare Tests Over Populated Areas* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1988), pp. 6, 44.

72. Les Brown, interview by the author, May 9, 1991.

73. ValGene Devitt to the author, May 3, 1991.

74. A. J. Mejia to Robert Pierson, February 14, 1969, Whitecoat File, GCA.

75. Clark Smith, "Adventist Medics in America Volunteer to Serve Humanity by Assisting in Disease Research in Project Whitecoat," *Review and Herald* (March 20, 1969), p. 20.

76. Jim Scott, "GI Guinea Pigs Risk Death," *Army Times*, (April 1, 1970).

77. Richard Lebherz, "Fort Detrick: A Symbol of Crisis," *The Frederick Post* (November 1, 1969), p. A3.

78. Richard Miller, interview by the author, May 21, 1991.

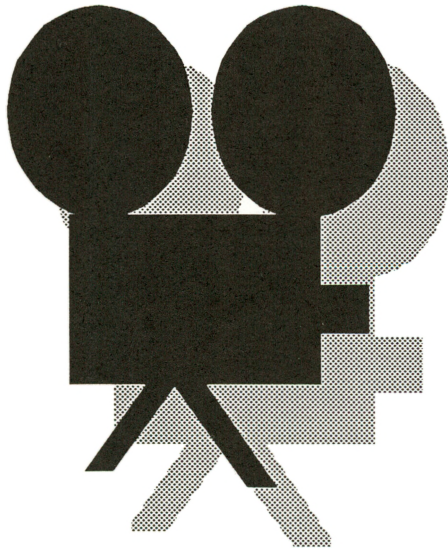
79. William Key, interview by the author, May 12, 1991.

80. Les Brown, interview by the author, May 9, 1991.

81. *Ibid.*

82. Hersh, *Chemical and Biological Warfare*, pp. 109, 110.

83. *Ibid.*, p. 11.



Columbia Union College Graduate Wins Emmy Award

by Alita Byrd

Rick Swartzwelder, a 1993 graduate of Columbia Union College, recently won first place for a comedy film from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in their national "Student Emmy" awards. Swartzwelder received a \$2,000 grant from Kodak and \$1,000 from the Academy, as well as an all-expenses-paid trip to Los Angeles for the awards ceremony and screening, which took place on March 10, 1996.

"Things really could not have gone better," Swartzwelder said. "The ceremony was great, and the DGA [Directors' Guild of America] screening the following night was exceptional as well—an outstanding response to the film itself. I was also fortunate enough to make some incredible contacts."

Swartzwelder's film, *Paul McCall*, is a 12-minute story about a shy second-grader with a hyperactive imagination who must do battle with the class bullies, as well as his own fears, in order to succeed in getting a mysterious note from his teacher to his mom. In this film about a young boy determined to do the right thing—no matter what—the plot weaves in and out of reality and Paul McCall's incredibly creative mind.

Entries in the competition sponsored by the academy represented 138 colleges and universities from 30 states. Swartzwelder's film was

produced as his master's thesis while at the Florida State University Graduate Motion Picture Conservatory, which he attended for two years, graduating in 1995 with an M.F.A. in Motion Picture Production.

Rick Swartzwelder, presently working in the cooperative education department at Columbia Union College, has worked on more than 40 narrative film and video projects and numerous stage productions. Recently, he produced and directed a music video for the alternative band 606, and portions of his documentary *GROUND ZERO: The Making of Trinity* aired during an episode of *Movie Magic* on the cable television Discovery Channel.

Female Chaplain's Ordination Recognized

Penny Shell, chief of chaplain services at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, was honored December 13, 1995, by the board of Adventist Healthcare Mid-Atlantic. It formally voted to "recognize Ms. Shell for her recent ordination to the gospel ministry."

Shell was one of the first three women ordained to the gospel ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The service took place September 23, 1995, at Sligo church. Shell is the first woman to be elected president of the Seventh-day Adventist Healthcare Chaplains, an association of her colleagues throughout North America.

A graduate and current employee of Columbia Union College wins an Emmy for his short comedy, Paul McCall, and Healthcare Mid-Atlantic honors a female chaplain's ordination to gospel ministry.

Alita Byrd, a junior English and journalism major at Columbia Union College, is Spectrum's office assistant.



At God's Table, Women Sit Where They Are Told

by Keith A. Burton

Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart. *The Welcome Table*. Langley Park, Maryland: TEAM-Press, 1995. \$9.95 paper. 408 pages.

My interest in the role of women in ministry of the church deepened as I studied at a United Methodist seminary with a 50-percent female student population. I read and studied with such authors as Rosemary Radford-Ruether, Rosemary Skinner-Keller, Phyllis Bird, and John Scholer.¹ As I have probed into the topic I have come to believe that the real issue is not ordination, but officiation. Women are ordained to serve in the church, but should not be installed in the office of pastor.

This approach has led me to agree with the proponents of women's ordination that Scripture does not deny the right of women to be ordained to minister. The Bible makes it clear that the distribution of the Spirit's gifts is undiscriminating. However, I also agree with those who oppose women

occupying a certain ecclesiastical office—the pastoral ministry. Scripture and the practice of the earliest church inform us that this office—which was not determined by a person's spiritual giftedness—was occupied only by males.

In my evaluation of *The Welcome Table*, I focus on those essays that claim to be involved in the biblical-interpretive process. I will show that these essays are deeply flawed by relying on the historical-critical method of understanding the Bible.

Raymond Cottrell, in "A Guide to Reliable Interpretation: Determining the Meaning of Scripture," says he uses the historical method to interpret Scripture (as opposed to *historical-critical* or *historical-grammatical*). However, Cottrell's application of this method suggests that the qualifying term *critical* would not be amiss.

Cottrell's claim, that Paul's admonition in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 is culturally conditioned, totally rejects the fact that Paul uses the *Tanakh*, and not the *Talmud*, to lend authority to his interpretation. Cottrell's assertion that Paul's views and teachings were governed by

A dismissal of The Welcome Table because its authors accept the "historical-critical" method, followed by an appreciation of both The Welcome Table and Women and the Church.

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chauvinistic culture means Paul himself was unable to determine the meaning of Scripture.

Particularly disturbing to me is the essay by Donna Jeane Haerich, which has been strongly influenced by the historical-critical conclusions of feminists such as Phyllis Tribble and Rosemary Ruether. Strangely enough, this essay is placed after Cottrell's discussion of biblical interpretation, in which he claims that, "No Seventh-day Adventist Bible scholar subscribes to [the historical-critical] method, or to its presuppositions or conclusions."² Haerich charges that the account of the creation of humans in Genesis 2 is not history. In advancing her misinformed charge that the original human was an androgyne, she completely rejects the fact that *Adam* is not only a generic term for "human," but is actually the name of the first male himself (as "Eve" is the name of the first female). As impressive as Haerich's scholarly argument may sound to the uncritical lay person, any honest biblical scholar has to admit that it is a reading of the author's views into an understanding of Scripture.

Interestingly enough, the essay that follows Haerich's completely rejects the absurdity of her thesis. In writing on "Man and Woman as Equal Partners," David Larson cautions against the tendency toward an androgynous interpretation of the Creation accounts. Larson approaches the issue systematically by summarizing the three theological prevailing positions concerning the relationship of male and female: (1) woman as subordinate and inferior; (2) woman as subordinate but not inferior; (3) woman as neither subordinate nor inferior. He then elevates the weaknesses in the first two arguments, while promoting a basis for the veracity of the third position. However, his critique of the second position is based on an extremely serious mis-

understanding of the major arguments supporting it.

I cannot speak for all who fall under Larson's second category, but I do not agree with his assertion that "this interpretation rests upon a distinction between equality in being and value on the one hand and inequality in role and function on the other."³ Larson deliberately obscures the position of many adherents of this interpretation when he uses the term *inequality*, instead of *difference*, to describe the unique, divine roles assigned by God to male and female. Just because a man cannot have a baby does not make him physiologically unequal to a woman—just different. Similarly, because Scripture portrays an order in the family structure that is gender-based does not mean that a woman is spiritually unequal to a man; her spiritual role is different—complementary.

Paul does not "reject" the male-female hierarchy, as Larson claims, but simply puts it into perspective. In fact, Larson himself says it best: "[Paul] does not abolish these roles and functions [between husband and wife]. He transforms their moral meaning with the theme of mutual submission."⁴ I agree with Larson that Paul would have voted in favor of the ordination of women, but he would not have supported their occupying the office of episcopos, or senior pastor.

Fritz Guy's essay, describing "The Disappearance of Paradise,"

I believe these essays are deeply flawed by relying on the historical-critical method of understanding the Bible.

also betrays the influence of historical-critical ideologies. Not only does he constantly refer to the two Creation stories seen by those who adhere to the documentary hypothesis, but judging by 12 of his 25 footnotes, his understanding of the Creation story is chiefly derived from Phyllis Tribble's charge of the misogynous nature of the biblical texts. It appears that Guy feels it his duty to continue the legacy of Tribble and elevate the female as the more rational partner of the original pair. In forwarding his image of a strong egalitarian female, he diminishes the male to a compromising wimp. Adam does not have the ability to think for himself, quickly shifting the blame to the female. By contrast, Eve, confronted by God, avoids the male's scapegoating excuses.⁵

A further betrayal of Guy's dependence on the presuppositions of historical-critical ideology is seen in his assertion that the curse on the original humans was "descriptive" rather than "prescriptive." If, as I suspect, this thought is borrowed from Carol Meyer's monograph *Discovering Eve* (which he does allude to in a footnote), then he is among those who see Creation as a story, rather than as history.

Edwin Zackrisson's essay, "Inclusive Redemption," is concerned with elevating the significance of what he terms the "horizontal" implications of Galatians 3:28. He suggests that Adventist "folk religion" has affected the official decisions of the institutional church, particularly with regard to women's ordination. Like many liberals—who desire to win the sympathy of Europeans who are afflicted with a guilt complex caused by their racist attitudes toward non-whites—Zackrisson suggests that in the same way the "church" was wrong in its support of the notion of white

superiority, it is also wrong in its practice of male superiority.⁶

Like many interpreters, Zackrison has totally misapplied the way in which Galatians 3:28 is to be contextually understood. In the passage within which the text appears, Paul is speaking primarily about "vertical redemption." Paul in no way intended to promote the dissolution of social, ethnic, and biological distinctions. That this was not his intention is evident from the many places in the Pauline corpus where he affirms these differences. Of course, while Galatians 3:28 does not teach that all humans are the same, it does herald the fact that all humans are of equal worth. In that sense, the concept of equality is definitely present in this manifesto of Paul's.

Zackrison's essay raises many questions, the chief of which is, "Who is the church?" Like many well-minded liberals, Zackrison still appears to be unconsciously molded by the notion that Europeans are supposed to define the church's agenda. He fails to see that women's ordination is chiefly a white, middle-class concern. (Charles Bradford's brief forward is the only contribution of non-whites to this collection.) It appears to me that Zackrison and his associates have not yet experienced the type of "horizontal redemption" that is inclusive enough to listen to what non-white Adventist theologians have to say about the issue.

Halcyon Westphal Wilson's article claims that the status and role of women in earliest Christianity has been forgotten.⁷ She paints a picture of Christianity giving voice to the marginalized women in a chauvinistic Palestinian society. She correctly points out that the disciples of Jesus included both women and men. Also helpful is her observation that every believer in Christ was a disciple, and conse-

quently a minister.

However, Wilson fails to ask the fundamental question of whether the inclusion of women among the disciples meant that gender distinctions were no longer important in God's religion. After all, many women were attracted to Judaism, and any convert to Judaism was considered a disciple (proselyte). Therefore, the inclusion of women in Jesus' band of disciples was in no way a violation of societal mores. One could further ask, If Jesus were intending to go against societal mores, why didn't he include women among his apostles? Wouldn't this have been an even stronger witness?⁸

Unlike Wilson, I fail to see how the Adventist Church is mirroring the chauvinistic attitudes of many of the inhabitants of first-century Jewish Palestine. In fact, "Appendix 6" in this collection shows that from the very beginning of our movement women have played an important role both internationally and locally.

For whatever reason, God decided to designate the male as the spiritual head of the family and the church. I will never know why he instituted this apparent hierarchy. I simply accept my limited understanding and allow God to be God.

The title of Sheryll Prinz-McMillan's essay poses the question, "Who's in Charge of the Family?" After conducting exegeses of several passages, Prinz-McMillan concludes that Christ is in charge of the family, and therefore any hierarchical structure among human beings is built on the fallacy of male superiority. Prinz-McMillan's chief objection is with the concept of "male headship," which she feels is responsible for abuse of power in male-female relationships.⁹ It appears to me that with this approach, Prinz-McMillan "throws out the baby with the bath water." It reminds me of the reactionary stance taken by the Nation of Islam which, by its rejection of Christianity, demonstrates an ignorant acceptance of the distortions placed upon Christian doctrines by European imperialists. Christianity is no more a "white man's religion" than is biblical "headship" a concept that gives men permission to abuse their women.¹⁰ In expressing the mutual dependence of woman and man later on in the chapter, Paul establishes that this divine order does not provide a precedent for abuse or privilege; it is merely the way things are.¹¹

The influence of the form critical branch of historical criticism on Prinz-McMillan is evident in her assertion that Ephesians 5:21-6:9 is derived from the Greco-Roman "household codes," and not applicable to our contemporary situation. What she fails to see is that Paul provides a theological rationale for comparing the husband to Christ and the woman to the church.¹² This comparison supports the notion of male headship and does not suggest the absence of hierarchical roles among the several parties comprising a family. One can ask Prinz-McMillan if the egalitarian American family can or

should be transferred to the ecclesiastical family.

Joyce Hanscom Lorntz's article addresses the issue of "Spiritual Gifts and the Good News." Lorntz reasons that since every Christian receives spiritual gifts, the church does not have the right to restrict the occupation of any church office to the male gender. I agree with Lorntz.

Lorntz, though, is under the mistaken assumption that spiritual gifts are the sole criteria for ordination and, consequently, the holding of church office. While I agree that the silence of the Scriptures means the church can ordain those who possess certain gifts, Scripture is not at all silent on the subject of who holds church office.

In building her case, Lorntz proposes that the biblical model of ministry is based on mutuality rather than hierarchy. A key foundation of her discussion is the concept of the "priesthood of all believers" that she finds in 1 Peter 2. She asserts: "The priesthood of all believers, . . . discredits any system which teaches that a man or priest must mediate between humans and God."¹³ But the priesthood of all believers is derived from Exodus 19:5, 6, and originally applied to the nation of Israel, which had an elaborate gender-restricted priestly system.

For whatever reason, God decided to designate the male as the spiritual head of the family and the church. I will never know why he instituted this apparent hierarchy. Neither will I know why he chose to rest on the seventh day rather than on the fourth; or why he designated certain animals clean and others unclean; or why he chose a woman to be the prophet to the remnant. I simply accept my limited understanding and allow God to be God.

Probably one of the more objective essays is that of V. Norskov

Olsen, who basically offers a report of the New Testament records of people in ministry.¹⁴ He makes no value judgment of the evidence, and does not attempt to push a hidden agenda. He simply states that, "The record clearly indicates that women were deeply involved in ministry in the early Christian church."¹⁵ In his objective reporting, Olsen gives us the opportunity to discuss whether or not the evidence supports the inclusion of women in particular ecclesiastical roles.

In his informative essay, Ralph Neall addresses the issue of "Ordination Among the People of God." Neall proposes that, since all in the New Testament church are priests, there is no longer a need for specialized offices. If this is indeed the case, I would like to know how Neall understands the functions of the *episkopoi* (bishops), *diakonoi* (deacons), and *presbyteroi* (elders). While I acknowledge that Jesus was indeed the embodiment of the

An unfathomable divine mandate requires that at God's table, men sit in their assigned seats and women in theirs. Regardless of who the members call pastor, only those who have remained faithful to the end will bear the blessed "well done" from the Father.

Israelite priesthood, none can deny that his establishment of an apostleship—along with the Spirit's guidance of the early church—marked the institution of a new organizational system.¹⁶

In my opinion, Ginger Hanks Harwood's discussion of "Women and Mission" provides the most compelling case for the ordination of women to the Seventh-day Adventist ministry. Although she does not want to admit that much of the current discussion has been fueled by arguments from the feminist movement,¹⁷ she is justified in her lamentation over the backward movement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church which encouraged and supported women in ministry in the 19th century, but now has policies that restrict the divine right of women to fully practice ministry. In her chastisement of the church, Harwood raises a serious concern with her observation that ecclesiastical restrictions on women's ordination could have a negative effect on opportunities to evangelize, particularly in the area of chaplaincy.¹⁸

Harwood also presents sensible rationales for ordaining women. Ordination is a recognition that the individual has been trained and adequately examined and is therefore worthy to represent the official church. As Harwood warns, to encourage women (or men) to minister independently without qualification by ordination could have disastrous effects on the stability of the church in matters of dogma and praxis.

I find two major weaknesses in Harwood's argument. The first is in her categorization of the various schools of thought about women's ordination that are present in Adventism. She neglects those who believe that women should be ordained to minister in whatever area they have been

called. However, this would not include the office of pastor, since it is an office restricted to appointed men; being a pastor is not a spiritual gift, but an ecclesiastical function.

Harwood is also to be challenged for her reasoning that the ordination of women would provide good public relations for the church. Many biblical doctrines held by Adventists are peculiar to onlookers—such as Sabbath observance, dietary restrictions, and dress. However, if the theological position of the church can be fully substantiated from the Bible, and is not based on tradition or opinion, there is no need to fear the response of onlookers.

Habada and Brillhart have set a table that already accommodates those who have attacked the relevance of biblical authority; those who wish to pretend that the gnostic image of the primeval and eschatological androgyne is the one toward which Adventists should be moving; those whose interest is in the acquisition of corporate power rather than the evangelization of a dying world; and, finally, those who confuse the indiscriminating distribution of the Spirit's gifts with the discriminating limitation of the familial and ecclesiastical roles that have been defined by the same Spirit. Of course, God has also already set a place at his table for women ordained to serve as evangelists, teachers, assistant pastors, chaplains, departmental directors, etc.

The two essays by Bert Haloviak and Kit Watts that commence the collection remind us that the Adventist Church of yesteryear was fully cognizant of the ministerial roles that God *expects* women to occupy in his church.¹⁹ However, one thing they fail to acknowledge is that an unfathomable divine mandate requires that at God's table, men sit in their assigned

seats and women in theirs. Since all seats are in the esteemed presence of the Almighty, neither complain because they realize that none is of greater or lesser worth—both are equal in his sight, both are uniquely needed in his divine plan. And when all is said and done, regardless of who the members call *pastor*, only those who have remained faithful to the end will hear the blessed “well done” from the Father. Maranatha!

1. These are some of the outstanding spokespersons on the status of women in the Bible and the church (Scholer is the foremost evangelical spokesperson on women in ministry).

2. Cottrell, “Interpretation,” p. 84.

3. Larson, “Equal Partners,” p. 120.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

5. Note his comments about Adam: “More like a sheep than a shepherd, he simply takes the fruit and eats” (Guy, “Paradise,” p. 141). “He pictured himself as the victim of circumstances: the woman gave him the fruit; what else could he do but eat it? For her part, the woman did little better. She ignored the man, and she didn't explicitly blame God” (*ibid.*, p. 145).

6. See discussion in Zackrisson, “Inclusive Redemption,” pp. 155-177.

7. “The Forgotten Disciples: The Empowering of Love vs. The Love of Power.”

8. Another pertinent question would compare how the role of women in earliest Christianity compares with that of women in Judaism and other religious systems of the first century?

9. See “Family,” p. 199: “Headship, as a catchphrase for relational hierarchy, not only has the potential for abuse, but also for idolatry as well.”

10. Before Prinz-McMillan builds an argument on Stephen Bedale's work, she needs to take a firsthand look at the work of Wayne Grudem who has conducted a detailed study of the semantic range of *kephale* based on the extensive *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (Does *kephale* [“Head”] Mean “Source” or “Authority” in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples,” *Trinity Journal* 6 [1985], pp. 38-59. It is obvious that Prinz-McMillan has never even

read the important sources she cites in her footnotes since she includes Grudem as one who supports *source* as a meaning of *kephale*.) Grudem proves that there is absolutely no instance in Greek literature where *kephale* can be understood as “source” (see also the article by Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Another Look at *Kephale* in 1 Corinthians 11:3,” *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989), pp. 503-511). In the context of 1 Corinthians 11, *kephale* can only be understood in hierarchical fashion (compare this passage to Ephesians 5:22-33 where *kephale* is again used metaphorically and conveys the meaning of literal *head*, as is deduced from the corresponding use of *soma* [body]).

11. Further evidence of Prinz-McMillan's inability to conduct responsible hermeneutics is seen in her reference to Dionysus as “. . . a prominent goddess in Corinth” (“Family,” p. 208).

12. See Ephesians 6:1-3, where the command for children to honor parents is based on the fourth commandment and not the Greco-Roman house codes.

13. Lorntz, “Spiritual Gifts,” p. 232.

14. “Ministry: A Place for Men and Women.”

15. Olsen, “Ministry,” p. 249.

16. If the apostles comprised the core of the new system, then it is likely that the gender restriction continued with the New Covenant. There is no obvious New Testament reference to a female apostle. Some suggest that Junia[s] in Romans 16:7 was an apostle, but the meaning of “among the apostles” has been much debated. Furthermore, whether Junia[s] is a male or female is debatable, since the accusative form “*Junian*” may suggest either gender. Another perturbing factor in Neall's essay is his uncritical reliance on the conclusions of Richard and Catherine Clark Kroeger in their recent book (*I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1992]). The Kroegers theorize that in 1 Timothy, Paul is responding to a Gnostic heresy being taught by some of the women in the Ephesian congregation. Therefore, they assert, Paul's teachings regarding male/female relationships are culturally conditioned, and do not apply to a modern audience. Not only do the Kroegers see 1 Timothy as deuterono-

pauline, but the major Gnostic texts upon which they build their thesis are all second century. Furthermore, their exegesis of the term *authentein* (which provides a major platform for their thesis) is terribly misconstrued. The Kroegers base their exegetical license with the claim that *authentein* means "to be the perpetrator and author of something." This translation is not even a lexical option. They also break all syntactical rules in their translation of the double infinitive found in the verse (*didaskein* and *authentein*). (For the definitive study on *authentein*, see L. E. Wilshire, "The TLG Computer and Further Reference to *Authentein* in 1 Timothy 2.12," *New Testament Studies* 34 [1988], pp. 120-134. Another earlier helpful study is G. Knight, "*Authenteo* in Reference to Women in 1 Timothy 2.12," *New Testament Studies* 30 [1984], pp. 143-157. Both conclude that the contextual understanding of *authentein* is "to exercise authority.")

After summarizing the Kroegers' argument, Neall concludes, "If [the Kroegers] are right, the passage does not give a universal prohibition of women from the ministry, but instead a refutation of Gnostic error" (Neall, "Ordination," p. 264). Given the probability that the Kroegers are wrong with their cultural exegesis, I wonder if Neall will be willing to accept the hermeneutical implications of the alternative exegesis?

17. See Harwood, "Women and Mission," p. 269: "Despite the prevalent impression, the question far predates the rise of feminism in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s."

18. *Ibid.*, p. 276.

19. Tracing the trajectory of women in Adventist ministry, the sequential essays are appropriately titled, "A Place at the Table: Women and the Early Years"; and "Moving Away From the Table: A Survey of Historical Factors Affecting Women Leaders."

female leader as an example of the capabilities of women. We ignore the implications of God's appointment of a woman whose writings have shaped both the practicing pastorate and the governing bodies of the church. We are able to see her as an exception that in no way invalidates the rule of an exclusively male ordained pastorate. How ironic—but life in the 1990s has made us comfortable with irony.

The debate that has swirled around the issue of women's ordination has deepened the irony. Much of the written contribution to this debate has come from men. Women have participated in the commissions that were formed to study the issue, and some have written insightful papers and reports (Rosa Banks, Iris Yob, Josephine Benton, Karen Flowers, and Carole Kilcher, for example), but this is only a beginning. Women scholars from other denominations have contributed mightily during the past 20 years to the discussion of women and their roles in ministry and society. We need to hear more from Adventist women.

Unfortunately, women in the ministry are easy targets. A woman who writes in support of the ordination of women is often accused of seeking after worldly glory for herself or her compatriots. Her motivation may be suspected, her integrity questioned. Some women feel that it is much better for them to follow God's call quietly, discussing the issue of ordination only with friends on Sabbath afternoon. Given the circumstances, this may be a reasonable decision, but what a loss to the discussion! What a loss to our church.

Both *The Welcome Table: Setting a Place for Ordained Women* (TEAM Press, 1995) and *Women and the Church: The Feminine Perspective* (Andrews University Press, 1995) represent a solid and welcome addition by women to the

Welcoming *The Welcome Table* and *Women and the Church*

by Alayne Thorpe

Lourdes E. Morales-Gudmundsson, ed. *Women and the Church*. Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1995. \$11.99 paper. 211 pages. See also Habada and Brillhart, eds. *The Welcome Table*.

"Who is Silvia? What is she?" When Shakespeare wrote these words, his patron was a woman who ruled one of the most powerful empires in the history of the western world. Unfortunately, even Elizabeth I's effective example

did not change the social conditions of women during her time. Nor did it still the debate over what societal roles women could and should play. For centuries, men have written treatises, essays, and poems about women in an attempt to answer those questions given poetic form by Shakespeare 400 years ago. Women didn't enter the fray in a concentrated way until the 19th century, when a true movement toward self-definition began.

One hundred years ago, God appointed another woman, Ellen G. White, to lead his people and to help establish his remnant church. We, as Seventh-day Adventists, are proud of Mrs. White and the effectiveness of her ministry. However, like England during the Renaissance, we are unable to accept our

Alayne Thorpe, vice president for education at Home Study International, Griggs University, received her Ph.D. in English from the University of Maryland. She has lectured at Oxford University on her academic specialty, the poetry and thought of W. B. Yeats.

discussion of women's ordination. A collection of essays edited by Patricia A. Habada and Rebecca Frost Brillhart, *The Welcome Table* was sponsored by Time for Equality in Adventist Ministry (TEAM) and written, in large part, to support the North American Division request that divisions be given the freedom to decide whether or not women pastoring in their territories should be ordained. The essays included in the collection cover the range of issues associated with the ordination of women: Ellen White's views on the role of women, what the Bible says about the role of women in ministry, the "headship" issue, the concept of ordination itself.

Perhaps the primary theme of *The Welcome Table* is best expressed by a quote from Ellen White (*Review and Herald*, July 9, 1895) that a number of the authors refer to: "Not a hand should be bound, not a soul discouraged, not a voice should be hushed; let every individual labor, privately or publicly, to help forward this grand work." Each essay stresses the inclusiveness of the call to ministry. To underline the idea of inclusiveness, the editors have used the metaphor of the round banquet table of ministry as the organizing principle for the book. Each essay (or chapter) tries to further this metaphor and to emphasize that women want nothing more than a place at the table. In the final essay, Iris Yob even envisions what the banquet table of ministry peopled by both men and women would be like.

In the true spirit of inclusiveness, the editors have also been careful to choose essays written by men, as well. Two notable contributions by men are "A Place at the Table: Women and the Early Years" by Bert Haloviak and "The Disappearance of Paradise" by Fritz Guy. However, the most powerful essay in the collection is "Genesis Revis-

ited," in which Donna Jeane Haerich addresses the plurality of creation. Whether or not you agree with Haerich's conclusions, her exegesis draws from many interesting contemporary sources that are worth consideration.

The Welcome Table makes its greatest contribution to the body of knowledge about women in Adventist ministry with its appendixes. The nine appendixes provide, in one convenient resource, information concerning Mrs. White's statements on ministry, questions and answers concerning the ordination of women, past church decisions regarding women in ministry, and, in the most moving and telling section, a selected list of 150 women serving the Adventist Church in pastoral roles.

As with Samson, what makes *The Welcome Table* strong also makes it vulnerable. Because it was clearly written in enthusiastic preparation for the General Conference Session in Utrecht with hope for a positive vote on the North American Division's proposal, readers today will have to contend with poignant reminders of that disappointment. Some of the essays also tread over the same ground. Repetition is understandable, and even desirable, in works written out of political urgency, but less forgivable as time passes. It would be

It would be interesting to see a post-General Conference edition of The Welcome Table. This book deserves a wider readership than the delegation that met in Utrecht.

interesting to see a post-General Conference Session edition of *The Welcome Table*. This book deserves a wider readership than the delegation that met in Utrecht.

The issue of the ordination of women is a recurring topic in *Women and the Church*, edited by Lourdes E. Morales-Gudmundsson, but the scope of this book is not limited to an analysis of the role of women in ministry. Morales-Gudmundsson writes in the preface that "the book grew out of an increasing need to know what Seventh-day Adventist women were thinking about their church, their beliefs, and the evolving roles of women in contemporary society." What that "need" has given birth to is an eclectic collection of essays that cover topics from the feminine aspects of God's character to the feminization of poverty. Each essay is a testimony to the rich intellectual life of Adventist women.

Four essays stand out for their creativity and insightful contribution to literature produced about, for, and by Adventist women. In "Relationships in the Godhead: A Model for Human Relationships," Beatrice S. Neall suggests that the unity of the trinity and the concept of three distinct beings acting as one should serve as the blueprint for marital relationships. Iris Yob, in "Coming to Know God Through Women's Experience," shows how our understanding of God's character can be enlarged by an appreciation for biblical metaphors that describe God as tender, loving, self-sacrificing.

The two most thought-provoking essays are "Women, Music, and the Church: An Historical Approach" by Estelle Jorgensen and "Machismo, Marianismo, and the Adventist Church: Toward a New Gender Paradigm" by Lourdes Morales-Gudmundsson and Caleb Rosado. Both of these essays foray

into interesting territory. Jorgensen draws a parallel between the development of church music and the roles that women have traditionally played both in the church and in society—a juxtaposition that may never have been explored before.

The editor has made an admirable attempt to reflect the multicultural nature of women in the Adventist Church. The results of the informal survey distributed to African-Americans concerning their beliefs about the role of women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and reported by authors Frances Bliss and Jannith Lewis open the door for follow-up studies. The issues of poverty and abortion are also addressed in thoughtful essays by Ramona Perez Greek and Ginger Hanks-Harwood.

It is hard to criticize such a courageous effort to promote seri-

ous scholarship among Adventist women. However, the editor seems so aware of the vast number of issues affecting Adventist women, that she is unable to limit her collection, and it is weakened by its variety. Each essay could become the first in its own collection devoted to women and poverty or the issue of abortion or gender myths and the church. Indeed, the greatest tribute to *Women and the Church* would be a series of essay collections that deepen the discussions begun on these pages.

The Welcome Table and *Women in the Church* show us what women can bring to our continuing debate. However, more women need to write and their works need to be read until there is a strong feminine voice in the Adventist community. I have often seen a parallel between women in the Adventist Church and William

Wordsworth's Lucy who "dwelt among the untrodden ways/ . . . A maid whom there were none to praise/And very few to love." The problem with being a Lucy is that anonymity begins to pall. Women begin to avoid the untrodden path, searching for busy boulevards where they are able to use the talents God has given them to help move the traffic of humanity toward the cross.

And as the Lucys wander off, what happens to the church? Perhaps a man should have the last word after all:

She lived unknown, and few
could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

—William Wordsworth
"She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways"



Women's Ordination—"My Heart Nearly Leaped Out of My Chest"

My heart nearly leaped out of my chest when I read that Sligo had ordained three women to gospel ministry (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 1). My heart has been yearning for this for years.

I still remember my very first day at an Adventist college back in 1972, hoping to graduate in four years and eventually become an ordained minister of the gospel. I eventually became a minister, but as the years went by I was totally dismayed at the inequality in the church. I am no longer an active minister of the Adventist Church, even though I still preach and still consider myself "in ministry." I work for the government and I am good at what I do. I've been chagrined to see our church treat women like second-rate citizens when it comes to ordination.

I don't know where I've been and how I could have missed such a great event, since I belong to SDAs Online. I live in North Carolina, just five hours away from Washington, D.C., and if I had known that this great celebration was happening, I would have driven to Sligo to be there. I am glad, however, to know that it happened and I want to thank you for starting that discussion in your Sabbath school class back on July 15. I am so elated

as I write, this letter may not be making any sense. But believe me when I tell you that I sense a feeling of deliverance and pride to think that there are still Adventists out there who have what it takes to stand for what is right.

For the past few months I've been really discouraged with the church and even though I am a third-generation Adventist, I've been rethinking my association with it. Reading today's report on what happened at Sligo gives me hope and renewed strength—hope that the future *is* here and that tomorrow will not be like today. The young people who saw this ordination and even those who heard about it know it can happen. If that can happen, other changes can come. Guys like me can stay around a little longer and dare to think big for our church. It's good to know I am not alone anymore.

Thank you for *Spectrum*. I've been receiving it since the mid-'70s, and this is the first time I am writing. I just couldn't keep silent. I am so excited and thrilled. I think I'll take a drive to D.C. soon and worship at Sligo!

Again, thank you and God bless.

Wilny Audain
Nashville, North Carolina

Women's ordination leads to celebration, charges of liberal fanaticism, and the baptism of a new member. Also, Spectrum goes to Sabbath school.

Partisans of Women's Ordination Exude Arrogance, Fanaticism

If *Spectrum* was accurate in reporting the events and statements surrounding the ordination of women at Sligo church (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 1), I have some real concerns—not with the issue itself, but with those most intimately involved in that action.

One of the participants in the Sligo ordination was quoted as saying on the day of the ordination “we are more Adventist than we were last Sabbath” (pp. 33, 59). The message of that statement isn't entirely clear, but taken in one obvious way it seems to contain an element of arrogance, pride, and conceit. Is my church less Adventist than it would be if we ordained a woman minister? These same elements appear under the context of moral high ground—“moral insult inflicted at Utrecht” (p. 49); this issue has not been “handled in harmony with the morality that Ellen White called for” (p. 48); refusing women ordination “is morally wrong” (p. 52). The implication here is that anyone or any church not inclined to concur in Sligo's action is morally deficient. Fritz Guy would apparently brand every Adventist who does not enthusiastically endorse women's ordination as prejudiced and immoral (p. 52).

This attitude is terrifyingly close to my perception of the extreme conservative arm of the church. Each appears to be equally fanatical. In fact, I am as disgusted with the public attempt to sway delegates at the General Conference (p. 20) as I am with the unabashed attempt to sway members of the Potomac Conference Committee members by ordination candidates and their friends

and relatives (p. 45).

This idea of a “grassroots initiative” (pp. 38, 46) also has me bothered. Certainly, truth can be discovered and articulated by laity in the local church, but I would expect such revelation to come from a Sabbath school class engaged in deep Bible study and prayer rather than in a discussion of strategy to circumvent actions taken at the last General Conference (pp. 33, 34). And what would we do with a localized grassroots effort to force the accommodation of polygamy or divorce or drug use?

Of course, the debate will not end with this issue of *Spectrum* or with the action taken at Sligo and La Sierra. The conservative side of Adventism is already sputtering over the “apostasy” evidenced by rejection of the Utrecht vote (for example, see *Our Firm Foundation* [November 1995]). And I suspect those now demanding ordination of women will not be satisfied until credentials are granted in their conference, and then in their union,

Beyond Reporting and Analysis, A “Luminous Moral Passion”

For the past 25 years, I have relied on *Spectrum* for scholarly analysis and insightful reporting of the Adventist community. The September 1995 issue (Vol. 25, No. 1), with its account of the Sligo ordinations, combined these qualities with a luminous moral passion. I read all the articles at one sitting and when I was done, I didn't know whether to cry or stand up and cheer.

and then . . .

So my objection to this whole business—and to a lot of other issues we seem to so gleefully embrace—is the attitude of the participants and the inordinate amount of energy and time we devote to it. The issue has been debated; the vote taken. It's time for Branson to spend more time studying the Word and consulting the Spirit in preparation for his Sabbath school class. It's time for Chuck Scriven to direct his passion and intelligence toward improving his college. It's time to quit acting like defiant children whose mother just said “No.” It's time for *me* to be out sharing a truthful picture of our God. If Sligo, La Sierra, any other church, or even a conference wants to ordain women, fine. But let them do it without the arrogance and attitude of superiority apparent at both Sligo and La Sierra.

I cannot close this letter without adding a compliment on the June 1995 issue. The articles on David Dennis and Russell Hustwaite were exceptional; we got the information without any author bias. And Crews' article on repressed memory was superb.

John A. Johnson
Boulder City, Nevada

I admired the thoughtfulness of the Sligo debate portrayed in your pages. But more importantly, I salute the courage of the church and the three newly-ordained women to end that debate—and simply act. Their action reminds us that issues of social and economic justice are not distractions or diversions from the gospel message but an integral part of that message.

I only hope that this rekindled sense of justice will not stop at the church's doors but will extend, invigorated, to the larger community that desperately needs the

church to bear witness to this principle.

Joe Mesar
Harrison, New Jersey

Who Understands the Terms of This "Ordination Question"?

Is there anyone who *understands* the terms of this "ordination question" (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 1)? Please radio in. Unenlightened confusion can quickly turn, and *has* turned in some cases, to incredible anger and prejudice. What's been missing from many ordination discussions, it seems, has been the other party—the part of our world church that is *not* North America. Glossing over key information must obscure the real debate, must contribute to confusion. Can we really look at North American women's needs without looking at African women's needs, or South American women's needs, and not only the women, but the men's and children's needs? We cannot—if we are to remain true to the mandate that God lays on us: a mandate not only to proselytize in all the world, but rather to fulfill one aim which the enormous and multiple layers of international Adventist agency and department must boil down to—loving our neighbor.

If we see that ordination is a *world* calling, can we, merely at Sligo, really rush to cover each other with approval and confirmation, while pushing further into shadow the specter of an international brotherhood whose needs and issues we do not fully understand? To carry out an individual action that flies in the face of a decision made together seems insensitive at the least. Sligo's ordination ceremony seems like such an action.

There hasn't been much dia-

logue about or with the non-American church communities, to even begin to understand their gender struggles which, like ours in

America, remain fraught. It isn't clear what *their* women feel and do, how their hierarchies work—who these communities *are*. We can begin to bring these real pastors and people out of our own shadows. We don't know, there may be a part we can play in helping to heal *their* problems, by acknowledging the impact their actions have in our lives and reaching out to them in unconditional love.

Michelle Anderson
Takoma Park, Maryland

Has *Spectrum* Stopped Being a Place to Speak the Unspeakable?

As a *Spectrum* subscriber for many years, I have been pleased to see the multiple viewpoints brought out in many subjects which the *Adventist Review* would never have published. I have admired the unadulterated truth in the many varied and interesting articles. Lately, I see letters, an editorial, and several articles regarding the ordination of women to the ministry. I did not see any article or report from the viewpoint of the *two-thirds* of the delegates to the General Conference who voted against that issue. Also, at least 35 percent of North American Adventists have yet to be convinced that the North American Division should vote for the issue.

The genius of *Spectrum* when it

was born was that it offered a place to speak the unspeakable, to think aloud, to argue, to report—all without orchestration by a liberal or conservative agenda. It never seemed to be an official or unofficial organ of a particular Adventist group.

May it never be said of *Spectrum* that it has lost its goal, as stated on the inside of its front cover: "... to encourage Seventh-day Adventist participation in the discussion of contemporary issues from a Christian viewpoint, to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, and to foster Christian intellectual and cultural growth."

Danny Oh
Dayton, Ohio

Mormon Joins Denomination That Ordains Women

The experience of someone who recently became a Seventh-day Adventist shows how important women's ordination can be for Adventist witness and evangelism. My wife and I had the joy of seeing a good friend of ours join our

church the same day Madelynn Haldeman and Halcyon Wilson were ordained. Judith Jenson was baptized in the La Sierra University church on December 2, a few hours before the ordination service.

It was the culmination of a long

spiritual quest. Judith became acquainted with Seventh-day Adventists in 1982, when she joined the outpatient medical office in the Department of Pediatrics at Loma Linda University Medical Center. A pediatric nurse practitioner, she is now clinical supervisor for homecare nursing. She grew up the oldest of seven children in the home of a prominent surgeon who put a high priority on education. One sister is an attorney; her other brothers and sisters are all physicians. Besides a degree in nursing from the University of Utah, she pursued graduate study at Yale and Harvard Universities, and plans to complete a doctoral program at Loma Linda University. She was raised in a religious home, but one of the things that increasingly disturbed her about the church of her childhood was the way it subordinated women to men and excluded women from ministry.

Judith's quest for a spiritual home led her to attend the La Sierra University church one Sabbath last spring. During that first visit, she and her two children all had the strong conviction that they had found what they were looking for. They became regular visitors and although she had discussed Adventism with many people over the years, her interest in Adventist beliefs and practices intensified. She had serious conversations with several Adventist pastors and religion teachers and twice read through a textbook on Adventist doctrines.

Judith was attracted to Adventism by the spirit of openness she found and especially by the way Adventists affirmed women and gave them an active role in ministry. One Sabbath we sat together through a sermon that raised some searching questions about the present state of the church. I knew she was thinking about possible membership, and I wondered if she would be put off by the

preacher's comments. To the contrary, she turned to me when it was over and said, "That was fantastic. I want to belong to a church where people can be so open about their questions and convictions." She personally congratulated the speaker and sent five tapes of the sermon to friends around the country. She also made a point of attending the church business meeting reported in the last issue of *Spectrum*, when the La Sierra church voted to proceed with the ordination of two women to gospel ministry.

Judith's baptism was scheduled for a time that tragically coincided with her father's last illness. But she left his bedside and made a 12-hour drive alone to keep her appointment the next day. Dr. Wilber Alexander, professor of religion at

Loma Linda University, and I officiated at her baptism during the morning worship service. Later that afternoon she attended the women's ordination with some non-Adventist friends who spent the day with her. Like everyone present, she was deeply moved by the experience. Toward the end of the program, Halcyon Wilson explained what it meant to her to be ordained to the gospel ministry. She said, "Now I can tell my granddaughter that she belongs to a church that ordains women." Judith turned to the friends sitting beside her and said, "And so can I."

Richard Rice
Professor of Theology
La Sierra University

Ten Good Reasons Why Men Should Not Be Ordained

I would like to thank you for the thoughtful and insightful articles and discussions provided in *Spectrum*. I appreciate being able to read differing points of view and not always the party line.

I have enclosed a paper a friend faxed to me not long ago.

Ten Reasons Why Men Should Not Be Ordained

1. Their physical build indicates that men are more suited to tasks such as picking turnips or dehorning cattle. It would indeed be "unnatural" for them to do other forms of work. How can we argue with the intended order that is instituted and enforced by nature?
2. If men have children, their duties as ministers might detract from their responsibilities as parents. Instead of teaching their

children important life skills like how to make a wiener roasting stick, they would be off at some committee meeting or preparing a sermon. Thus, these unfortunate children of ordained men would almost certainly receive less attention from their male parent. Some couples might even go so far as to put their children into secular day care centers to permit the man to fulfill his duties as a minister.

3. According to the Genesis account, men were created before women as a prototype. It is thus obvious that men represent an experiment rather than the crowning achievement of creation.
4. Men are overly prone to violence. They are responsible for the vast majority of crimes in our country, especially violent crime. Thus they would be poor role

- models, as well as being dangerously unstable in positions of leadership.
5. In the New Testament account, the person who betrayed Jesus was a man. Thus, his lack of faith and ensuing punishment stands as a symbol of the subordinate position that all men should take.
 6. The story of Gethsemane also illustrates the natural tendency of men to be either unable or unwilling to take a stand. Men always hide behind committees. It is expected that even ordained men would still embarrass themselves with their natural tendency toward a pack mentality.
 7. If men got ordained, they would not be satisfied with that; they would want more and more power. Next thing, most of the Conference leaders would be men and then where would we be? No, the line must be drawn clearly now before it is too late.
 8. Many if not most men who seek to be ordained have been influenced by the radical "men's movement" or "masculist movement." How can they be good leaders? Their loyalties are divided between leading a church and championing the masculist drive for men's rights. The tract writers haven't pronounced on it yet, but the masculist movement is probably profoundly un-Christian!
 9. To be an ordained pastor is to nurture and strengthen a whole congregation. But these are not

traditional male roles. Rather, throughout the history of Christianity, women have been considered to be not only more skilled than men at nurturing, but also more fervently attracted to it. Women, the myth goes, are fulfilled and completed only by their service to others. This makes them the obvious choice for ordination. But if men try to fit into this nurturing role, our young people might grow up with Role Confusion Syndrome, which could lead to such terrible traumas as the Questioning Tradition Syndrome.

10. Men can still be involved in

worthy Church activities, without having to be ordained. They can still take up the offering, shovel the sidewalks and maybe even lead the singing on Father's Day. In other words, by confining themselves to such traditional male roles, they can still be vitally important in the life of the Church. Why should they feel left out? (Adapted from the "Mennonite Report," by Ivan Emile.)

Sometimes it's easier to laugh than cry.

Keep up the good work.

Judi L. Baker
Petaluma, California

Spectrum Goes to Sabbath School

The report on the withdrawal of the July 1994 issue of *Ministry* from circulation (*Spectrum*, Vol. 24, No. 2) provided an unusual and striking example for a Fresno Sabbath school class.

The Sabbath school lessons for the fourth quarter of 1994 dealt with the Three Angels' Messages. As a teacher, I had struggled with a universal theme that would make the lessons relevant for today. In that context, I was shocked on reading the *Spectrum* news update that the entire issue of *Ministry* was withdrawn from circulation because of the honest and open admission of David and LaVonne Neff that they had withdrawn from the Adventist church because of a lack of an "experience of the awe and majesty of God," the very theme that I was trying to emphasize! The censored paragraph strikingly and beautifully fit with the lesson. Ad-

ditional impact was provided by the title of the censored article, coincidentally emblazoned on the beautiful banner at the front of the church in celebration of the Thanksgiving season—"Make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise"—and because of my personal acquaintance with David and LaVonne Neff, when they were at Andrews University. We concluded the study with the words of that great hymn, "Worthy, Worthy Is the Lamb."

The church is to be a forum not just for smooth talk but for painful and unsettling messages. Thanks to *Spectrum* for openly reporting on censorship that, in an unexpected and roundabout way, was to become such a powerful message for a Fresno Sabbath school class.

C. Thorben Thomsen
Chair, Health Administration
Loma Linda University

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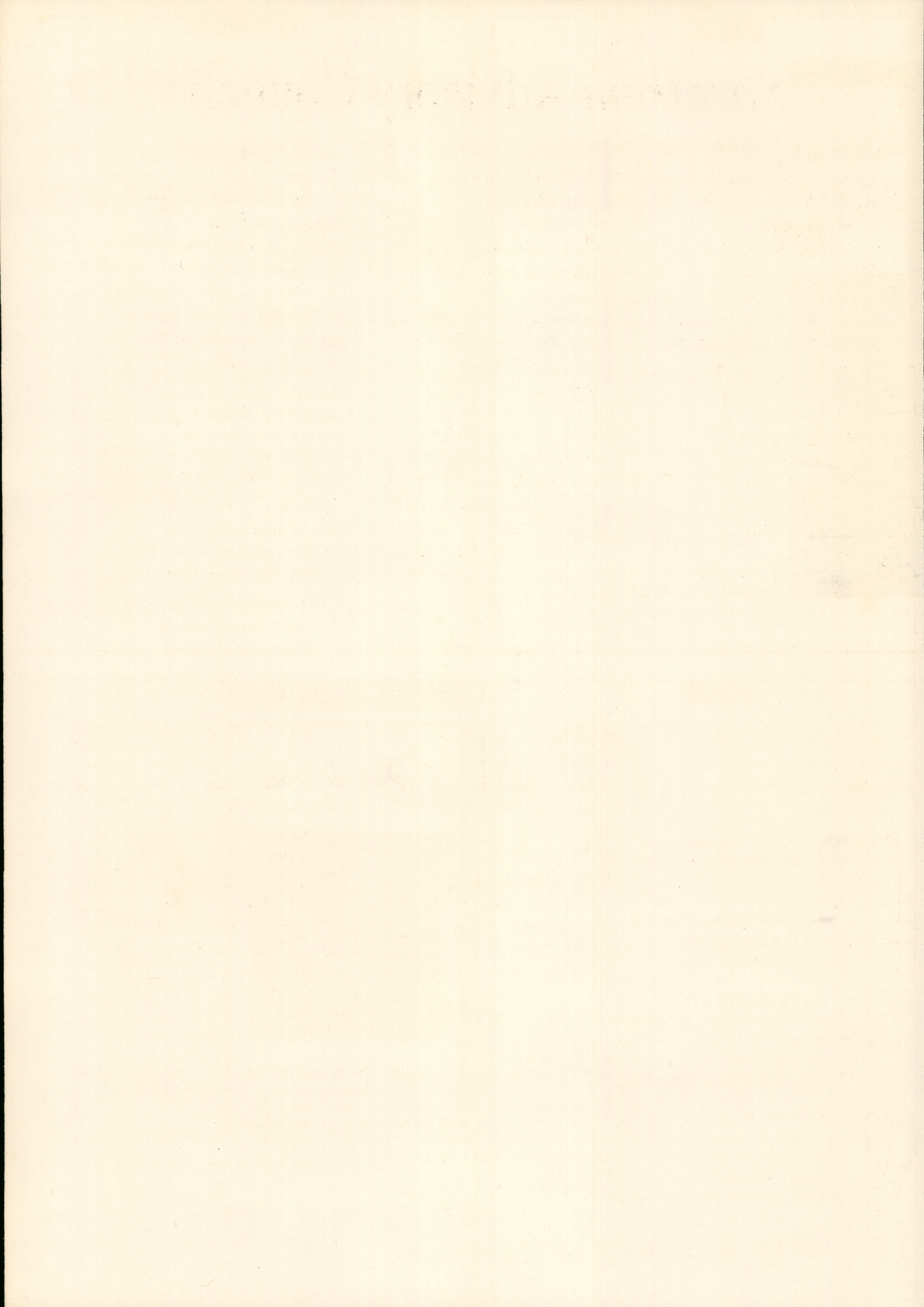
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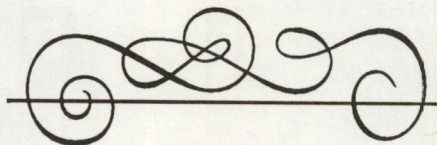


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—Patricia A. Habada and
Rebecca Frost Brillhart, eds.

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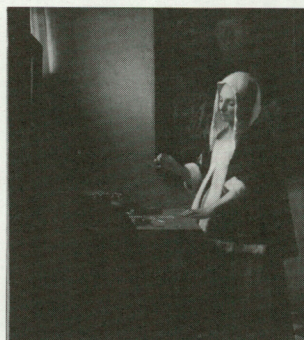


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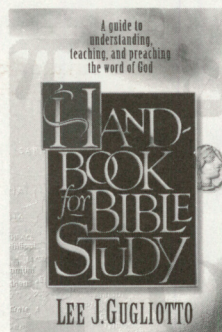
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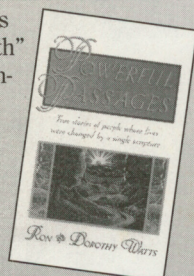
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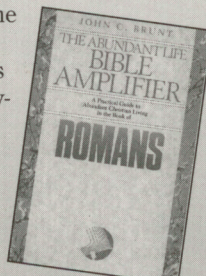
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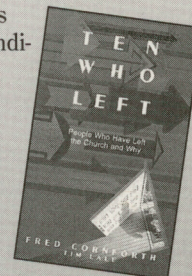


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