



The Case for an SDA Prep School

An Adventist educator offers a modest proposal that Adventists regard excellence and spirituality as inseparable.

by Michael Stepniak

IT IS TIME WE ESTABLISHED AN ACADEMICALLY rigorous Adventist high school. The benefits stemming from its creation could be significant. Adventist colleges and universities would react positively to students prepared to pursue theological and other studies at the highest academic level. The church would be blessed with an influx of well-trained scholars ready to provide leadership throughout our church and the academic community. And Adventist youth who currently seek the highest scholastic challenges would be given the opportunity to flourish in a setting which placed as much emphasis on their salvation as it did on their ability to think critically and act responsibly.

The need for the formation of an academically excellent institution is real. And certainly

the time has arrived in our denominational history when the size of our student population, extent of our educational scholarship, and wealth of our members could support its establishment.¹ But what type of school could provide superior training for young Adventists willing and able to reach for the highest levels of scholarship, while simultaneously maintaining a focus on conversion and an atmosphere that was not culturally or socially exclusive? The independent preparatory school is one model for such an institution.

Qualities Worthy of Imitation

No two prep schools are exactly alike, of course; differences are readily observed, for example, between and among Catholic schools (like Georgetown Preparatory School, in Maryland), "academies" (like Phillips Andover, in Massachusetts), military academies, Western schools (like The Orme School, in Arizona), and so on. Not all qualities found at prep schools would be worthy of adoption

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by individuals interested in the formation of an Adventist prep school. But there are key qualities shared by the best prep schools that would prove very worthy of consideration: (1) rigorous academics, (2) superior facilities and resources, (3) a nurturing environment for boarders, and (4) multiple opportunities for moral growth.

Communities of Excellence

Leading prep schools, such as those identified by one author as the "Select 16,"² place an enormous emphasis on academics.³ Once enrolled, students at leading prep schools undergo what has been described as a massive

academic assault on indolence. Classes are usually held six days a week (Monday through Saturday), and can provide an hour of homework each per night. Small class sizes (usually with fewer than 12 students) facilitate student-centered discussions and encourage the development of communication and critical thought. Teachers who are well-educated and remain active as scholars (thanks to the focus of the schools, and financial and personal support of the administration) foster a spirit of scholarship both within and outside the classroom. The impact of this academic environment upon the student can be dramatic: better study habits, the ability to manage time effectively, and increased independence are just a few of the possible and probable outcomes.⁴

Should "Gifted and Talented" Children Receive Special Treatment?

In the Gifted and Talented Children's Education Act of 1978, the federal government offered an oft-debated definition of "giftedness":

The term "gifted and talented children" means children and, whenever applicable, youth, who are identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership ability or in the performing and visual arts, and who by reason thereof require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school.¹

Immediately, questions of privilege and exclusivity arise. Won't "ordinary" students suffer if "exceptional" students are provided with special attention, facilities, and so on? The answer, it seems, is No. What follow are common questions raised about programs for gifted

children, and responses to those questions.

*Won't the removal of students with exceptional abilities result in a loss to the overall instruction of the class?*²

The reverse may be true for at least three reasons. First, this separation lessens the range of intellectual and reading abilities with which the teacher has to contend. With a smaller range, the teacher can devote more time and effort to various groups within the class. Second, the presence of extremely able pupils is often frustrating, as teachers find they are unable to provide sufficient motivation and flexibility for them to pursue their interests in depth. A program that provides opportunities for the gifted to develop their potential can alleviate this source of teacher frustration. Finally, sometimes when the gifted students are separated, other students begin to play a more active role in the classroom and thereby may also develop more confidence in their own abilities.³

Aren't the gifted already provided for? The percentage of gifted individuals receiving adequate attention remains small and the federal allocation of funds minimal.⁴

Won't the gifted succeed anyway? (After all, "The mind is its own place, and it self Can make a Heav'n of hell, a Hell of Heav'n.") Many gifted students do not succeed within the present academic setting; they drop out of school or fail to continue their education beyond high school. While gifted and talented individuals often suffer in classes where no provisions have been made to accommodate their special abilities, they seem to succeed in special classes. In an extensive California study of 929 gifted students, grades 1 to 12, Simpson and Martinson found that those in special programs made significantly greater gains in academic achievement than those in regular classes. The lack of challenge and realistic goal-setting for

As noted above, prep school faculty play a critical role in creating an academically rigorous environment. As the catalogues from many schools show, most teachers have an admirable scholastic record as made evident by their education at highly selective universities and other past scholastic accomplishments. The majority have graduate degrees and a significant percentage have doctorates. Many remain active as scholars, writing articles, serving on national testing boards, and continuing their own education.⁵ Catalogues distributed by leading prep schools sometimes use as much space describing the faculty as they do student life.⁶ The most outstanding teachers are often reviewed in multi-paragraph or page-length biographies,⁷ which describe

them as intellectually gifted, passionate about their subject, compassionate toward students and student learning, and portray them as the school's most valuable resource.

Superb Facilities and Resources

The emphasis that leading prep schools place on academics is complemented by a strong emphasis on superior facilities and resources. The reason behind this emphasis is that leading prep schools share an educational philosophy based on the belief that "the final four years of [secondary] schooling are a critical period of transition between child-

the gifted may foster poor academic attitudes and lazy study habits that can further impede full academic achievement.⁵

Won't the gifted have emotional and social problems if placed in a special program? Most research has shown this to be false. Rather, emotional problems are usually brought on by the frustration of ability.⁶

Don't special provisions benefit only participants? The removal of the gifted and talented individuals from regular classes does not necessarily detract from the total instruction for the other students. Actually, removing gifted children from a regular classroom may result in the stimulation of new leadership among students previously overshadowed.

Won't gifted and talented individuals become "snobbish" if selected for a special program? Research has proven otherwise. In fact, sometimes gifted and talented students become less "elitist" when included in a special program because they find they do not have to be defensive about their abilities with their classmates.

Isn't providing separate education for the gifted akin to helping others become superior? It is true that our way of life is based on the principle that everyone is equal. Although this means that all people should have equal opportunities to achieve their potentials, it should not be interpreted to mean that everyone has the same needs.

1. As reprinted in Betty W. Atterbury, *Mainstreaming Exceptional Learners in Music* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1990), p. 60.

2. The following arguments and corresponding rebuttals are adapted from Frederick B. Tuttle, Jr., Laurence A. Becker, and Joan A. Sousa, eds., *Program Design and Development for Gifted and Talented Students* 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1988), pp. 13-21. They presume a context of the public school classroom. But while teaching and learning conditions in Adventist academy classrooms may occasionally differ from their counterparts in the "typical" school, the fact remains that these differences are unlikely to be significant enough to undermine the relevance of most of the following arguments or rebuttals.

3. Ibid., p. 13. One of the more typical arguments against removal of the gifted from smaller-sized classrooms has been the assertion that a small classroom enables teachers to provide the gifted with any necessary personalized attention. (See, for example, Miriam Wood, "Schools Need Special Learning Programs for Gifted Children," *Adventist Review* [October 27, 1988], p. 13).

4. *Program Design and Development for Gifted and Talented Students*, pp. 15, 16.

5. Ibid., pp. 16-18; see also Ray Simpson and Ruth Martinson, "Educational Programs for Gifted Pupils: A Report to the California Legislature" ED 100 072 (Sacramento, Calif.: California State Department of Education, January 1961).

6. See *Program Design and Development for Gifted and Talented Students*, p. 18. Studies which show that the participation of gifted students in special programs does not cause social or personal problems include Walter Barbe's "Evaluation of Special Classes for Gifted Children," *Exceptional Children* (November 1955), pp. 60-62, and *Education of the Gifted and Talented: Report to the Congress of the United States by the U.S. Commissioner of Education* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972).

hood and college.”⁸ The assumption that adolescents have special needs is shared by many parents who are willing to pay the often sizable tuition fees charged by most of the leading prep schools. (The average annual boarding fee for the “Select 16” in 1995 was \$20,925.⁹) The size of these fees is largely the result of the commitment made by schools to maintain first-class facilities and resources aimed at caring for adolescent needs.¹⁰

An equivalent Adventist institution would certainly run the risk of being viewed as the exclusive domain of the wealthy. However, the strong financial position of many of these schools (often ensured by the loyalty of alumni) enables them to offer financial aid to gifted and needy students who gain admission but find the expense prohibitive. Phillips Academy in Massachusetts, for example, and the Hill School in Pennsylvania, both charge yearly tuition of approximately \$21,000. Phillips, however, with an endowment of \$274 million, makes \$6.4 million available yearly in financial aid to students, and the less exclusive Hill School, with a \$61 million endowment, offers \$1.6 million yearly in financial aid.

Quite often, prep school facilities are as awe-inspiring as their endowments and corresponding fees. It is not uncommon for a leading prep school with a student body of less than 500 to have a fine arts complex, sizable library, beautifully crafted chapel and dining commons, adequate dormitories, and a superb athletic complex. Woodberry Forest School, for example, has a relatively small enrollment (approximately 350 male students), but maintains an athletic program that is supported by 17 tennis courts (three indoor),

eight football fields, four soccer fields, four lacrosse fields, two baseball diamonds, cross-country courses, a regulation nine-hole golf course, and sports complexes that house, among other things, a 200-meter track, five basketball courts, three squash courts, two swimming pools, and a racquetball court. The justification for the expense related to such comprehensive athletic facilities is not dissimilar to Adventist philosophy, which maintains that a clear mind requires a healthy body.

But leading prep schools also assert that active participation in sports can have a profound influence on a young person’s potential to succeed in a position of leadership. As one

school explained, sports can become an integral part of an adolescent’s growth into a well-rounded adult because by “working toward a common goal, students learn the value of commitment, discipline, and sacrifice while learning to deal maturely and gracefully with victory and defeat.”¹¹

Prep schools acknowledge that by maintaining facilities that can provide better superior support for sports, extracurricular activities, and artistic endeavors, they can ensure the better development of their charges and contribute to what one headmaster described as “the liveliness and joy of our community.”¹²

Adventism is a world of diversity. Adventists and the world would benefit enormously if an independent Adventist prep school were established, committed to the inseparability of excellence and spirituality.

Communities of Care

While most agree that classes, teachers, facilities, and resources are responsible for defining the school experience and giving it value in the marketplace, an additional,

defining characteristic of most prep schools is their status as boarding institutions. This should be an area of particular concern to Adventists, since the denomination's distribution dictates that an exclusive institution like the one discussed here would require boarding facilities.

The likelihood of "bad apples" among the pool of possible friends and the possibility of their bad influence has been enough to convince some that the boarding school experience is inherently undesirable. As one Adventist author stated:

At this time [in teenagers' lives] peer group pressure also becomes exceptionally significant, and it would be naive to believe that all other students at the boarding academy will have a positive and productive spiritual influence. It is the belief of the authors that for most youth it is far better for them to be with their parents until at least college age.¹³

Regardless of the potential for a negative experience, parents of many prep school students and many students themselves remain eager to experience boarding life.

The potential for the "dormitory experience" to shape an adolescent's character and performance was illustrated most recently by the wonderfully candid collection of essays on life inside prep schools, entitled *Casualties of Privilege*.¹⁴ In this volume, student essays such as "Living Inside the Prep Culture," "Beating the System," and "Hazing" describe the enormous (and often negative) impact that the boarding experience had upon their character, behavior, and memories. One student summarized his perception of life at Dervey (the fictional name he had assigned to his dormitory) as follows:

Here, in bold-face print, was the division between myth and reality. . . . We were viewed as independent and responsible young adults capable of taking care of ourselves. But in fact, the school in general, and Dervey in particular, housed many who acted with wild irresponsibility toward themselves and others.¹⁵

The assumption has long been that the factors that most significantly impact student life in dormitories are peer relationships. To a large extent this is supported by research.¹⁶ Samples of the rich literary tradition describing this culture include John Knowle's stirring *A Separate Peace* (New York: McMillan, 1959), and Arthur Marshall's hilarious *Whimpering in the Rhododendrons: The Splendors and Miseries of the English Prep School* (London: Collins, 1982).

In spite of occasionally disturbing reports, and because leading schools are increasingly doing so much to ensure that their dormitory experience is rewarding, parents continue to present their children at the prep schools' doorstep, knowing that their child is about to become totally immersed in an intense and comprehensive educational experience unlike any other, and convinced that prep school adults will become involved in and care for that child's growth and development.¹⁷

Fostering "Moral Decisiveness"

Morality is perhaps the issue most relevant to a discussion of an academically rigorous Adventist secondary school. Because of this fact, it is important to note how the best prep schools aim to do more than simply provide superior academic instruction and a nurturing boarding environment for talented and/or wealthy students. From the employment of full-time psychologists (St. Paul's) to offering a ninth-grade required course in Movement and Mime (Milton Academy); from providing a weekly service of worship (Woodberry Forest) to using chapel to encourage the consideration of broad ethical questions outside of any religious denomination (Phillips Exeter); these schools utilize various activities and tools to positively influence the wholistic development of their charges.

For most parochial and non-parochial schools, the desired development necessarily includes some type of spiritual or moral growth.¹⁸ This fact is often publicized in prep school mission statements. Groton School, for example, asserts that it has an “unflagging commitment to each student’s intellectual, moral and physical development. . . .”¹⁹ The mission statements of other prep schools, however, clearly reveal a desire to avoid the rigidity and perhaps condescension suggested by such absolute terms as *morality* or *religion*. Choate Rosemary Hall, for example, proclaims a commitment instead to “integrity, individual worth and responsibility to others.”²⁰ And Philips Andover Academy strives to help young people achieve their potential in “aesthetic sensitivity” and “moral decisiveness.”²¹ Occasionally, this curious-sounding language comes from a school which has steered away from an earlier and more religious mission. Deerfield Academy, for example, acknowledges in its mission statement that it was “originally pledged to the instruction of youth, and the promotion of piety, religion, and morality.”²²

It is interesting to note that while some prep schools support their efforts in directing students toward a desirable moral position by the imposition of many rules and regulations, many of the leading schools emphasize disci-

pline through the maintenance of honor codes (“I will not lie, cheat, or steal, and will report those who do”) and often reserve more severe punishment for those who fail to show self-discipline than for those who break other imposed rules. The rationale offered for focusing on the student’s own sense of honor or fairness is occasionally stated with eloquent frankness:

At St. Paul’s, rules and regulations are described as “expectations” because relationships, not rules, are designed to inspire and ensure appropriate behavior. . . . The School recognizes that a moral life cannot, ultimately, be imposed from without by means of prohibitions; it must grow from within, inspired by worthy norms and cultivated in meaningful relationships.²³

A warning note for Adventists should sound when they review the records of parochial secondary schools. The moral training provided by these schools is often aimed less at creating social conscience or moral integrity than it is at ensuring denominational fidelity and church participation.²⁴ The achievement of this desired outcome is more assumed than assured. It is true, on the one hand, that parochial schools are often successful in imparting knowledge of a denomination’s history and beliefs.²⁵ These same researchers, however, also found that a large range of factors assumed to have a significant effect on youths’

The Effect of Uniforms on Classroom Conduct

Many schools utilize various methods besides relationships to modify undesired behavior. For some schools, these methods have recently included the adoption of school uniforms or strict dress codes. Educators supporting this adoption often believe that uniforms represent a “concrete and visible means of restoring order and discipline to the classroom” (Kathleen L. Paliokas and Ray C. Rist, “School Uniforms: Do They Reduce Violence—Or Just

Make Us Feel Better?” *Education Week* 15:28 [April 3, 1996], p. 52). While the real benefit of uniforms and dress codes remains in question (see Derek C. Wilde, in a letter to the editor, printed under “School Uniforms and Pride, Envy, Responsibility,” *Education Week* 15:31 [May 8, 1996], p. 40), the popularity of uniforms continues to rise. For some schools, their desirability is not only cosmetic (improving the way students look and simultaneously in-

creasing their identification with classmates), but also stems from issues of security (identification of students in an open school). Under the direction of its principal, Takoma Academy adopted uniforms during the 1995-1996 school year for these reasons. The result, the principal recently asserted, has been a different and improved attitude among students (conversation with Dunbar Henry, then principal, Takoma Academy, May 13, 1996).

church participation and attitudes had, in fact, little effect. The results of their research clearly indicated that among those factors that had *little* effect on youths' church participation were years of formal religious training (either in a Sunday or parochial school), extent of religious knowledge, and socioeconomic factors.²⁶ Their research also indicated that church participation was determined more by youths' reported like or dislike of past religious education than it was by "either the number of years of their religious education or the knowledge gained (measured by our test of Bible knowledge)."²⁷

Factors that did significantly influence youths' attitudes toward church included types of relationships with other people; peer pressures; the religious activities of parents (i.e., what parents did, not what they had their children do); and relationships with church leaders.²⁸ Other researchers have also concluded that relationships are of primary importance in the development of matters of faith. In their study of six mainline denominations, Benson and Elkin found that one of the most important predictors of whether adolescents and adults could report having a "mature faith" was whether or not, as children, they could recall conversations with their mother or father about issues of faith.²⁹

Adventist Diversity Can Embrace Excellence

This discussion of the "prep school experience" suggests a wealth of unanswered questions, of course. How might students be selected for the program? How much would such a school cost, and who would fund it? Who would have ultimate responsibility for the institution?

Great care would obviously need to be taken in seeking answers to these and many other questions. Although there would be many similarities with leading prep schools

around the country, an Adventist prep school would be different in that it employed teachers chosen not only for their exemplary scholarship and character, but also for their basic commitment to the church.³⁰ One would assume that some of our denomination's best scholars would be readily attracted by employment at an institution that provided support for continuing scholarship while nourishing their efforts as mentors and teachers to eager learners.

The curriculum at an Adventist prep school, with merit-based admissions, would also need to be carefully tailored so that it prepared the brightest of our young people for the highest level of scholarship in major fields of learning covered by our own higher education institutions. For example, a particular emphasis could be placed on theological education and a special diploma could be earned in this field. Such a diploma might be awarded to those who have completed core studies with distinction, taken extra classes in the theology department, and completed a significant foreign language requirement that would enable serious and significant biblical scholarship (three years of Greek, for example, and two years of Latin).

Could our church benefit from the formation of an Adventist prep school as described above? Yes. Can the church accommodate yet another alternative mode of education? If the variety of opinion among early Adventist educators on the relevance and purpose of education is anything of an indication, the answer is also undoubtedly Yes.

From its infancy, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has harbored diverse opinions on the relevance and purpose of education. While most agreed that the goal of such institutions was to win converts to the Advent faith—and, in turn, to fit them as messengers of that faith—those most committed to the idea of the imminent return of Jesus Christ were under-

standably suspicious of the value of institutions that required sizable financial and temporal investment. In response, some early educators asserted that

[t]he object in establishing these schools is not to make them full fledged colleges, or to take persons through a long course of study . . . [but] to provide schools where brethren and sisters desiring to fill some position in the cause can have a preparatory drill upon those points in which they are deficient. . . .³¹

But other leaders of the early church argued against any move to provide temporary training at the expense of academic and intellectual development.³² James White, arguing for the establishment of Adventist schools, asserted that

[t]he fact that Christ is very soon coming is no reason why the mind should not be improved. A well-disciplined and informed mind can best receive and cherish the sublime truths of the Second Advent.³³

Ellen G. White agreed, voicing her support for the importance of intellectual growth:

Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts.³⁴

Further differences of opinion existed regarding the scope of the education to be offered at Adventist schools; a popular focus was on the development of the entire person. The first of the four original goals of South Lancaster Academy, for example, was described as being "to connect physical labor with mental discipline."³⁵ In addition, some educators supported a focus on manners and communication skills—skills they believed would complement the proselytizing mission. Students attending Adventist schools, Haskell insisted in 1884, "should not only be taught a knowledge of the truth, and how to present it, but how to enter all classes of society so as not to give offense."³⁶

The variety of opinion among early Adventist educators on the relevance and purpose of education continues to be reflected in the many alternative modes of education that Adventism currently accommodates. While church-supported academies publicize a commitment to the conversion of enrolled students and their academic preparation for Adventist and other similar colleges, some church members consider these church-supported institutions inadequately religious and unable to support the development of needed practical skills.³⁷ In response, a number of self-supporting schools adopt a conservative and religious focus, one which more often than not is accompanied by an emphasis on the development of practical skills. The recently opened and self-supporting Heritage Academy, in Monterey, Tennessee, for ex-

Does Education Jeopardize Faith?

Dean R. Hoge and Gregory H. Petrillo's research has shown that more abstract religious thinking among high school students is often associated with more religious rejection (Hoge and Petrillo, "Development of Religious Thinking in Adolescence: A Test of Goldman's Theories," *Journal for the Scientific*

Study of Religion 17:2 [June 1978], p. 151). These researchers suggest that "an intriguing dilemma exists for the educator in the American church today hoping to enhance the level of abstract religious thinking among adolescents. Under most conditions, the more he or she succeeds, the more likely it is the adolescent will

become negative toward the doctrine and the church. But for the private school Catholics it is the opposite—the more he or she succeeds, the more positive the adolescent will tend to be toward the doctrine and the church" (Hoge and Petrillo, "Development of Religious Thinking in Adolescence," p. 153).

ample, operates with the objective of providing a "conservative academic Seventh-day Adventist school with opportunities in music and in practical work situations."³⁸

Adventism is a world of diversity. It embraces members and institutions reflecting all

the world's cultures. Adventists—and the world—would benefit enormously if Adventism's institutions included an independent Adventist prep school committed to pursuing excellence and spirituality as two inseparable sides of God's will for humankind.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Conservative assumptions for enrollment suggest a potential student body of between 236 and 355 students. Assumptions are based on the following: 15 percent of high school students currently enrolled in NAD Adventist schools might qualify for admissions and 10 to 15 percent of qualified students might choose to attend such a school. Given that the North American Division high school enrollment in 1995 was 15,766, this formula would suggest the potential student body of 236 to 355 students. This final figure of course does not include Adventist students currently enrolled in non-Adventist high schools or potential foreign students. Enrollment figures are taken from *General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists North American Division Office of Education Annual Report, 1995* (Silver Spring, Md.: North American Division Data Management Service, 1996), p. 28. The separate but related debate over whether gifted students should receive special treatment is covered later in the paper.

2. The following discussion refers to "the select 16," which, as E. Digby Baltzell reports in *Philadelphia Gentlemen: The Making of a National Upper Class* (New York: The Free Press, 1958), "set the pace and bore the brunt of criticism received by private schools. . . ." These include Choate Rosemary Hall (Connecticut), Deerfield Academy (Massachusetts), Episcopal High School (Virginia), Groton School (Massachusetts), Hill School (Pennsylvania), Hotchkiss School (Connecticut), Kent School (Connecticut), Lawrenceville School (New Jersey), Middlesex School (Massachusetts), Phillips Andover Academy (Massachusetts), Phillips Exeter Academy (New Hampshire), St. George's School (Canada), St. Mark's School (Massachusetts), St. Paul's School (New Hampshire), Taft School (Connecticut), and Woodberry Forest School (Virginia). Data on these schools come from school catalogues and *Peterson's Private Secondary Schools 1996-1997* (Princeton, N.J.: Peterson's, 1996).

3. This emphasis is first noticeable upon reading the admission statements from the more selective prep schools. Typical are statements such as the following: "Exeter looks for student of exceptional promise who demonstrate intellectual curiosity and tenacity, welcome challenges, and take initiative" (*Phillips Exeter*

Academy Catalogue, distributed in 1996, p. 4). And "At St. Paul's, we are interested in attracting students who have demonstrated intellectual ability, motivation, and curiosity both academically and outside the classroom" (*St. Paul's School Catalogue*, distributed in 1996, p. 29).

4. Students share the assumption that academics define prep schools to a considerable degree. In fact, Cookson and Persell report that students appear to measure the "authenticity" of their prep school experience by the extent to which their school meets academic or intellectual ideals (see Peter W. Cookson, Jr. and Caroline Hodges Persell, *Preparing for Power: America's Elite Boarding Schools* [New York: Basic Books, 1985], pp. 148, 149).

5. Many schools recognize the close relationship that exists between teacher satisfaction and classroom performance. This satisfaction is the result of many factors, primary among which is that of workload.Sizer has noted that the size of a typical high school teacher's workload seriously undermines that teacher's ability to perform (see Theodore R. Sizer, *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985], p. 20). Elsewhere he suggests that the maximum total student load per teacher should be 80 pupils (see the final of the nine points that make up "The Common Principles" published by and available from the Coalition of Essential Schools, Brown University, Box 1969, Providence, RI 02912).

6. See, for example, the *Hotchkiss School Catalogue*, distributed in 1996.

7. This occurs in most of the better prep school catalogues: Groton's, Hotchkiss', Kent's, Phillips' (Andover and Exeter), St. Paul's School's, and etc.

8. Taken from a letter written by Tony Hill, the head of St. Mark's School, printed on page 2 of the school's 1995-1996 catalogue.

9. This figure does not take into account Canada's St. George's School.

10. The modern understanding of adolescence as a time of trial and opportunity (when needs are great) is at least a few centuries old. In *Emile: Or, On Education*, Rousseau held that youth could best make the transition from child to adult if given the opportunity to be rightly educated. His description of an appropriate education

can be summarized as follows: "The young student should be plucked from his parents and the contamination of the city and placed in a rural environment (isolation) to be tutored by a knowledgeable and sensitive mentor (intervention) in order to produce a natural man (transformation)" (as quoted in Cookson and Persell, *Preparing for Power*, pp. 31, 32.) Scholars such as educator and psychologist G. Stanley Hall (in his two-volume *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education* [New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1904]) further defined adolescence as a kind of demilitarized zone between childhood and adulthood where growth was rapid and the possibilities of fulfillment and despair extreme. Many prep schools, like grammar schools of old, maintain that the development of leadership skills also requires a social setting that prepares the youth for work among the socially elite.

11. Taken from the *Middlesex School Catalogue*, distributed in 1996, p. 19.

12. Taken from the *Kent School Catalogue*, distributed in 1996, p. 1.

13. Colin D. Standish and Russell R. Standish, *Adventism Imperiled* (Rapidan, Va.: Historic Truth Publications, 1984), p. 148.

14. Louis M. Crosier, ed., *Casualties of Privilege: Essays on Prep Schools' Hidden Culture* (Washington, D.C.: Avocus, 1991).

15. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

16. For example, when they asked prep school students to indicate boarding school's best feature, Cookson and Persell discovered that "32 percent chose the 'other students,' 23 percent chose 'the academics,' and 5 percent chose 'the teachers'" (Cookson and Persell, *Preparing for Power*, p. 154).

17. *Ibid.* Crosier has described the essential system needed for a successful dorm slightly differently. The essential systems needed for a successful boarding school, he asserts, include (a) training of dorm faculty; (b) value of student prefects; and (c) promotion of the idea of professional parenting (see Crosier's "Great Ideas: Communication on a National Level," in *Healthy Choices, Healthy Schools: The Residential Curriculum*, Louis M. Crosier, ed. [Washington, D.C.: Avocus, 1992]. For detailed information on dorm faculty and prefects, see especially Hamilton Gregg's "Dormitories: Staffing and Rooming," and Susan Graham's "Dormitory Prefects: Making a Difference, Defying the Odds," *ibid.*)

18. Of course, America has unique and historical interest in moral education. Perhaps no account of this country's educational heritage, a heritage that began with puritanical efforts aimed at ensuring the promotion of various religious and moral postulates, is a more delightful read than Adolphe E. Meyer, *Educational*

History of the American People, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967).

19. *Groton School 1995-1996 Catalogue*, p. 2.

20. *Choate Rosemary Hall: A Sense of Place*, catalogue distributed in 1996, p. 4.

21. *Andover*, the Phillips Andover Academy, catalogue distributed in 1996, p. 9.

22. *Deerfield: Catalogue 1995-1996*, p. 43.

23. Taken from *The Trust: A Compact With Students and Parents*, a pamphlet distributed with the St. Paul's School catalogue in 1996.

24. The idea that schools are better equipped to be the primary teachers of the faith than the home is a relatively recent creation, with roots not in early Jewish or Christian traditions but in the Reformation. For a fine overview of the changing locus of religious education, see Frank E. Proctor, "Teaching Faith in the Family: A Historical Overview," *Religious Education* 91:1 (Winter 1996), pp. 40-54.

25. Weber's study comparing instruction in Catholic schools with "out of school" instruction concluded that the Catholic high school is "fulfilling the function of imparting Catholic knowledge more effectively than is 'out of school' religious instruction for Catholic students who attend public high schools" (Larry J. Weber, "A Study of the Effectiveness of Catholic Schools for the Purpose of Imparting Religious Knowledge," *Religious Education* 63 [July-August 1968], pp. 320, 321.) And Hiltz showed that research could not support the theory that "pursued religious interest, operationalized through independent study, would result in greater religious interest than subject-centered religion study exposure, nor did the research find that students' importance and commitment to further search and study of religion significantly increased through exposure to independent study" (John T. Hiltz, "Effects of Independent Religion Study on Religious Interests of High School Sophomores," *Religious Education* 70:4 [July-August 1975], pp. 424, 425).

26. Dean R. Hoge and Gregory H. Petrillo, "Determinants of Church Participation and Attitudes Among High School Youth," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 17:4 (December 1978), p. 376.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*, p. 372. For more information on the Creedal Assent Index, see Morton King and Richard Hunt, "Measuring the Religious Variable: National Replication," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 14 (1975), pp. 13-22.

29. Conclusions of research of six mainline denominations outlined in Peter Benson and Carolyn Elkin, *Effective Christian Education: A National Study of Protestant Congregations* (Minneapolis: Search Institute, 1990), as quoted in Frank E. Proctor, "Teaching

Faith in the Family: A Historical Overview," *Religious Education* 91:1 (Winter 1996), p. 41.

30. Would these teachers also need to be able to entertain a critical approach to matters of religion while being concerned that these ideas not critically undermine a student's commitment to the church and faith? Such an ability is certainly desirable, though difficult to define or measure.

31. S. N. Haskell, "Preparatory Schools," *Review and Herald* (April 11, 1882), p. 233.

32. After all, such training could be supported by individuals or households as well as it could by institutions.

33. James White, "Questions and Answers," *Review and Herald* (December 23, 1862), p. 29.

34. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903), p. 17.

35. Eugene Leland, "The South Lancaster Academy," *Review and Herald* (February 19, 1884), p. 116. The other four were "[2] to provide a place of education whose moral atmosphere is such that parents can feel safe in trusting their children under its influence. . . . [3] to provide a place for the proper religious training of its students, as well as to protect them from the pernicious doctrines of 'freedom of thought,' and positive infidelity, so prevalent in some of the leading schools of the

day. . . . [4] to provide a place where young men, and those even of more advanced years, can prepare themselves to enter the great harvest field which is fast whitening for the sickle. . . ."

36. S. N. Haskell, "Our Schools," *Review and Herald* (January 1, 1884), p. 11. Other matters of concern to the early educators seem quaint in retrospect. When describing the primary goals of the Battle Creek institution, for example, George Butler stated that "we hoped to have a school . . . where frivolity, pride, vanity, and premature courting, could be mainly shut out" (George Butler, "Unpleasant Themes: The Closing of Our College," *Review and Herald* [September 12, 1882], p. 586.)

37. Occasionally, the stated objectives of church-supported institutions appear to weaken an assumed religious and denominational commitment. Some academies, for example, aim for greater identification with the larger Christian community and hesitate to assert that the Adventist conversion experience may be a privilege rather than an imposed requirement. As one such school recently stated: "As a Seventh-day Adventist Christian high school, we are responsible to both evangelize and nurture our students in our faith" (see *Forest Lake Academy Bulletin*, distributed in 1996, p. 7).

38. Richard Garver, "A New Academy Is Born," *Southern Tidings* (February 1995), p. 22.