# SPECIFICATION Community through conversation Figure 1. The second seco



## American Dreams Come True

The Prophet Amos on Gaza

### Why Women Shouldn't Be Ordained

Top Ten Ways to Fix Women's Ordination

#### **This Adventist Life**

Winona Wendth Shasta Nelson Herold Weiss Gary Gilbert

### **Reviews**

Three Books on Intelligent Design; William Miller Revisited

## SPECTRUM

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#### ABOUT THE COVER:

Pacific Union College art major Cabel Bumanglag created this image of anger as part of a series of five paintings on the emotions of family life. Also depicted were fear, happiness, love, and sadness.

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## **Life Begins at Forty:** Telling Our Stories in the

Conceptual Age | BY BONNIE DWYER

We tell ourselves stories in order to live. . . Joan Didion

n 2005, Daniel H. Pink got a lot of press and speaking appointments with his prediction that the Information Age of "computer programmers who could crank code, lawyers who could craft contracts, and MBAs who could crunch numbers," was giving way to the dawning of the Conceptual Age, in which artists, inventors, designers, storytellers, caregivers, consolers, and big-picture thinkers would reap society's richest rewards and share its greatest joys. His Whole New Mind became a New York Times and Business Week bestseller.

In this Conceptual Age, Pink said narrative would be significant. Recent events bear out his prediction. Narrative did play a major role in the election of Barrack Obama, or maybe just as significantly, the defeat of John McCain, who struggled with his advisers throughout the campaign about how his personal narrative should be used.

Pink finds narrative everywhere—in the world of medicine, in real estate, in products. And once the suggestion has been made, you begin to see it, too. "Tell us your worst valentine gift in 100 words and get 20 percent off your next purchase," Talbots advertised in February. Ice cream and cookies now have back stories think of Ben and Jerry's, or the cereal bars sold by Trader Joe's called "this fig walks into a bar."

This year as Spectrum turns forty, narrative is much on our minds. What is our story and how does it fit into the Adventist megastory? Some of the most popular articles that have appeared in our pages are the various tellings of what it is like to grow up Adventist in different places at different times. We return to that genre in this issue with four different family accounts of "This Adventist Life." Other family stories are scattered through the sections of the journal.



"Storytelling"; scratchboard for a poster to publicize a grantfunded storytelling program.

It is in the Bible that we find the first stories of the Jewish people and their encounters with their neighbors in Gaza. Doug Clark paraphrases the text of Amos to give us a devastating look at the most recent war in that region. Adventist history and the creation/evolution debate provide material for our reviews. And with General Conference coming in 2010, we pause to revisit the issue of ordination.

These four topics—war, creation and science, women's ordination, and family life—are a significant part of the Spectrum narrative. We've looked at them in detail and watched their changing shape within our community over time. Of course, there have been other important topics: the Bible, Ellen White, Glacier View I and II, theology, art, and poetry have all been significant. Lawsuits have riveted our attention, along with institutional stories and General Conference sessions.

Adventism has exploded around the world; America has changed significantly, and that makes the words of Spectrum's first editor Mollerus Couperus somehow even more true today than when he wrote them in 1969:

Continued on page 64...

## Women and Men and Ministry: A Family Story? | BY CHARLES SCRIVEN

eekdays I trudged off with my brother to our church school in Spokane. The walk was short enough that sometimes I was the kid they hired to stoke the coal furnace and clean out the clinkers on weekends.

I enjoyed schoolwork. I loved recess. Sometimes the whole room—boys and girls together—would play supervised dodgeball. Usually, though, we'd split by gender into different activities. Now and then the girls would simply watch whatever the boys were doing.

At recess in the spring, we'd race across the field outside to home plate. The first few to touch the plate would bat, and the rest, in their order of arrival, would start at catcher, pitcher, and so on all the way to right fielder. With each out, we'd move up a position, toward the opportunity to bat. It was a version of baseball—actually, softball—that we called "work-up."

In the fall, it was touch football; in the winter, basketball. And we always took it for granted that boys would take the field or court, and girls do something else.

Years later, I attended Walla Walla College, preparing for the pastorate and keeping company with the pre-meds and theology majors. Theology was fairly popular then. Job prospects were good. You got enough respect from your fellow students.

But in my memory, no women took a class that was for theology majors only. I was in a boys' club. Later, as a student at the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, I began to see how ethics touches on social relations, not just on the thoughts and doings of the individual. But the seminary was a boys' club, too. We didn't get to the question of justice for women.

Not long after that, however, the feminist movement began to put a crack in all this obliviousness. At least by the early 1970s, and I suppose even sooner, Adventist women were noticing New Testament passages like the

one in Galatians 3 that says there "is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

This passage seemed to say that "in Christ Jesus" there can be no splitting of human opportunity by gender. But the Church's pastors and administrators were a boys' club themselves, and they found it easy to dismiss the relevance of Paul's words. Just as clerics, despite Galatians 3, had once defended slavery, clerics now defended a different, but in some ways similar, oppression.

Like the Syrophoenician woman—the one Jesus first rebuffed, then heeded—Adventist women persisted in what they had to say. They kept on noticing that in Scripture God opens doors of hope, and frowns on those who close them. They kept on noticing the Bible's trajectory toward freedom and opportunity for everyone. And what's more, people began to listen. It wasn't too long until some women found congregations where they could work in ministry even if, officially, they were interlopers.

I first met Jan Eiseman (later, Daffern) when she was a student at Walla Walla. It was the mid-1970s. I was teaching journalism, and she was teaching—Sabbath School. Already, she was a spiritual leader. Already, I imagine, she was dreaming of the day when the Church would welcome women into pastoral ministry.

Later, I met Jan again, when I became senior pastor of the Sligo Adventist Church, near Washington, D.C. It was the mid-1980s now, and she was a member—unordained, of course—of the pastoral staff. Strangely, considering my new role, I was unordained, too. I was passionate about church, and by now had taught theology, but life's turns had left me with little experience as a preacher or pastor. Still, even though I was nobody's first choice for the job, I ended up at Sligo-and it was immediately determined that I should now be ordained to the gospel ministry.

The time was not ripe (I told myself) to complain loudly

## Still Waiting for You to Hear

Some recent and upcoming events at

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July/08

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☐ Jon Paulien, Ph.D. November/08

\*\*The Open Remnant: A Biblical and Historical Vision\*\*

□ Ivan Blazen, Ph.D.

\*\*Biblical Texts and Homosexual Practices\*\*

January/09

Gerry Chudleigh.

February/09

California Proposition #8: Why the Division among SDAs?

Doug Clark, Ph.D. March/09
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□ Beatriz Krumbein, M. F. A. *Art and Spirituality* 

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## New York's Best-Kept Secret

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April 4
Lynn Marie Tonstadt, Yale Divinity Student

April 18 Gerald Winslow, LLU

May 9
Ginger Hanks Harwood, La Sierra University

June 13 Clifford Jones, SDA Seminary

See www.MNYAForum.org for our current program.
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521 W. 126 St., Manhattan

(two short blocks from the 125 St. Subway station on the #1 line).

about the injustice of all this. Nor did anyone, least of all Jan, pressure me to resist my own ordination. The service took place on a Sabbath morning, where I was affirmed by the church leaders and local members who were taking a chance on me.

But at the climax of that service something happened that I, and certainly Jan, would never forget. She had a platform role, and was the one woman seated up front. When the time came for the ordination prayer, the worship leader asked all the ordained ministers in the congregation to join those on the platform for the "laying on of hands."

A pretty big number came forward—enough ordained ministers to make my fragile ego congratulate itself upon this occasion of high honor. These men and I would eventually kneel in front of everyone. During the ordination prayer, the rest of the congregation would remain in their seats.

Jan Daffern knew immediately what dawned on the rest of us more slowly. She would end up the only one on the platform still seated, and her solitariness would be painfully visible. She was a Sligo pastor, and yet she was not.

Her exclusion that day was like thunder but not as loud. In remarks after the prayer, I mustered the courage to saying something hopeful about women in ministry, and many in the congregation applauded. They were disposed kindly to me, but they were applauding—Jan, the person sitting behind the wall in the middle of room.

Is it not time to tear down this wall? Tear it down completely? It was time then. Jan Daffern herself looked for and eventually found a more welcoming community. Three or four years later, a youthful husband and wife, highly involved in the congregation's life, announced to me that they were dropping their Sligo membership: "We can no longer support a church that has an official policy of discrimination," they said.

Thousands of other Adventists have walked away, or fallen into bitterness, just because the wall remains.

Adventist women saw the Bible's *trajectory* toward freedom and opportunity for all. The inability to notice this trajectory is the great hermeneutical disaster, and the ability to notice it is the key to Christian authenticity. You can quote Scripture to shore up the wall against women or smooth the way for genocidal monsters. But when you notice the Bible's trajectory toward Christ's all-embracing peace, you help everyone. You give everyone a chance to take the field or court—or pulpit—with dignity and passion.

Charles Scriven chairs Adventist Forum.

## **Time and Time Again**

Editor's Note: The fall 2008 issue of Spectrum magazine included an editorial titled "What Time Is It?" which touched on the issue of Bible prophecy. Shortly after publication, the editor received a letter regarding the 490-Year Prophecy, along with a detailed chart (right) and explanatory essay. An edited version of the letter follows.

WOULD YOU BE kind enough to examine the enclosed chart?

Since we placed our chronology on the Web <www.oldtestamentchronology.com> four months ago, we have compiled a list of eighty-five events that have a number of prophetic utterances and are tied into the 490-Year Prophecy. We have asked visitors to our site to download the eight-page chart on chronology and to align this with the list of eighty-five events from 457 B.C. to 409 to see how perfectly they are fulfilled.

All the material on the chart is marked in red for Ptolemaic years and green for Old Testament chronology. The chart explains itself if users follow directions in the essay titled "Does Cyrus's decree fit the Ptolemaic Timeline?"

We ask that this chart be passed on to scholars to re-evaluate our work, which shows that the prophecy of the 490 years can be determined



and understood only through Old Testament chronology years.

The exercise is to prove to intellectuals and scientific minds that the Old Testament is historically precise in its chronological forecast of the 490-Year Prophecy.

B. Dobra VICTORIA. AUSTRALIA

#### **Homosexuality and Religious** Freedom

HAVING JUST READ the pro/con arguments for California's Proposition 8 (autumn 2008). I feel I must respond.

Nicholas Miller has clearly crossed the line he accuses his opponents of crossing. His entire argument is grounded in religiously based moralitv. He argues that because he finds gay marriage morally offensive, he should have the right to make a law

that prohibits gay marriage. This is religious discrimination.

His best advice to Seventh-day Adventists who have faced this issue is to be silent if they are unwilling to take the high road with religious liberty and argue that the Church should not defend Proposition 8. He should have taken his own advice.

I don't need to like gay marriage to recognize that its prohibition crosses the religious liberty line. True religious liberty gives freedom not only to practice religion, but also to reject all religious dogma and live life without it.

Miller's position has no business being incorporated into law in a state that clearly separates law from religion, as the U.S. Constitution demands.

Dave Reynolds VIA THE INTERNET

#### Correction

Author Maury Jackson ("Answering the Call for a Sacred Conversation on Race," summer 2008) is mistakenly identified as a doctoral student at Fuller Theological Seminary. He actually received his doctorate from Claremont Graduate University. The editors regret this error.



## An Interview with Don Davenport | BY ROBERT DUNN

Robert Dunn: Don, you were my student a number of years ago at Loma Linda University (now La Sierra University). Your success gladdens my heart. So far as I am aware, you were the first to write a novel in lieu of a thesis for a master's degree in English. Then you began writing in earnest with "Faith for Today." Later, you went independent. A few years ago, you produced a novel in co-operation with Kenny Rogers. I am delighted that you are willing to sit down for an interview with me on your present work as a writer for television.

On January 10, 2009, the Hallmark Channel screened a premier of "Expecting a Miracle," based on the novel The Miracle of Dommatina, by Ira Avery. You wrote the screenplay for it. What did you see as the novel's intent and to what extent did you seek to bring it out in your television adaptation?

**Don Davenport:** The book was really about how easy it is for couples to become worn down by the demands of modern life, almost to the point where they become emotionally anesthetized. Sometimes the best way to rediscover what you love about someone is to be forced to strip away all non-essentials. For Pete and Donna Stanhope, getting stranded in a primitive, albeit charming, Mexican town was the beginning of that rediscovery.

**Q:** The Mexican priest who presides over the annual fiesta fascinates me. Did you do any research on clergy or religious festivals in Mexico?

**A:** To tell you the truth, the book was set in Tuscany in the early 1970s. When the executive producer told me that Hallmark wanted to move the setting to Mexico, I was initially concerned that the story might not translate. I thought for a second and immediately got a picture of Chimayo, a very small New Mexico village about a forty-five-minute drive north of Santa Fe.

Called the Lourdes of the West, it has a small church

whose dirt is claimed to have miraculous healing powers. There is an anteroom filled with crutches from the people who have been healed. This was a place where the possibility of a miracle was very real and very palpable. So Chimayo became the *new* inspiration for the setting in the film.

**Q:** Much of the film is set in a small Mexican village and involves the desire of a young boy to walk normally and the desire of an American couple to have a child of their own. The problem of the couple is solved when they eventually agree to adopt. But the crippled Mexican child gains the ability to walk in an accident. Do you know whether anyone has regained the ability to walk in such a way?

**A:** No, not personally. But that's a little of the question we're left with, and one that our characters, in their attempt to be rational, try to resolve. If the boy was simply suffering from a spinal injury—a compressed disk or slipped vertebra or similar—it certainly is possible that his condition could be "cured" by a similar trauma that set things right. A good chiropractor does that on a lesser scale dozens of times every day. Then, again, maybe it really was a miracle.

**Q:** You have told me that Hallmark or the director made a number of changes to your script. To what extent do you regard these changes as contributing to the success of the film.

**A:** The script was pretty well shot as written. The director, Steve Gomer, did a really wonderful job and when I saw the original cut of the film, the one he supervised, I was very pleased. The emotional beats hit in all the right places, and I really couldn't have asked for a better directorial interpretation of the script.

It was obvious he *got* the material, understood the relationships, had a genuine feeling for the story. Unfortu-



nately, it's not the writer or the director who decide, and Hallmark, then, made additional changes. That was the version that aired.

Now, Hallmark is very successful at what it does and is very clear on who its audience is and what ground its productions need to cover to serve that audience.

Q: Yes, knowing and respecting your audience constitutes a first rule of good writing.

**A:** They subsequently cut several scenes, including scenes in which we see Donna and Pete begin to build their emotional walls, virtually brick by brick. There were scenes where the growing trouble at home begins to effect work performance, and a scene where it became painfully obvious that the relationship had, in essence, stalled. No one was willing to negotiate. It was very much "duck and cover." I truly felt we needed to go there in order to sense that hopelessness that comes from being "stuck."

My guess is that somehow it all got a little too dark for Hallmark and it opted to connect the emotional

dots in a little more linear way, which is certainly its prerogative, although it produced a somewhat less nuanced film, in my opinion.

I take great solace in the fact that I am doubtless the first and only film writer who has ever felt that some of the best stuff was left on the editing room floor.

**Q:** How did you get the assignment to do this project?

A: A producer friend who felt this would make a great Hallmark movie gave me the book. The production company agreed, but when it came to trying to acquire the rights, things became complicated. The author had died, and it became very difficult sorting out various legal and financial issues with his widow. That was why it took a little over eight years to get this film made, and several times I truly believed it would never be made at all. But one does get points for tenacity in this business.

**Q:** What other significant television projects have you done before, including what you did for the Adventist Media Center?



**A:** Well, I kind of cut my teeth writing "Faith for Today" "Westbrook Hospital" episodes and also had the opportunity to do some directing there as well. During that time, we also produced a TV movie-esque project called "Lesson in Loving," which I also wrote. It was an ambitious project, and in retrospect one not particularly well thought-out. We were operating a little in the "If we build it, they will come" mode. The whole experience was kind of sweetly naive, although extremely well-intentioned. It was also a great learning experience for me.

**Q:** I understand you are scheduled to do another script for Hallmark titled "Love Finds a Home," based on the book by Janette Oke. This will air on May 10, 2009. How are you preparing for this assignment?

**A:** The film has been shot and edited, although I haven't seen it. It was actually quite an honor to be asked to work on a Janette Oke project. She is a well-loved, best-selling author, and films based on her books have done extremely well. In fact, *Love Comes Softly* is still the most successful film the Hallmark Channel has ever produced and has sold thousands and thousands—if not millions—of DVDs.

It was also a personal thrill for me to have Patty Duke in the cast. Any time you have an Oscar-winning actress spouting lines you've written, it's a great feeling.

**Q:** Are you planning other projects you would care to mention?

**A:** Christmas in Canaan, the novel I co-wrote with singer Kenny Rogers, is scheduled to go into production this spring for Christmas 2009. I have already done the screenplay version and we have a wonderful director, David Paymer, attached (another Oscar-nominee). Then, there is a little feature film project titled Calliope's Spell that involves some of my experiences working with the members of the Cousteau Society. It's gotten some very good reads, and I'm hoping to nudge it along.

**Q:** Thanks a lot, Don Davenport.

**Robert Dunn** is professor of English at La Sierra University, Riverside, California.

## **American Dreams Come True**

#### From King's Dream to Obama's Hope

BY AUBYN FULTON

The following is the text I followed in giving a fifteen-minute talk recently at Pacific Union College. I should note this was in the form of a personal story and reflection, rather than a formal paper or scholarly presentation, and much of the detail consists of forty-year-old memories of an eight-year-old child.

I WAS ASKED to talk about the relationship between Martin Luther King Day and the election of Barack Obama to be president of the United States on November 4, 2008. I am happy to do that, as long we understand that you could ask one hundred different Americans to talk about the road from King to Obama, and you would get one hundred different stories. This one just happens to be mine.

It is not possible to think of Obama's victory last November without also thinking of MLK and his Dream; even more so since Obama's inauguration next Tuesday happens to fall on the day after MLK Day, and Obama will take the oath of office on the other end of the Washington Mall from where Dr. King gave his famous speech.

I am going to Washington for

the inauguration, and I'm taking my family. I don't have tickets and we don't know how to dress in cold weather, but we are going to stand in the mall with several millions of our fellow citizens watching the ceremony on big screens when we certainly would be able to see more and hear better from the warm comfort of our living roombecause I just have to be there. Too much has happened to get us to this moment; too many people have sacrificed too much, for me not to be a witness.

For me, the key to understanding the forty-year journey through the wilderness from the murder of Dr. King on April 4, 1968, to the election of Barak Obama on November 4. 2008, lies with my father and with my mother, David and Sheila Fulton. They were active in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s—both were officers in the Southern California branch of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)—an organization that worked closely with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SLCL), whose leader was the young Baptist minister Martin Luther King.

My parents had been trained by King's associates at SLCL in nonviolent resistance tactics, and, in turn, they trained hundreds of local



Union College's weekly Colloguy.

I am happy to let these remarks stand on their own, though I will respond to any question or or offline on private email (or even an old fashioned, face-to-face communication). If I co make one change, based on the dozen or so different conversations I have had with people already, it would merely by to underline even more boldly than I thought I had that the critique that I offer at the end is not of white people, but

of "Whiteness". White people are not bad, destructive or problematic: the idea of "Whiteness" is all three of those things. And most Americans - Asian, Latino, African or otherwise - participate in, and maintain the idea of Whiteness, and all of us share

The following is the text I followed in giving the 15 minute talk. I should note this

activists before heading out to protests and picket lines and marches that they organized throughout the Los Angeles area.

The day King was murdered was something of a nightmare in my house. Mother crying, dozens of adults, some I knew, many strangers, coming in and out of the house, talking in loud, and then hushed voices. Even then, they were organizing, not just mourning—there was intense worry that there would be riots in Southern California that night and the next (only three years after the Watts Riots of 1965).

About one-half of the people who came by my house argued that there should be riots—they said that we had tried it Martin's way (nonviolence)

and all it got was him killed—now it was time for violence. My father (an elder at our small Seventh-day Adventist church) was a leader of the faction that argued that even, and especially, now that Martin had been killed we had to remain true to his principles of nonviolence. He would say over and over that day and in the days to come, "They can kill the dreamer, but they can't kill the dream."

Gradually, he and others on his side won over the more militant groups, and instead of a riot that night in Pacoima, they organized meetings in high school auditoriums and church sanctuaries. My mother and father took my sister and me with them to three or four of these meetings that night, and at each one they would take to the podium and cry with the folk who had gathered, express their rage at the murder, and then repeat over and over the importance of staving true to Martin's nonviolence principles.

At one of the meetings, a couple of grown-ups in black leather jackets (I now realize they were in their midtwenties, but at the time they seemed old to me) standing in the back of the room asked me if "Dave" was my father. I was proud of what he was doing and smiled and said Yes-but when I met their eyes I saw that they were not complimenting my dad.

One of them said, with an anger and hatred that buckled my knees, "If it weren't for your father, we would be burning this city down tonight. We won't do it because he asked us not to-but he's wrong, and he is going to be sorry. White people don't understand nothing but killing."

There was no riot in Pacoima that night, or any of the other nights for

the next week, though there were in one hundred other cities across the United States. I think my father, along with a number of his fellow organizers, prevented that. But what I remember most is that the next night my father, who was an artificial kidney patient, and needed to receive dialysis treatments for twelve hours at a time three days a week or he would die, was stopped at a roadblock just outside the limits of Pacoima by police who were not letting black men through because they thought they were too dangerous.

We turned around and went back home, and my mother got the chief of staff at U.S.C. County Medical Center on the phone and explained the situation, and he got in his car and drove an hour to our house with a letter documenting that my father's need to leave Pacoima was a matter of life or death, which got him through the roadblock. For the rest of her life, my mother made sure that my father had a version of that letter in the glove compartment of his car at all times.

I remember something else, too, from those days. I remember that when I later told my father what those young men in black leather jackets had said, he shook his head sadly and told me that the thing to learn from that was that it wasn't only white people who were prisoners of hate. I didn't know what he meant, but gradually I came to understand that while those men listened to my father because he had a certain authority in the community from his years of leadership, they did not trust my father because his wife was white.

It took me a while to figure this out, because we did not think of my mother as white, and she did not think of

herself as white. It wasn't that she pretended to be black—it was that she had stopped identifying as white, and instead identified herself with her ethnic background, which was Jewish. When people used to ask me if I was "mixed," I would say Yes, and they would often say "black and white"? and I would say "No, black and Jewish."

What I learned from my mother then I have come to realize is crucial. Many Americans are tired of bumping up against race, of being divided by race, and want to move beyond it. But the mistake that they have traditionally made is in assuming that moving beyond race means that nonwhite people need to let go of their racial identity and essentially act like "regular people"—by which they mostly mean, like white people.

The truth—and it is a hard truth to hear, one that I know will be offensive the first ten or twenty times some people hear it, is that in order to get beyond race, it is white people who need to let go of their racial identity. It is whiteness, not blackness, or Latinoness, or Asianness, that is the real problem.

To claim a white racial identity is to lay claim to the privilege of disproportionate power, rights, access, and wealth. Whiteness is what Americans have used since the seventeenth century to justify and legitimatize treating some humans as less than human, as other than human.

How can we own and enslave some people? How can we steal their land, deprive them of life and liberty? How can we exploit their labor, deny them property rights or equal protection under the law or full participation in our elections, economy, and society? Because they are Them, they are Other, they are not white, meaning they are less than fully human.

Whiteness is the problem—whiteness is the claim, whether one is conscious of making it or not—that one deserves to be treated as fully human, while so many others do not.

What the election of Barak Obama demonstrates once and for all is the bankruptcy of this claim. It is now clear and obvious that you do not have to be white to exercise power in this country.

What we need now is for more and more Americans to break the habit of calling themselves white. This is not to say that they should wallow in guilt or be ashamed of who they are. Rather it is an opportunity for people to reconnect with their history and family traditions, while at the same time endorsing the most basic of all truths—there is only one human race, and we all are equal members of it.

So I am going to Washington D.C., this weekend, and I will stand in the cold with the masses and probably not see or hear—but I will be there. I will be there for my father and my mother, who are both dead, and cannot be there except through me.

I will be there for my African American father, David, who was one of those who kept the peace, and the dream, and the hope for so long during those long years in the Wilderness. I will be there for my Jewish mother, Sheila, who early on knew and taught and lived the conviction that whiteness was an oppressive ideology of hate and hierarchy that one can choose to escape from, into an identity that offers both pride and celebration of ethnic roots and traditions, and common ground for all members of the human family.

#### A Family Attends the Obama Inauguration

BY AUBYN FULTON

I WILL NOT BE ABLE to do justice to our trip, but I will make a few notes here, since so many people have asked me to.

We left Angwin at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 17, and we got back to Angwin shortly before midnight on Wednesday, January 21. The entire trip was even better than I had imagined it would be. The Lord provided, though several of his angels, unexpected access to several special opportunities, and in the end we also got tickets to standing room areas pretty close to the podium, so that really helped.



We got to the District of Columbia Sunday afternoon (after some adventures caused by naive Californians trying to drive out of Manhattan down the New Jersey Turnpike in snow) just as the concert was starting. We decided not to give up on it, and May (my wife) and Josh (my son) dropped Sasha and Chloé (my daughters) and me off as close as she could drive the car (about K street) and we walked down to near the Lincoln Memorial.

By the time we got there, they were no longer letting anyone in, and it was halfway over, but we were able to hear very clearly the remaining singers and speakers. It was exciting to hear Usher, Stevie Wonder, and Bono and Beyoncé (among others), but the highlight for me was Pete Seeger and Bruce Springsteen singing "This Land Is Your Land," which literally took my breath way, and was the first of several episodes of the shedding of tears.

Monday morning we drove down to Saint Elizabeth's, the oldest federal psychiatric hospital in the United States. The Obama Inauguration Web page had a link to volunteer opportunities to participate in on Martin Luther King Day, and this one jumped out at me (my Abnormal Psychology class watched the classic documentary The Asylum about Saint Elizabeth's while I was away).

It turned out that the group organizing the event was a support group for gay and lesbian young people, and the Gay and Lesbian Band of America, which marched in the Inauguration Parade the next day, was there, too. We spent the morning visiting and playing games with the patients, and watching the band march and play.

Monday night Sasha and Chloé went to a special Bipartisan dinner held in honor of John McCain. McCain, Joe Biden, and Barack Obama all spoke there, and "The Girls" (as we call them) got to see them all up close, and had pictures taken with some of them.

Tuesday morning we got up at 5:15 and took the Metro down to the Capitol. Our angels got us tickets in three different locations, so we had to split up—but we were all much (much) closer than we would have been otherwise. Josh and I entered at the Blue Gate, which put us standing on the right side of the Capitol (as we were facing it). We could not easily see the podium, but I was staring right at the conductor of the Marine Band, and we were right in front of a huge big screen TV.

It was COLD (I cannot believe people live like that on a regular basis) but we were dressed pretty well for it. The lines were very long and the crowd was packed very tightly, but, unbelievably, everyone was in a good and joyful mood throughout. Everybody helped each other out; nobody could stop smiling. I have not seen the ceremony yet on TV (I recorded it on my TiVo to watch later) so I don't know how it played at home, but the most moving moment was when Obama took the oath of office (more crying by most around me).

Another very moving moment was when they put Teddy Kennedy on the big screen—everyone around me broke into a loud cheer. The funniest moment was probably when they put Joe Lieberman's picture on the big screen—everyone let out a long, deep and enthusiastic Boo. It was also

deeply moving when they showed civil rights veteran John Lewis.

We had several opportunities to join the crowd in rousing, primitive cheering of "O-Ba-Ma! O-Ba-Ma!" Almost everyone around me had participated actively in the campaign in some way or another, and it really felt like a family out there.

I thought Obama's speech was stunning. What was striking about it from the crowd was how quiet everybody got. It was unbelievable how so many people could listen so carefully and quietly. I would say the feeling during the speech itself was less emotional and more deeply thoughtful.

I will be interested to hear Rick Warren's inaugural prayer. After all was said and done, it seemed to be pretty much a non-event. He did not say anything (from what I can tell, I have not had a chance to read it yet) that was offensive, and it seemed to go OK.

After it was over, Josh and I walked around the other end of the Capitol (we were going to meet the rest of our family at Union Station). We were surprised to see when we got to the other end that now-former president George W. Bush and Laura Bush and now-current president Obama were standing out there-waving to a group of people in front of them. After a few minutes, the Bushs got into a helicopter and flew away so Josh and I stumbled upon Bush's farewell to Washington.

I tried really hard to stay positive during the weekend. Being president is not an easy job, and not everything George W. Bush did was horrible. But I could not help but silently mouth "good riddance" as his helicopter flew away.

Walking around the Capitol after the speech was a chance to share in the joy and hope of the day with so many different people from so many different places. One of the unexpected highlights was when they put marvelous crowd shots on the big screen. The crowd recognized itself, and it collectively sucked in its breath and said, almost as one, "That's us!" It was kind of like those pictures of the earth they took from space and showed on TV when I was a kid.

From the moment we arrived in New York City (where all five of the cars rented to people in line ahead of me were to people driving to the District of Columbia for the Inauguration) to the flight home to San Francisco (when people saw the hat I had bought that says "Barack Obama, 44th President, January 20, 2009, and shared their feelings about the event) there was a wave of good feeling and common purpose and hope and identity.

Obviously, there will be plenty of time for division and disagreement and mistakes—but all weekend we were proud to be not only Americans, but also part of a circle of common humanity that seemed to be expanding.

I am glad we went.

**Aubyn Fulton** is professor of psychology at Pacific Union College, Angwin, California.

#### My Inaugural Experience

BY NICOLE FRAZIER

WOW! THAT'S THE ONLY word I can think of to describe this amazing experience. I was blessed to be a University Presidential Inaugural

Scholar for the 2009 Inauguration. The program was incredible and lasted five days. Five thousand university students were chosen to participate in this grand occasion from all over the world.

The first night of the program the Inaugural Scholars got the opportunity to meet and greet. There were many different people and countries represented. Luke Russert, the late Tim Russert's son and co-host of the show "60/20 Sports," spoke on the power of youth.

All of the Inaugural Scholars were guests at state-of-the-art hotels. I stayed in the Omni Shoreham Hotel, which was phenomenal. On the second day of the program, we were guests at the University of Maryland, where General Colin Powell spoke. His regal, yet down-to-earth presence shocked me. He greeted the crowd and began a very organized and interesting speech.

General Powell spoke on leadership and the keys to being an effective leader. He mentioned that good leaders possess several qualities. They have vision, which they translate into goals. They organize themselves by measuring their strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of their opponents. They organize their forces and realize that they must sometimes make difficult decisions and that failure is possible. He focused on one aspect of leadership—effective leaders understand that leadership is about followers.

After General Powell's lecture, we went to the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel for other lectures. I attended the press panel, where we got to question a panel of journalists from the *New York Times*, NBC, ABC, and



CNN. This was very informative, but I wish it had been longer.

I later went to a presentation by James Carville (Democratic strategist/CNN) and his wife, Mary Matalin (Republican strategist/former presidential adviser). This lecture was interesting and filled with many debates on issues like immigration, taxes, and youth community involvement.

After the headliner, the inaugural scholars headed toward the inaugural celebration on the National Mall. An estimated 1.4 million people attended. It was so crowded that people pressed together from the Lincoln Memorial past the reflection pool and the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, all the way to the Capitol. During the inaugural celebration, we enjoyed performances by John Legend, Bruce Springsteen, Beyonce, U2, Stevie Wonder, Garth Brooks, Usher, and others.

On Monday, we were special guests at a presentation by Al Gore at the University of Maryland. I really thought he would be stiff, but he was interesting and full of humor. He spoke on global warming, politics, and how we can positively impact the environment.

After Al Gore's speech, we went to two more presentations of our own choice. I went to one by Jon Seaton (managing partner/East Meridian Strategies) and Sarah Simmons (director of strategy for John McCain's presidential campaign) out of curiosity. Their presentations were informative.

For me, one of the most interesting presentations was that of Robert Pinsky, the former U.S. poet laureate. His presentation was on the

power and significance of selfexpression in a democracy. I was able to speak with him and get an autograph and picture.

Inauguration Day was spectacular. I will always cherish the memories of that day. Not only was I able to witness the inauguration of the fortyfourth president of the United States of America, I was also able to experience and participate in the feelings of optimism and jubilation. The crowds were ecstatic. There was energy in the air and a sense of American pride that was intense and unimaginable.

On Inauguration Day, I got up at 1 a.m. and headed for the Metro station with some friends. As I stood in the bitter cold among the ecstatic crowds, my thoughts rushed to the significance of that joyous occasion. Not only was it significant for me because I am African American, it also signified changes in American politics and ways of thinking, as well as the role of youth as vital elements of change.

There were so many people that even though we arrived early, we could watch the festivities only on a big screen TV. Even though the crowd was pressed together, people weren't concerned with the many differences we had in nationality, race, religion, or political views. We were truly one.

As the festivities proceeded, the crowd's energy increased, especially when President Obama spoke. After the festivities ended, the same warmth could be felt as everyone dispersed.

I scarcely had time to rest because the Black Tie Gala was hours away. My roommate and I prepared quickly. Finally, we got into the bus and headed toward the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. Traffic was so heavy that, although we left the hotel at 6:30 p.m., we didn't arrive until 9:00 p.m.

Most of the roads were blocked, and the entire city was chaotic but exciting. My friends and I decided to go to the Hirshhorn Museum first. There was music, food, and beautiful abstract artwork. The evening was spectacular. After spending some time in there, we went to the Smithsonian, where there were live bands, airplanes, naval equipment, and artwork.

I enjoyed this experience and would not trade it for anything. The friendships I made were priceless.

As I reflect on my experience in Washington, D.C., the words of President Obama ring in my ears: "It's not a liberal America or conservative America, but it's the United States of America." Truly, I am proud to be part of this great country. I hope that the new administration. along with us—the people of this great nation—will work hard to restore America.

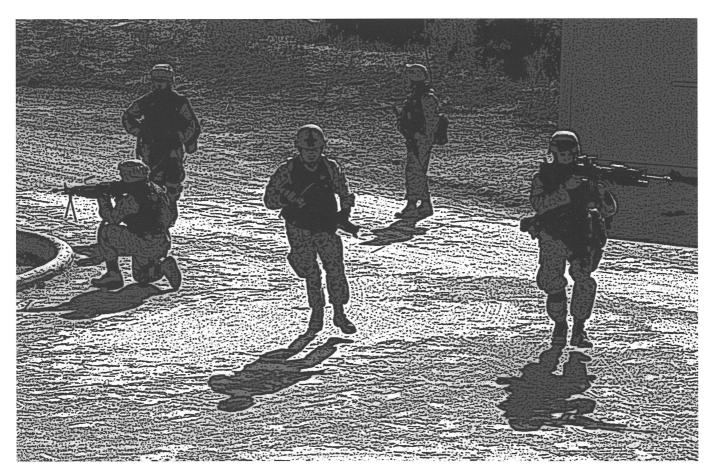
As a young adult, I vow to be a part of this restoration process. In the words of John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

Nicole Frazier, a student at Oakwood University, attended the Obama Inauguration as a University Presidential Inaugural Scholar.





## The Prophet Amos on Gaza | RE-VERSED BY DOUGLAS R. CLARK



ith apologies to the eighth-century Hebrew prophet, Amos, whose opening sermon to ancient Israelites—a backhanded, hard-hitting diatribe brought on by ethical and moral lapses in their treatment of the oppressed—has been adapted here to the situation in Gaza 2008-2009.

Prophetic oracles against foreign nations, like this series of speeches in chapters 1 and 2, were not addressed to the foreign nations themselves, but to Israel. Appearing in all the writing prophets except Hosea, they were calculated to give Israel hope for survival against external threats. Without being irreverent, they were somewhat like pep rallies, intending to build morale among the people and motivate the troops.

However, the prophet, a master of cruel irony, pretends to please the crowd gathered at Bethel on the southern border of Israel at the time, with a rhetorical flourish against surrounding nations, all the while aiming to turn the tables, lower the boom, and blast his own people with a scorching indictment for social crimes. Prophets do this.

What follows is Amos 1–2, re-versed on January 17, 2009.

The words of Amos, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of the King of Israel in the time of the conquest of Gaza:

#### JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL'S NEIGHBORS

AND HE SAID:

"The LORD roars from Zion. and utters his voice from Jerusalem; the pastures of the shepherds wither, and the top of the mountains melt."

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment: because they have threatened our lands and caused fear in the hearts of many. So I will send a fire on the house of Assad, and it shall devour the strongholds of Syria. I will break the gate bars of Damascus and cut off inhabitants from the Golan Heights. and the one who holds authority in the capital: and the people of Syria shall go into exile to Baghdad." says the LORD.

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment; because their leaders are listed among the terrorists, and because the people, deprived of everything they had, are a threat. So I will send a fire on the houses of Gaza, fire that shall devour everything in sight. I will cut off the inhabitants from Zeitun. and the one who holds the scepter from Gaza City: I will punish them one hundred-fold for what they have done to us, and the remnant of the Palestinians shall perish." says the Lord God.

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of Lebanon, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment: because they too accommodate terrorist elements, and did not remember to control these terrorists. So I will send a fire on the camps of Beirut, fire that shall devour all their people."

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of Jordan, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment: because in the past they were our enemies and had cast off all pity; they continue demonstrating in the streets, and have kept their wrath forever. So I will send a fire on Amman, and it shall devour the strongholds of the country."

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of the Egyptians, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment; because they have not stepped up against Gaza in order to protect our territory. So I will kindle a fire against the inhabitants of Cairo, fire that shall devour their cities and streets, with shouting on the day of battle, with a storm on the day of the whirlwind: then their king shall go into exile, he and his officials together," savs the LORD.

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of all Arab lands, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment; because they have resisted our military assaults, and continue to grow terrorists in their cities. So I will send a fire on them, and it shall devour the strongholds of Iraq, and Iran shall die amid uproar, amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet; I will cut off the rulers from their midst, and will kill all their officials with them." savs the LORD.

#### JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL

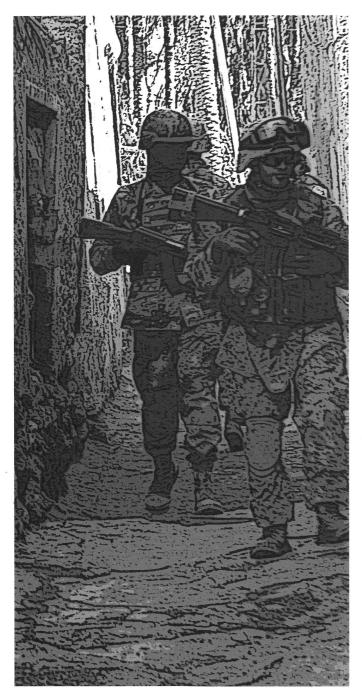
#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment: because they sell their souls for more land, their integrity and humanity for another settlement they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth,

and push the afflicted out of the way;

politician and soldier brutally destroy an occupied, humiliated people.

so that my holy name is profaned; they set themselves up as above the law, above scores of United Nations resolutions, above signed conventions of international law, above principles of basic human decency, above the laws I gave them in the Bible, above what any prophet would sanction, above their own best interests. They have ceased being human,



exacting a 'shock-and-awe' toll in Gaza far beyond anything rational or moral; their policies have created an oppression of unparaleled proportions;

they continue incubating the next generation of those who will hate them forever;

they skew the media to justify their cruel cause to a world that no longer believes them, to an informed humanity that finds no humanity in their policies and practices."

#### THUS SAYS THE LORD:

"I brought you up out of the land of the Third Reich, out of the hand of the oppressor, but not to possess the land of others.

I raised up your children to be strong in spirit and morality,

and some of your youths to be leaders in world prosperity.

Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?" savs the LORD.

"But you turned your children into a military machine, and commanded the youths, saying, You shall occupy the land.

whoever it belongs to and at whatever cost.'

So, I will press you down in your place, just as a cart presses down when it is full of sheaves.

Flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not retain their strength. nor shall the mighty save their lives;

those who handle the assault rifle shall not stand, and those who are swift in jets shall not save themselves,

nor shall those who ride in tanks save their lives; and those who seem stout of heart among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day," says the LORD.

Adapted from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Douglas R. Clark is professor of Hebrew Bible and archaeology at La Sierra University, Riverside, California, and the associate dean of the university's School of Religion.

## Top Ten Ways

for the General Conference to Fix the Problem of Women's Ordination

- 10. Abolish ordination. Declare Adventism to be truly a priesthood of all believers.
- **9.** Declare ordination to be a local event, instead of a worldwide one. Places that want to ordain women could. Those that don't, would not have to.
- 8. Adopt a universal credential that covers men and women.
- 7. Poll the *membership* and then take an action based on the poll.
- **6.** Publish Ellen White's ministerial credential in the Review and initiate a GC action in her honor.
- **5.** Use the study done by the faculty of Andrews University after Utrecht as reason to revisit the issue and vote again.
- **4.** Declare 2010 the Year of Women Evangelists and ordain women in their honor.
- **3.** Publicly apologize for the unequal treatment of women throughout the history of the Adventist Church and declare ordination as the way to make things right.
- **2.** Declare the Southeastern California Conference's use of women ministers a successful pilot project that is now ready to be adopted by the rest of the Church.

1. Just do it!

## Why Women Shouldn't Be Ordained | BY LOREN SEIBOLD

**Ordination** has been the means of moving more and more of our talent into an institutional framework. while diminishing creative, productive ministry.

roximity in time is a good teacher; the brain keeps an afterimage with which to make comparisons. And I couldn't help but compare when I attended two quite different national gatherings of Seventh-day Adventists in succession.

On the weekend of October 24-28, 2007, I joined the Association of Adventist Women at their twenty-fifth annual convention in Silver Spring, Maryland. It was my first AAW convention, and although it concerned me that there weren't very many young people in attendance, I was impressed with the dedication of the women who were there.

The highlight of the convention is the presentation of the Adventist Women of the Year. The winners for 2007 included a division women's ministry leader who's a major activist against Asian sex slavery, a division president's wife who has started orphanages all over India, an Adventist Disaster Relief Agency (ADRA) leader who's brought in some of that organization's largest gifts, a gifted professor of theology, a lay evangelist in China, a laywoman who started her own nonprofit foundation to raise money for humanitarian projects—all self-starters and entrepreneurs.

The Association of Adventist Women, though, still nurses at its collective bosom a Great Elusive Hope: that the Seventh-day Adventist Church will at last give women full ordination to ministry. This injustice has obsessed AAW since its beginning: Why won't our church (a church that was, for all practical

purposes, founded by a woman) ordain women to ministry?

A few days later, I was sitting in the North American Division's annual Executive Committee meeting, in the auditorium of the General Conference building. I am of the age when conference officers are my peers. A friend with whom I started ministry and I sat together and reminisced about how we used to grumble about "the suits" who ran the Church, and reluctantly we conceded that we have now become them.

This meeting was quite different from the other. We made significant decisions, but not with the enthusiasm I'd seen the previous weekend. Everyone at this meeting, myself included, loved the Church, and wanted it to succeed. But we were operating in a quite different way than the women I'd met the week before. We were there in an official capacity, with titles and appointments, to work the clanking, obdurate machinery of the Church, and perhaps from our theater seats push it along toward what we assumed were universally shared goals.

We love the Church for good reason: it is the mother that defends the faith, spiritually nourishes millions of people, and protects billions of dollars in assets—even though sometimes it appears to be struggling for breath under its own weight. I tried to think of us as pilots of the massive ecclesiastical ship, but sometimes, I admit, I felt more like its ballast.

And the question that I wished I could voice to those women of the previous weekend's meeting was this: Do you women really want ordination? That is to say, Do you want to become like us?

I CONFESS, NOW THAT I've got your attention, that my title is deliberately provocative, and I don't mean it. I want women to be ordained. Not the ersatz ordination that they now receive.

But I'm also concerned that what has happened to us Adventist men will, with full ecclesiastical recognition, happen to Adventist women, too. Ordination has been the means of moving more and more of our talent into an institutional framework, while diminishing creative, productive ministry.

ou will correctly object that these were meetings of quite different purposes, and I don't deny it. The comparison stumbles a little there unless you understand that I'm not comparing purpose, but power—the type of power that each group appears to depend upon.

The varieties of power have been variously defined, notably by Max Weber, and appendixed by others.1 Conflating and editing, I come up with this list:

**Expert Power.** The power wielded by a person who analyzes the data and knows the facts. The engineer, the consultant, and the scientist all have this kind of power. Alvin Toffler predicted that in a technological world this kind of power would become more than mere consultancy; he was partially right.

Moral Power. The power of having right on your side. Although it may lose out in the first round, it often triumphs grandly in the end. See King, Martin Luther, Jr. (Religionists often confuse moral principle with doctrine, which may complicate discussion of moral issues in a religious setting.)

**Relationship Power.** This is the most subtle power, a combination of nurture, devotion, clear purpose, loyalty, instinct, endurance, and presence. At best, the person who uses this kind of power draws people into cooperation by

forging relationships. Women, especially those in cultures where they're placed in inferior positions, have had to depend almost solely on relational power.

**Personal Power.** The power to convince others to do what you want them to do. We sometimes speak of this as charisma: the ability to communicate and inspire. See Schneider, Don.

Physical or Coercive Power. While including the ability to smack someone around, it usually needn't go beyond the threat level. This is military or police power, as well as the power relied upon by people who keep guns under their mattresses and wallop their children at slight provocation.

Positional, or Institutional Power. This is the power that comes from having a title that stacks the weight of an institution and all of its tradition behind your words.

IT SHOULD NOT BE supposed that any of these types of power are unnecessary. We all make use of all of them. Men once tended to default to the last kind of power: in primitive cultures, the need to hunt, to fend off aggressive neighbors, set us up for it. It may be for this that God gave us testosterone.

In our culture today, though, positional power has become the dominant power for men. The president of a corporation gets what he wants because he's the president. We hope the pastor provides useful spiritual help, but even if he doesn't, he can continue to function because he has the title of pastor, backed up by the Church.2

But the exercise of just one kind of power to the exclusion of others creates a certain kind of group. Positional power expands the organization in which we get our position, and so tends toward the hierarchical rather than the cooperative. We in the Seventh-day Adventist Church are seeing the results of that now, in an overgrown organization where the best minds climb



Oin Zheng Yi started churches in Sichuan Province under communist rule. Today there are six thousand members. She was ordained by the **Adventist pastors** in East China. **AAW honored her** in 2007.

into positions where they do the least good. And that door rarely seems to swing back the other way.

ALTHOUGH IT IS HARD to disagree that we Adventists are heavy in church structure, I have no truck with angry critics of the Church who say that those who work in conference, union, division, and General Conferences offices are hypocritical or corrupt.

I have spent most of my ministry around these men (almost, to a man, men), and while there are uninspiring and marginally talented people in any group, those I've known are all sincere and wellintentioned; they do what they do because they love the Church and want to serve God in it. Often they are where they are because they were creative, capable, and productive at some other level of the organization. See the Peter Principle.

The problem is not in the men; it is in the system. which no man or group of men seems able to subdue. It creates its own reality, enveloping you until you cannot see the world except through its windows. From the inside, it begins to seem logical that the best thing to do is louder, flashier, more energetic variations of what we always have done; we already have tools and skills for those tasks.

Each man falls into his place in this system: it is a comfortable place, where expectations are generally clear, and we require (and tolerate) few risks. In fact, those who are too creative may get into trouble, for church members don't especially like change, either. (Which is one reason why there's no stomach for troubling the rest of the Church by ordaining women in North America.)

But I don't think this system is working as well as it should. I have sat through many (it seems like thousands, but it is probably only a few score) presentations of new denominationally generated programs, most heavy on printed paper materials, that the entire audience knows, even as we are watching the rollout, are dead on arrival and will be dumpster fodder almost as soon as the UPS truck delivers them.

While corporations still generate top-down plans, our denomination rarely succeeds at it nowadays. That is, we still generate them, but few seem to get much traction. Church members have become more independent than in the past, and the positional power that still keeps us

ordained men working together rarely carries the same weight out in the highways and byways. There, other kinds of authority need to be employed.

THAT'S WHY THE AAW's Adventist Women of the Year presentations were so interesting. This was about madefrom-scratch ministry and mission built on a better-balanced palette of powers than those we men use.

Take, for instance, Karen Kotoske, one of the 2007 Women of the Year, who twenty-plus years ago talked her way onto a mission plane to the Sierra Madre Occidental. Rather than returning home moaning about how bad life was for the Huichol Indians, Karen started Amistad International, a nonprofit organization with which she could get money from secular, corporate people for humanitarian projects done in partnership with the Church.3

Through the years, she's braved the crash of a mission plane and the death of all her friends on it, as well as having her work questioned by a Latin American. male-dominated bureaucracy that probably wishes they could use her money someplace else. But her mission has expanded into areas that no one else would have noticed.

Best of all, she's getting happy money (not the "here'sa-buck—now-get-the-hell-off-my-porch" money of the old Harvest Ingathering) from people who are not Seventh-day Adventists—something much of the official church (ADRA excepted) has failed at. To put it bluntly, Karen saw a need and moved to fill it, and she didn't wait for anyone's permission.

Then there's Zhang-Zhu, a Chinese woman who learned about the Seventh-day Adventist Church when a single copy of the Desire of Ages came into her hands. Threatened with imprisonment (for "American imperialism and anti-revolutionary behavior") by the communist authorities, she kept preaching until she'd raised up a congregation of five hundred Seventh-day Adventists. She prepared training programs, organized house churches, wrote church leadership manuals, and built a baptismal tank in her dining room that was disguised to look like a bed.

By 2003, the church started by Zhang-Zhu had a membership of four thousand, scattered all over Sichuan Province—all without denominational direction. Finally, three pastors from East China ordained

her, her son David, and three other women ministers. Today there are six thousand Adventists worshiping in this province.

Zhang-Zhu's achievements are so in line with what our church leaders tell us they want that you wouldn't be surprised were I to tell you that dozens of them rushed over from the General Conference office (just 5.5 miles-12 minutes according to Google Maps—straight up Highway 29 from the Silver Spring Hilton) to honor Zhang-Zhu as her daughter, Rebekah (a Ph.D. candidate at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary), accepted this award on behalf of her mother.

But, in fact, the presentation was unattended and unremarked by any top church leaders. Although some would have appreciated her contribution, it probably didn't appear on their radar. Organizations like ours are fairly self-referential: we give the most high-level attention to the stuff we thought of.

I'M NOT SAYING people working within the Church can't start these sorts of ministries. Some have (though I think you could make a convincing case that in the process a greater proportion of our resources are consumed in the aforementioned machinery of church governance).

But with positional power, you needn't think that way—and probably oughtn't: the organization has its own goals, and those are the goals we in the organization will bend our backs to achieve. And when you women get ordination, you, too, will become part of that machinery. And you will begin, like we do, to proscribe your ministries by its plans and permissions.

Perhaps women in leadership will be more resistant than we men to the institution's ability to fossilize what it touches. Perhaps female leadership is simply so different (à la Carole Gilligan) that women will start a revolution in the Church rather than be enveloped by it. 4 But you're taking a risk. Safety and security—what the Church offers its ordained people—are tougher to turn down than you think. I suspect this thing is bigger than both of our genders.

want to be clear that this is not the same old argument that women ought to be content with what they can do, and not bother the big, strong men as we go about our important business. Exactly the opposite. Our dependence upon ordinational authority has made our positions more secure, but our work arguably less effective than it could be.

I'm not sure that the status of women as outsiders doesn't serve them better for building up God's Kingdom than ordination has served men. Eventually, our positional organizations may fall apart: they often do. Feet on the ground ministry, though, will never become obsolete.

So women who want ordination (and I still say you ought to have it), please be aware that this is where you may be heading if you're not more careful than we men have been.

I really don't think you want to end up like us.

#### **Notes and References**

- 1. See Max Weber's, Essays in Sociology (1924).
- 2. It is only in parenting where positional power— "because I'm the mommy and I said so"—seems to have fallen from favor. Though not a parent myself, I'm always humored by the tendency of modern parents to try to convince a two-year old with lengthy, logical argument that he should obey.
  - 3. See <www.amistadinternational.org>.
- 4. Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

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### Women's Ordination:

The Flaw in the Debate | BY EDDY JOHNSON

first met Susan at a gathering of the Australian chapter of Kinship International, which had invited both of us to be guest speakers. I had previously heard about her at an advisory meeting of union ministerial secretaries: she was mentioned as the lone female among a group of promising young interns. At the time of the Kinship convention, she was employed as a full-time minister, but of course not ordained. As I watched her mingle with the community of homosexuals with ease and composure, I sensed why she had responded positively to God's call to ministry.

Recently, she has been appointed to an important position in one of the unions in my division. The way matters stand, Susan will not be ordained when some of her male counterparts are. It will not matter that she has a track record at least as good, if not better, than theirs. She will not be ordained because the Seventh-day Adventist Church voted against female ordination at the Utrecht Session of the General Conference in 1995, when it rejected a request from the North American Division for permission to ordain female ministers.

Today, it is well-known that the 1995 vote was flawed because the dissenters voted against the motion either because they did not want to see a split within the church community or because they were culturally biased. Theology, misused and applied, provided psychological and religious security for those who opposed the proposal.

Although the misused theology has been discredited. the Church has not revisited the vote. The issue is no longer debated officially. But it is nevertheless an issue that still rankles. The question also crops up again and again in other Christian denominations. Not long ago, the Church of England, which does ordain women in Western countries, faced a schism because of efforts from one segment to accept female bishops.

Perhaps the debate over women's ordination in the Sev-

enth-day Adventist Church during the last two decades of the twentieth century missed the main point because it was conducted in one realm only—and probably the wrong one at that—namely, theology. Instead, the Church should have opened the issue to other disciplines and also considered leadership qualities and style.

During the 1980s and 1990s, researchers in the field of management were discussing two major styles of leadership: Transactional Leadership (TA) and Transformational Leadership (TF). Their findings strongly suggested that women tend to have a TF style of leadership more often than men. Had the Seventh-day Adventist Church been tuned in to the discussion it might have seen that the TF style also happened to be well-suited to the qualities it valued in its ministers and that women might inherently be better suited to the ministerial role than men.

Within this context, it is conceivable that the vote at the General Conference Session in Utrecht could have favored women's ordination instead of opposing it. As a result, Samuele Bacchiocchi's so-called "Order of Creation" would have carried far less weight, except with the far right wing of the Church.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps even now these research findings can encourage the Church to view this issue from a wider perspective.

#### Two Leadership Styles

In 1994, Stephen P. Robbins and his colleagues identified two major styles of leadership, as follows.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Transactional Leader

Contingent reward: Contracts exchange of rewards for effort; promises reward for good performance; recognizes accomplishments.

Management by exception (active): Watches and searches for deviations from rules and standards, and takes corrective action.

Management by exception (passive): Intervenes only if standards are not met.

Laissez-faire: Abdicates responsibilities, avoids making decisions.

#### **The Transformational Leader**

Charisma: Provides vision and sense of mission: instills pride; gains respect and trust. Inspiration: Communicates high expectations: uses symbols to focus efforts; expresses important purposes in simple ways. Intellectual stimulation: Promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving. Individualized consideration: Gives personal attention: treats each employee individually, coaches, and advises.

Robins and his colleagues elaborated:

Transactional leaders guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying roles and task requirements. But there is another type of leader who inspires followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the organization, and who are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on their followers. These are transformational leaders.... They pay attention to the concerns and developmental needs of individual followers.... They are able to excite, arouse and inspire followers to put out extra effort to achieve goals. In essence, TF leaders are also charismatic because they are seen as heroic.4

It is commonly assumed that the gospel minister has the main role of being the kind of servant/leader Jesus was. "Be shepherd of God's flock that is under your care," wrote Peter, "serving not as an overseer; not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being an example to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:2, 3 NIV).

This text has been taken to mean that God calls ministers to lead and that the role calls for care, compassion, and sharing, as well as

focus, gentleness, and the ability to cast a vision. The assumption is that the church member, influenced by the minister, will be transformed gradually and will by and by live on a higher moral plane.

How does this perspective compare with transformational leadership?

The consensus about TF leadership was that TF leaders seem to be able to persuade people to follow them by inspiring others to set aside personal interests for the sake of the team. If this is true of TF leaders, then job descriptions of ministers should take TF qualities into account. Ministers should be chosen because of qualities, skills, and abilities that enable them to bring about transformations that move people from a self-serving egocentric attitude to one of altruistic service.

According to Bernard M. Bass, TF leaders can move people to transcend their own interests for the good of the group, organization, or country.5 Ministry was certainly far from the writer's mind, but his finding can be used to show that ministers are the kind of TF leaders who could best model and teach the qualities of meekness and poverty in spirit.

In short, language used to describe the TF leader is fundamentally similar to the kind employed to describe gospel ministers. Compare the following statement from the Adventist Minister's Manual with one by Bass:

It is the only business on earth that I know of, excepting mother's business, that is clear all the way through; because it is using superior faculties, superior knowledge, not to take advantage of men, but to lift them up and cleanse them, to mould them, to fashion them, to give them life, that you may present to God.6

Transformational leaders attempt and succeed in raising colleagues, subordinates, followers, constituencies to a greater awareness about the issues of consequence. This heightening of awareness requires a leader with a vision, self-confidence, and inner



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strength to argue successfully for what he sees as right or good, or for what is popular or acceptable according to the wisdom of the time.7



The Southwestern California Conference elected Sandy Roberts to its number two position executive secretary —in November, 2004.

One expects ministers to be described in terms of the first statement because spiritual endowments designed to help them achieve the goal of human transformation accompany their calling from God. Similarly, proponents of TF leadership seem to sense that true TF leaders have almost supernatural qualities as to be some sort of charisma.8

According to P. Gronn, Bass built his assumption about charismatic leaders on the work of Max Weber, who defined charisma as "[a] certain quality of an individual's personality by virtue of which [the leader] is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities."9

Additional research that Bass conducted has determined four factors, which he called the "Four Is," by which the TF model of leadership is defined.

- 1. Charisma (Idealized influence). Leaders are respected and trusted by followers, have high standards, and are viewed as having attainable vision and mission.
- 2. Inspirational motivation. Leaders provide symbols and simplified emotional appeals to increase awareness and understanding of mutually desired goals.
- 3. Intellectual stimulation. Leaders encourage followers to question their own way of doing things or break with the past.
- 4. Individualized consideration. Within a learning and development focus, followers are treated differently but equitably on a one-onone basis.

Bass's research bolsters the impression that gospel ministers, due to the nature of their calling, should possess TF attributes. So what did related research say about those characteristics and women in leadership positions?

#### **Transformational Leadership** and Women

In 1988, Jessica Rogers of Miami University wrote convincingly that the female ethos merged well with the TF style of leadership. She summarized related literature in an article titled: "New Paradigm of Leadership: Integrating the Female Ethos."11

It [the female world] is a kinder, more rational, more constructive world than men's. Women learn to cooperate while men learn to compete. Women learn to empathize with others while men learn to manipulate them. Women learn to build up and maintain social structures while men study ways to destroy them. 12

#### Rogers continued:

Because at the heart of the female ethos is the focus on relationships and the resulting value of duty, love, and care, feminine leadership emphasizes accountability, co-operation, team work and conflict resolution. The feminine leader views quality relationships as worthy ends in themselves. It brings openness and depth of feeling for other people, caring and concern for the whole person is expressed. Emotions are considered important for problem solving. The emphasis is not on winning but on performance excellence and challenging people to find solutions to new problems together. 13

Writing about church leaders, Eddie Gibbs and Ian Coffey also stressed the importance of mentoring. Other literature has shown that leaders need to build trust.14 Isn't it well-established that mentoring is a task women instinctively do as they raise children? Isn't it also common knowledge that women do not have difficulty expressing their emotions and that doing so is fundamental to creating and strengthening trust. Literature on this subject shows that TF leaders mentor and build trust instinctively. It seems clear that women leaders are born to be such leaders.

Two quotes about women's leadership style are reminiscent of many biblical statements concerning leaders. According to Rogers, "Women would rather preserve relationships than win the debate." Likewise, Judith Rosner, from the University of California, Irvine, claims that "[w]omen leaders do not covet formal authority. They have learned to lead without it."15

The Seventh-day Adventist debate over women's ordination never made room for the fact that the female ethos is very close to the qualities that Scripture has identified for such leaders as elders. The Church failed to recognize and acknowledge that scriptural mention of male elders alone was a cultural bias that does not exclude women from that position today.

Had the Church been aware of research in the field of management about TF leadership, it may have had little difficulty deciding that women are ideally suited to lead in any organization or institution that favors the TF style. Although not mentioned as such in Scripture. the TF style is nevertheless the one that almost all biblical leaders seem to have had in mind.

#### Conclusion

Clearly, Scripture does not address the issue of women's ordination in any conclusive way, although both sides of the discussion referred to the Bible at length. Had the Church focused on data provided by research in the field of leadership rather than on scant, inconclusive biblical information, one dares to say that the debate probably would have been healthier.

Who knows? The Yeas might have won in 1995 at the General Conference Session in Utrecht and women in the Church valued and given the recognition that are theirs in all enlightened organizations.

Perhaps it is not too late to resume the discussion, this time with a broader field of vision and possibly with a different outcome.

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- 3. Stephen P. Robbins et al., Organisational Behaviour: Concepts, Controversies, and Application (Sydney: Prentice Hall of Australia, 1994), 502.
  - 4. Ibid., 501.
- 5. Bernard M. Bass, Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectation (New York: Free Press; London: Collier, 1985), 15.
- 6. H. W. Beecher, "Lectures on Preaching," in Seventh-day Adventist Ministers Manual (Silver Spring, Md.: The Ministerial Association, 1997), 17.
  - 7. Bass, Leadership and Performance, 17.
  - 8. Ibid., 31.
- 9. P. Gronn, "Greatness Re-visited: The Current Obsession with Transformational Leadership," Leading and Managing 1.1
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- 11. Jessica Rogers, "The New Paradigm Leadership: Integrating the Female Ethos," Initiative 5 (fall 1988).
  - 12. Ibid., 2.
  - 13. Ibid., 6, 7.
- 14. Eddie Gibbs and Ian Coffey, Church Next: Quantum Changes in Christian Ministry (Downers Grove, II.: Intervarsity, 2001), 77; and R. Goffee and G. Jones, "Why Should Anyone Be Led by You?" Harvard Business Review (Sept.-Oct. 2000):65.
- 15. Rogers, "New Paradigm Leadership," 3; and Judith Rosner, "Ways Women Lead," Harvard Business Review (Nov.-Dec. 1990):120.

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## THIS ADVENTIST LIFE



## Love Apples | BY WINONA WENDTH

n December 29, 1908, my grandfather walked down the gangplank of the Slavonia and stood on the docks of the East River, looking around. He was eighteen, and had already passed by a few pennies on the walkway to the immigration line. "I wish I had a quarter for every penny I didn't pick up that day," he used to say.

When I was a kid, I thought about this often,

multiplying the number of pennies in the jar that held our swinging kitchen door open by twenty-five: two hundred fifty dollars, if my father's testament to the contents of that jar was correct. My grandfather would have been rich had there been a thousand pennies in the street, and had someone handed him twenty-five cents for each of them, I thought.

I imagined my grandfather smiling and looking forward while he didn't pick up pennies, and I wondered if there was anything any of us could do about that now. No.

I knew him as a jolly man—I can't think of another word for it. And I had in my mind the picture of my grandfather in what that generation called, "The Old Country," playing an accordion—a concertina, I was told—in a grassy bucolic setting, living it up as well as he could, but secretly planning to come to America, where he wouldn't have to work in the fields, or stoop to pick up coins.

To a great extent, this image of my father's dad came



from a small, crenulated picture of him that surfaced now and again throughout my childhood. When someone in my family whose job it was to mind the albums died or moved, or died and then had to be moved, the small, two-by-three-inch photograph would appear, and from what I remember, someone would say something about Europe.

I came across it again when those albums finally fell into my hands. Like the people whose images were no longer fixed on the brittle black pages, the photographs in them are yellowed, creased, and desiccated. The one of my grandfather hopefully playing whatever wheezy instrument it was, his hat askew, his youthfully thin legs, and his dark hair—this one of him sitting somewhere in where I believed for years was his homeland—slipped out of one of those books when I turned a page.

"Life before Here," it said to me, although clearly, I hadn't given the picture the right kind of attention.

THE STORY OF my grandparents bravely going to America has been an important part of our family narrative, and, understandably, one that has shaped my own identity and sense of possibility. Although we have scores of photos of my great-aunts and uncles in New York, I have seen very few of them in Europe, so this accordion-concertina picture has been significant to me.

I have repeatedly tried to imagine myself there, living on plum pastry, harvesting wheat while singing along, tricking or arguing the authorities out of taxes, wearing embroidered vests and dancing through the summers. Of course, my childhood understanding of life in Europe was as off-mark as my grandfather's understanding of life here had been before he arrived.

But I really did know better, even when I was a kid. The family gangplank anecdote tells of an innocent man who expected Manhattan's streets to be littered with copper coins that had fallen from the pockets of the ubiquitously wealthy. This story—the not-reaching-for-the coin story—is commonplace among the families of immigrants, I have learned, somewhat to my disappointment.

But I was also surprised to learn that the story holds truth potential: around this time, John D. Rockefeller had been handing out ten-cent pieces randomly, mostly to children and service personnel walking along the street—a guilt token worth about a dollar and a half today.

Clearly, money came easily in America, and apparently word had reached the farmlands of Eastern Europe. My grandfather was ready with an empty coin purse and great expectations. Over the years, I have gradually brought some mental pictures into focus; thinking about this photograph casts a reflective, retrospective light on who he was and what he wanted to be. Whatever it was, it had to be easy.

Like Chaplin's Tramp, my grandfather fully believed that the wealthy in America were, at core, just the same as he, that they held strongly democratic notions of the equal distribution of goods, that the privileges and liberties of the Rockefellers were as newly established as his neighbors' street-front businesses in New York, and that, naturally, John D. would share, too. "We all put our pants on the same way, here," my grandfather would say, "one leg at a time."

How he had assumed Franz Joszef II had been putting on his pants, I don't know. I guess he believed the emperor always had someone like him to hold his pants up for him—a destined designated pants-holder who made it possible for the emperor to hop in, both legs at once—unless, of course, the pants-person had the foresight to come to America so he could climb into his own, the same way Mr. Rockefeller did.

y grandfather came to America looking for an easy life: little work, less responsibility, and a motorcycle. He eventually found the bike—a nifty red Indian Chief. But the bike came late and went quickly. What he also found—and what stayed with him—were American lagniappes: beefsteak tomatoes and Jesus. Although the bike temporarily saved him from what he remembered as a painfully slow life in Europe, those bulbous, ribbed, ripe, red tomatoes, and a Seventh-day Adventist apostle changed his life forever.

The stories my grandfather heard in Europe hadn't mentioned that Rockefeller was fully literate and had spent years clerking and strategically developing aggressive business tactics before he got into oil refining. The stories my grandfather believed in skipped directly from Rockefeller's impoverished boyhood to his office on Fifth Avenue—step over those coins, I guess he thought, and wait for someone to give you something better. So he was disappointed when several years passed before he could come up with the money for a bike.

Like many in his family, my grandfather worked at Schozer's Bakery, an old-country establishment in Brooklyn with a huge front window through which passersby could watch employees work flour and eggs into yeasty dough, and shape the risen dough into bread and cakes.

Joe Schozer, who had come from my grandparents' hometown as a kid himself, provided employment for the folks who had just arrived until they could get on their financial feet; he had the idea that the harder he worked, the more likely he could retire early, maybe to Lake Ronkonkoma or some other place he could keep a garden.

My uncles and aunts and second cousins and second

cousins once-removed put their time in at Schozer's before they moved on to driving a bus or apprenticing to a plumber or electrician or moving up the food service chain and finding work in the pastry kitchens of Upper East Side hotels. From what I know, most of them stayed for twelve or fourteen months before they found something better. My grandfather, a self-taught machinist, worked for Joe for seven years.

I inherited a sepia photograph of him standing in front of a floury table among some former neighbors and collateral relatives. He seems uncomfortable in an apron and cradles some kind of wrench so that no one would think he slapped dough around or worked with butter and eggs.

I was not surprised to learn that oiling and calibrating heavy-duty mixers did not bring in enough cash for his bike. So he worked up a financial plan: he found a woman who could supplement his income, and he convinced her to establish a household with him.

Six months later, my pregnant grandmother, who eventually learned to read English, discovered that the green-bordered calligraphed document she held in her bureau drawer was a health certificate, not a marriage license.

She gave up the notion of an equal partnership and took command: she obliged a legal marriage, bought herself a fashionable, hand-worked calf-

length wedding garment and headdress, and with my grandfather at her side, appearing somewhat stunned, sat smugly for what must have been for her an expensive formal photographic portrait. She wore pale, strapped and buttoned, curved-heeled shoes.

Unlike her new husband, my grandmother had not been much of a drinker and spent little time at dance



halls; she was careful with whatever small income she came by at the bakery and from incidental tailoring she could do at home. By the time my father was four, she had saved enough to book passage back to Europe, and left. She promised her son's father a motorcycle when she got back, not suggesting when that would be.

In one of the few examples in American immigrant

history, money traveled back to America from the homeland. And my grandfather began to grow into the life he had been hoping for: as little responsibility as possible and an allowance—a nearly perfect life for an adolescent male, save the missing motorcycle. He was twenty-eight.

The story thins out here—second- and third-generation cousins disagree about what happened during those eight years, and only a few sienna or grey monochrome photographs from Europe remain, one in which my five year-old father sits on a taxidermed horse, a painted rural backdrop behind them and his mother standing beside him, improbably dressed in a longskirted suit and elegant buttoned shoes.

Another places them in front of the small commercial building my grandmother had built and rented to local business people. She had learned a little something from Joe Schozer.

Eventually, she returned to Brooklyn, a fair amount of Austro-Hungarian currency in her bags and her American-citizen son in tow. Before long, she found a place as a housekeeper for E. Douglas Hamilton, an attorney with a Harvard J.D. and a comfortable American family, "as nice as any Rockefeller," she used to say.

She cooked and cleaned and mended and ran after the Hamilton kids, who taught her pretty good American English. Cornelia Hamilton, their mother, bought her shoes on Fifth Avenue, and the family drove a Packard.

Within a year, my grandmother kept her promise and bought a 1928 Indian Chief, outfitted with a sidecar for my father and her, and learned how to drive it. This was not what her husband had had in mind, but it was close enough, and I can imagine him running his palm over the hip of the Indian's red gas tank with genuine affection.

He put his wrenches to work and did what he could to juice the bike up. Only once did he take a corner so fast and tight that the sidecar parted company with the rest of the vehicle. Swooping off Long Island's Sunrise Highway someplace near Islip, it rolled into a grassy ditch and pitched my father into a stand of scrub pine.

That was once," my grandmother said. "It should have been enough." This was 1929, and in spite of the hard times after October, she started saving money for a Packard.

The Depression was good for my father's mother: she had made herself indispensable to her employers, who allowed her to move into ad hoc servants' quarters with her son and husband. My grandfather was kept occupied with a wrench and sharpening stone as a handyman when he wasn't touring around on his bike or polishing its red fenders or chrome-plating its exhaust pipes.

In spite of the cost of chrome, she managed a thin trickle of income well enough to start acquiring and trading ration tickets; she bought and sold meat and kitchen staples on the black market, and before the close of FDR's First New Deal had been able to parlay corned beef and sugar into a couple of parcels of real estate and an Indian Scout bike for my father.

The real estate proved a good investment. But when my grandfather crashed his chromed-up Chief-light and quick, once relieved of its sidecar -- and flew over a cement buttress, landing unconscious on the pavement, "That was enough," according to his wife. She had cashed out both bikes, augmenting her Packard fund, before her husband was home from the hospital.

That summer was the end of the red bikes and the beginning of the red tomatoes. Plans were made to move to a large house that would provide business opportunities for my grandmother. The building had been a home for "a comfortable family," and provided large, formal yards and an oversized kitchen garden, which she needed her husband to manage, along with the required and routine wrench-intensive maintenance toward which he was normally inclined.

She planted seeds and cuttings from the Hamilton's gardens and handed her husband a rake and garden hose. From what I have heard, this brought him an unexpected kind of contentment, especially when the first crop of sweet, fleshy beefsteak tomatoes ripened. Possibly, holding them in his hands was as sensuous as running his palms along the rounded red hips and curves of his lost bike.

Through the late summer of 1934—while Adolf Hitler was beginning to cast an international shadow and Shirley Temple was dancing happily across the silver screen-my grandfather, who had been accustomed to the small, pear-shaped fruits of Europe, carried huge lobed red tomatoes over to a small table near the garden, where he sat with a shaker of salt, a slab of Schozer's black bread, and a freshly sharpened kitchen knife.

This was a daily summer ritual for him for the rest of his life. And these are my first memories of my loveapple-loving grandfather.

For years, this small photograph of my grandfather appeared and disappeared among piles and pages of pictures stored one place or another in my parents' home. Not more than twelve square inches, it somehow provides an open space for my grandfather that most of the other photographs I have of him do not—the ones with his family surrounded by equipment in a commercial bakery, at a post-hoc wedding photograph with wife and unborn child, with his army-uniformed son thirty years later, and another tiny print of him in a plaid shirt holding an infant me and resembling Otto Preminger, were he to retire on Long Island to grow tomatoes.

Because the photograph provides little by way of geographical location, I had unreasonably believed someone had taken it in Europe: a bottle of wine and a glass on the table, an accordion on his lap, a hat rakishly covering his left ear, his thin legs crossed at the ankles. He sits in the middle of a field overgrown to nearly knee-high grasses; a wooden fence runs across the background behind some kind of fruit tree and thicket-like, roddy bushes. This said "over there," to

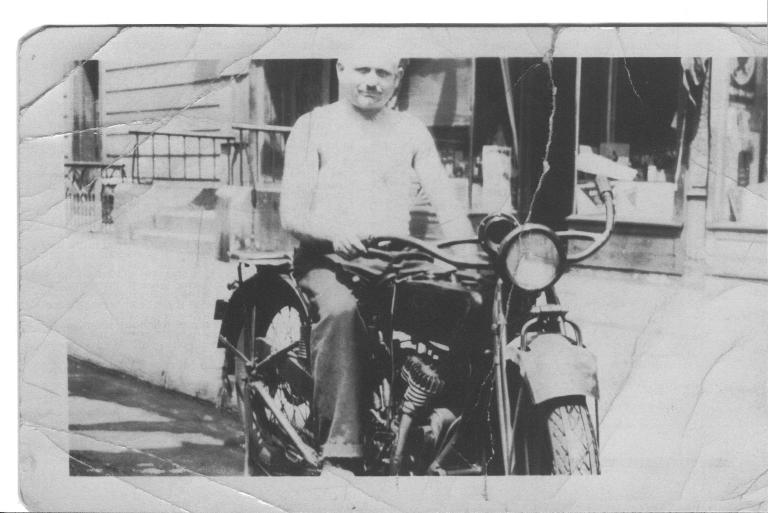
me—I could not see Brooklyn or Flushing in that field. In this photograph, my grandfather is slight, not the rounded man I knew as I was growing up.

He stares directly into the camera, very much present, although I cannot tell if his dropped chin and outfrom-under-his-eyebrow regard is a sign of disdain or slyness or a low-level attempt at personal allure. But that is impossible: When I zoom in on the digital copy of the photograph, I can see lines on his face and the deeply set eyes of an older man.

The man in this photograph must be close to forty in this snapshot. The alluring young man I had heard about lived in Europe as a teenager. This means that the merry wine drinking, czardas-playing, flirtatious homeland European forebear I believed was in that photograph could not possibly be true.

And this is why: Between the bike and the tomatoes had come Sister Catharine Straus.

atherine Straus was a stunningly plain and solidly Christian woman. Converted to the truth of Seventh-day Sabbath-keeping and healthful living, she had given her life over to bringing others to her conviction and sup-





ported herself by being what at that time was referred to vaguely as "a church-worker."

She marched up and down the streets of Brooklyn and East New York in sensible shoes and cotton stockings, a Christian soldier diligently handing out religious tracts, knocking on doors and selling books, and doing her best to schedule Bible studies in the homes of the spiritually tired or restless.

Sister Straus knocked on my grandparents' door one afternoon in 1934, when just about everyone was tired. My grandmother took her in and let her talk. Who was engineering the salvation of whom is still worth debate: my grandmother took pity on a women several years her junior who must have seemed hopelessly without ambition yet greatly determined—a peculiarity to my grandmother, certainly.

The woman returned, armed with more books, with ammunition proof texts. Eventually, Sister Straus guaranteed that if my father could learn to read through the first several pages of The Great Controversy Between God and Satan she could get him into an English speaking grade school where, at the age of twelve, he wouldn't have to start at level one, as the New York Public Schools were insisting. A miracle, certainly.

That was enough religion for my grandmother: the conversion was immediate. But there was more: Sister

Straus was a great Christian democrat. Everyone was a sister or brother in a genuinely egalitarian way. She shared what little she had—she brought tiny pencils and notebooks and even more little books and asked only that my grandparents read them and take notes.

My grandmother fed the church worker plum doughnuts and tried desperately to liven up her wardrobe by providing colorful woolen scarves and personal tailoring services. Nothing doing: just read the books.

All of the books and pamphlets offered more or less the same advice: read the Bible and get out of town, the most reliable way to restore and keep one's self in good physical and spiritual health. But some directives were more specific than others: Walk a mile every day, drink ten glasses of water, bake your own bread, and grow your own food. Start a garden. Give up alcohol; don't smoke; don't eat meat; give up sugar. Read more books, but read the right ones: The Bible was a good start.

Some of this made intuitive sense to my grandparents; some required more of them than seemed necessary to keep my father's place in school. Plum cakes would stay, so would chicken paprikas. But my grandfather was happy to give up beer for what was a genuine gift from heaven: the requirement that he not work one day a week.

Sister Straus delivered even more: she asked nothing

of my grandfather but that he believe in the grace of God and the seven rules of healthy living. That was it. No further stipulations; no expectations. She was plain, but to my grandfather, she must have come close to being a perfect companion. She taught him how to play "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" on his accordion and gave him a pamphlet on the value of vegetables; he grew tomatoes and tried his best to sing, "I Come to the Garden Alone," which he did almost every day until he was finally planted, himself.

I remember Catharine Straus and her cotton stockings well: she visited my grandparents regularly, bringing them books and crocheted bookmarks, singing songs, refusing the paprikas, but occasionally taking some strudel and always admiring my grandfather's tomatoes.

She brought me two kittens: rusty polydactyls she had named Peter and Paul who wandered about, "witnessing," she said, simply by napping in the sun. The kittens not only lived happily with us but also lived with two lab rats my grandfather had brought home having saved them from "something Satan makes people do," she said.

That was what Heaven would be, she said—the lion and the lamb, the cats and the mice, everyone getting along, everyone sharing their food. For years, I imagined a Heaven with cats and mice and tomatoes and sensible shoes, a place where my tone-deaf grandfather could sing well. A better deal, by far, I thought, than the uncomfortable place my other grandparents had described, where everyone had to sit quietly and pay attention.

If my grandfather missed his bike less and less as he loved his tomatoes more and more, I am sure that Sister Straus was significantly responsible: she gave him every reason to slow down further and throw his life into planning for the world to come, a world that did not require Packards or real estate or beautiful shoes but promised songbooks and gardens.

his photograph of my grandfather—the photograph of real or imagined allure, the one in which he is not in Europe, is not playing dancing music, is not drinking wine—is a photograph of him on Long Island. I recognize the fence, now—one I straddled as a kid; the

tree in the background is an apple tree I fell from when I was nine—probably twenty years after this picture was taken. He is not yet the grandparent I knew—grandparents are perpetually sixty—but he is hardly a young man.

Had I paid closer attention, I would have noticed long ago that that bottle on the table next to him holds a straw. A closer look tells me that it holds Straub's Ginger Ale, his favorite drink, made especially peppery and sharp for him to make up for the loss of alcohol from his drinking diet. It was probably a happy trade.

So there he sits in a 1950s tubular chrome-legged chair in his wife's backyard rimmed by American fencing, with a huge American accordion on his lap, probably not too far from his tomatoes—the grasses are late summer grasses. The sun glints on the chair and short shadows tell me the day is far from half-over. My grandmother is undoubtedly busy arranging roses or peonies inside or preparing goulas or making arrangements for someone to come and wash the Packard. I think he is happy where he is. He is not close to where I had thought he had been.

I don't know what he's playing, or pretending to play on his accordion, but, possibly, he is wheezing out the refrain of "Jesus Loves Me," looking into the camera coyly, hopefully expecting Sister Straus to join him.

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## Losing Luke, Finding Me: The Value of

Accepting Grace | BY SHASTA NELSON

#### **Finding Luke**

The lights would dim within moments. Knowing our church service was about to begin, I tried to transition my head from the logistics of the morning (Are enough tables set up? Did our volunteers arrive? Is the PowerPoint working?) to the purpose of the morning. My sermon notes swam in my head, distracting because I didn't really want to think about them yet, but neither did I want to push them too far out of my mind in case one of them drowned before I had the chance to share it.

So with those notes anxiously bobbing on the water, I sighed a thankful prayer that things seemed to be in place around me. With the heart of an associate pastor who was working alone this summer morning, I anxiously gave everything the look over one last time. Then I nodded my head to the back of the room, giving permission for the lights to go down so the program could begin. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw him walk in. And then, darkness.

his is where I should be praying. Focusing. Breathing. I should be whispering to God about how I want him to be the picture I paint this morning, with me being only the nail that holds his portrait up for all to see. I should be the lifeguard trying to pull up those little swimming sermon notes. I should be thinking about nothing else except the message I am moments away from giving. But I saw this man's face and for some reason it really struck something inside me.

To be honest, I had never met him. But I did recognize him. Over the last few months at various service projects our church had facilitated downtown, several members had encountered him. He looked like a well-dressed homeless man, probably in his seventies, though it was admittedly hard to tell. He was most certainly very

learned and well-spoken. The one recurring theme of those conversations was that he was to be avoided because he talked your ear off with his destructive and critical monologues based upon his cynical opinions.

He made it very clear to his captive listeners that he hated organized religion, distrusted pastors, was adamant against Seventh-day Adventism—and Ellen White specifically—and didn't seem too impressed with Christians in general. It was all hearsay, but I can't say that I found myself wanting to hear his stories firsthand! Nor was I too thrilled that he had tracked us down, probably just to spew more of his venom. Meanwhile, the final scenes of the opening video clip reminded me of my present responsibility. I bowed my head, turned on my microphone, and walked into the spotlight.

After church, I was determined not to let him distract me. My plan was to stay busy talking to people, fearful that if he got my attention I wouldn't have the chance to greet all the other guests before they left. I did glance at him occasionally, though I was always careful not to make eve contact. He stood alone, but I noticed that his countenance revealed a confidence that visitors rarely portray. I'm sure this made me even more nervous! With him waiting over my shoulder, I finally turned to give him my attention.

I prepared myself to be as sweet and kind as possible, but also to be firm and short in my conversation. I didn't feel warm. I braced for his attacks...and prayed that no one else would be within listening range to his rants.

So as not to disappoint me, he began his monologue with every pastor's three favorite words: "I don't like...." His rambling list included everything from my denomination, to pastors, to women preachers specifically. Contemplating how to move the conversation into something more positive, he caught me off guard when he abruptly

transitioned into his purpose for attending our church.

"I came here today to confirm that this church is like all the others....I had my pen and paper ready to write down everything I disagreed with...everything I disliked...." At this point, I quickly moved from trying to strategize a positive response into simply trying to come up with a defensive response for survival!

But, again, before I could catch up with him, his face suddenly softened with his closing sentence, "God spoke through you today, young lady... I felt the presence of God here...thank you." He touched my hand and suddenly all the gruffness I had feared endeared him to me.

Though I pride myself on thinking quickly, he had been a step ahead of me the whole way. I still hadn't proven able to articulate an appropriate response. And I was too late. He hobbled out the door. That was Luke. I felt love in my heart for that man.

He attended our services for several weeks. He was still Luke, still opinionated and unafraid to speak out when he disagreed. But he was also the Luke who longed for the presence of God beyond the façade. Through that honest and hungry side of him, his gruffness was more like a giant teddy bear to me. I gave him big hugs every time I saw him, and though he always acted like it was unnecessary and annoying, I could tell he loved it!

Through conversations, I was thrilled as I saw God at work in his life. His eyes lit up when I teased him. He claimed still not to believe in women as pastors, but for some reason he trusted me. We had bonded. Somehow I was getting through to him. He was softer. He smiled and connected with people.

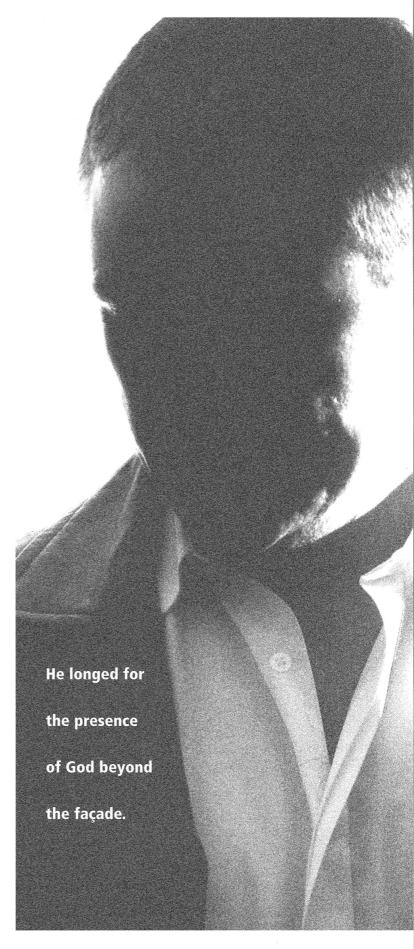
I had found a friend in this retired grumpy man.

#### Losing Luke

Once again, the lights would dim within moments. Knowing our church service would soon begin, I tried to transition my head from the logistics of the morning (Are enough tables set up? Did our volunteers arrive? Is the PowerPoint working?) to the purpose of the morning. You know the routine.

Except this time rather than watching him walk in, I watched him walk out.

He had joined our team during our early prayer time that morning, so he had been around for twenty minutes or so. But his back faced me now as he, seemingly unnoticed, opened the door into the hallway. My head rea-



soned that he would probably just grab a coffee next door or use the bathroom before sitting through the service. My heart, however, compelled me to follow him. With a sense of unexplained panic, I made my way to the door.

"Luke?" I called down the hallway to the figure of a man whose shoulders appeared more fallen than usual. I noted the irony that he had first arrived with a countenance of confidence, but was now leaving in defeat.

Without turning around, he just muttered to leave him alone and that he had to go.

Something pushed me down the hall, where I reached out to his arm, fingers on his forearm inviting him to turn around. I felt pain.

Had someone said something to him that hurt him? Had he become disillusioned with us? Did he have something going on in his life that was leaving him distracted? I couldn't pinpoint it. Yet I sensed that this man was walking away for the last time. With renewed vigor, I begged this new friend of mine to share with me what had happened.

Again, he just muttered that he had left a note at my seat explaining himself and, as if that were enough, he turned to leave. His back faced me once again.

I don't know what made me say it. Maybe desperation? Maybe hope? Maybe the fact that I no longer cared why he was leaving? I guess if that were my priority I could have looked for the note. But the only thing that was on my heart was that he was leaving. What do you say to someone who is giving up?

"Luke...I love you. Good bye."

His cane came to a stop. It was all the encouragement I needed.

"Luke I love you...and so does God. I don't know why you're leaving, but you walk out that door and you remember that there is a pastor here who loves you and a God who is going to go with you." I rambled. I showered him with my heart.

I was scared. I hurt for him. I was just praying the whole time. And then his slow words revealed to me what he thought were his shortcomings. But, really, they would eventually prove to be mine.

"Shasta, I can't be here. You don't know the things I have done in my life...you guys...," he paused, flicked his hand in a gesture toward the sanctuary filled with happylooking people, and turned away before continuing, "you guys are all...anyway, I don't belong here."

His head shook back and forth, eyes lowered to the ground. It wasn't so much what he said, but what he didn't say. We were too good for him. This belief would later be verified by his note, which expressed the belief that he had lived too much life for God to accept him. While he felt sick that he was such a sinner, I felt sick that we were, too, but that we hadn't shown it. Especially me.

"Luke, you're welcome here no matter what! I've messed up, too. We all have!" I begged that little sermon lifeguard to pull out of the water the words I needed! Here I was, trying to convince him that just because I looked like the good-girl, put-together pastor, in fact, I could truthfully relate to his sense of unworthiness.

I would have given anything to sit down and have an entire confessional session with him in that hallway. But again, he looked me over, as though he wanted to believe my words, but then shook his head in disbelief and walked out the door, saying only that maybe he would come by again someday.

And he was gone.

This was a life-changing moment for me.

#### Finding Me by Losing Me

In that empty hallway, my entire life message changed. No one else saw the change for another month or two, at least, but this is where the confession that eventually came out was given wings of courage and purpose. Thousands of pages of sermon content materialized in those moments as I stared at the exit door. Something clicked.

People don't come to Christ because I appear good or because they feel like such perfect people—they come because they need a savior. And I did, too. If God could forgive me—a pastor who had an affair—then maybe people could believe that God could forgive them, too.

Although Luke was the first person I had ever wanted to tell, I hadn't. The truth was ugly and I had hesitated. I felt alone. I hated myself for the sinful actions I had done. I ached that I wasn't who I wanted to be. I felt scared because, as much as I wanted to whisper the truth, I knew it would hurt others. It would, in turn, make them feel unloved and confused and trapped, also.

I was scared because I was the pastor. Scared because I had secretly liked being the good girl who people thought did everything right. Scared because I was the one who was expected to preach grace, not need it. Or at least appear not to need it.

To be truthful, I still felt very ugly and ashamed, but for the first time in my life I cared more to reveal a God of grace than I did about looking perfect. Those are big words from someone who wants so desperately to be liked by everyone. So much of my life involved trying to hide my worst. Here, in this hallway, I wished he could have seen beyond my smile, my makeup, my carefully chosen outfit, my good deeds, and my talents. Maybe it would have made a difference.

Maybe he would have been able to believe me when I told him he was still welcome here no matter what. Maybe he could have seen the God I experienced every week—a God who invited me in, even when I hurt others and myself. I wanted to boast that this God still pulls us in to worship, even with our imperfections, and loves us, and that we were home, here, in this church.

I wanted to tell Luke that he could stay. That I could stay. That in fact, when our sins remind us of why we need a savior, we should have front row seats to worship services. That our spiritual journey calls for us to be in the presence of God and community more now than ever! Sinners are welcome.

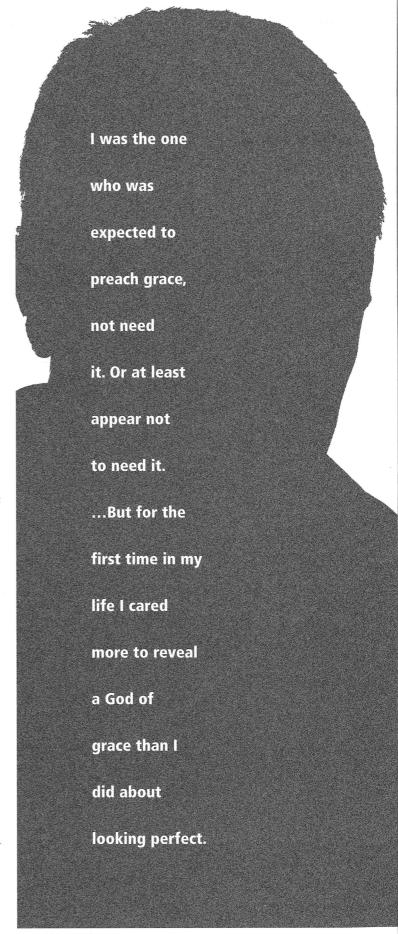
I had always been a preacher of grace. This morning, my sermon would not change emphasis. But when this sermon was done, the wheels would be put into motion that would someday alter how I shared. Eventually, not only would I be a pastor who preached grace, I would also be marked the rest of my life as a preacher who needed grace. More importantly, in addition to that need, I would hopefully be one who modeled the acceptance of that grace.

Many people talk about how hard it is to extend grace to others, and I know that to be true at times. But to receive grace is no less difficult. Expressing my need for grace marked the hardest journey of my life with a forever stain of tears.

To receive it means that I must admit I need it. It means that some people will never admire me or respect me—they will only see my failures. But Luke struck me in the heart. I saw that modeling the perfect life was less effective than modeling reality: that Christians need a savior, too. Most of all me.

He was gone. The lights would dim within moments. I bowed my head, turned my microphone on, and walked into the spotlight.

**Shasta Nelson** writes from San Francisco, where she pastors a church with her husband, Greg <www.secondwindSF.org>, and serves as a life coach <www.FlyAgainCoaching.com>. Her story is shared from her journal, which is titled "A Grace Accepted."



## Growing Up Adventist in Argentina | BY HEROLD WEISS

s a youth, I understood that the president of the Austral Union and a small circle of his friends administer the personal needs of Adventist churches in Argentine, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The appointments are then rubber-stamped by conference committees. The vote would be a "call" to serve in this or that capacity, which the recipient was expected to respond to as one coming from God. It happened that the secretary-treasurer of the Central Argentine Conference, Rudolf Steger, was called to serve at the Northern Argentine Conference, and my father was called to serve in his place. Thus our family planned to move directly to Paraná, Argentina.

Upon our arrival, however, we learned that Steger refused to go to the Northern Conference. For a few weeks, we wished my father had not accepted his call. The conference and the union tried to persuade Steger to obey the church's call, but he wouldn't budge. In the end, my father was asked to go to Corrientes and serve as secretary-treasurer there until a more permanent arrangement could be made. Since my oldest brother, Ewaldo, had completed his premedical course work in Montevideo and planned to enter the medical school at Rosario, my parents decided that while my father went to Corrientes, the rest of the family would spend the year in Rosario, the second largest city in Argentina.

WE RENTED A modest house on Jujuy Street, just a few houses from Boulevard Ordóñez. The local Adventist church was a few blocks away on Catamarca Street. In Rosario, there was no Adventist church school, so my mother decided to enroll Klinton, another sibling, and me at the German school that was open even while the war was raging in Europe.

My brothers and I experienced a harsh reality check when we enrolled into the Argentine educational system. All of us were required to repeat grades. The medical school took an entire year to decide how many credits it would give Ewaldo for his premedical course in Uruguay. At the end of the year, he was told that he should return to Montevideo, do a first year of medicine there, then go back to Rosario, take seventeen exams on secondary school subjects having to do with Argentine history, geography, and economics, and then start first year of medicine.

It was not hard for Ewaldo and the family to decide that he should go back to Montevideo and complete his medical education there. In the meantime, he had squandered a year of his life. I had to repeat a grade I had already done.

epeating third grade at the German school in Rosario created all sorts of tensions within me. My mother, I am sure, thought she was doing the best for me, and, in a very real way, she was. Even though their families had left for Russia two hundred years earlier, both she and my father had strong identity ties to Germany, though neither had any sympathy for the Nazis. They had grown up in Entre Ríos reading a German Bible and attending church in German. When my mother found out that there was a German school in Rosario, she enthusiastically enrolled Klinton and me.

My sister, Lyllian, was already in secondary school and Evelyn, another sister, was in kindergarten. The teachers and families of the other students at the German school, whether they sympathized with the Nazis or not, were wholly in favor of a German victory in the

war. Thus, whereas before the move I had openly rooted for the Allies, at the German school in Rosario, I soon learned I could not let my allegiance be known. For a ten-yearold boy peer acceptance was a must.

I vividly remember the day in 1944 when the Allies entered Berlin and the Germans surrendered. It was as though history had come to an end for everyone at the German school. That day, classes were suspended. It was a day of mourning. As far as I know, that was the last year that school was open.

uring the year at Rosario, our family's budget was stretched tightly, since my father's meager church salary had to support two houses: his in Corrientes and ours in Rosario. To ease the economic pinch, my mother gave room and board to two Adventist bachelors, both nice, middle-aged fellows. They made for very lively conversations at the dinner table.

One of them was French, Aimee Fayard, a traveling salesperson for several companies. The other, Manuel Ampuero Matta, was a Bolivian in the fourth year of medical school. Both men were very amiable characters, especially Ampuero Matta, who was a typical bohemian student for life. He had already been studying medicine for ten years but was nowhere near graduating. In Argentina at that time, there was no legal divorce. Since Ampuero was separated from his wife, this added another twist to his personal profile, and also left him outside the graces of the church.

In Rosario, there was a cinema that showed only newsreels and Walt Disney movies and cartoons. Around the dinner table, our extended family decided it was not a sin to attend this cinema, even though there was no such consensus at church. Both of our pensionistas took us at one time or another to that cinema, whose name I no

longer recall. I also remember going there to see Fantasia. Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra overwhelmed me. It made me an orchestra fan forever.

MY BEST FRIEND at the German school, Walter Niebauer, who lived a couple of blocks from my home on Boulevard Ordóñez, convinced my mother to let me go with him to the cowboy serials that played on Friday afternoons at a neighborhood cinema. I don't think I would have received permission if my father had been around, but my mother was more open to culture and the arts. Thus, whereas Fayard or Ampuero occasionally took some of us to a newsreel cinema, Walter's mother regularly took me to see cowboy films that cut the story each week when the guy with the white hat was cornered in a barn or behind a big boulder.

Once during that year, Mrs. Niebauer took Walter and me to a live theatrical performance of Pussyfuz with Boots. These exposures to activities not approved by the Church made me realize that not everything proscribed by my religion was as it was described.

Fascination with the movies, of course, made me daydream that one day maybe I could become a matinee idol myself. These dreams created the first real inner tensions in spiritual matters in my life. Only ten years old, I understood that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to be a movie actor and an Adventist.

At that time, I could not conceive of myself not being an Adventist. Therefore, there was no question that the dreams of becoming a movie star, which I am sure were not at all peculiar to me at that age, were only distracting fantasies. Their persistence, however, was something that at times disturbed me. It caused me to question the strength of my commitment to the faith. I did not know how to deal with doubts about the reasonableness of what the Church

Around the dinner table. our extended famimly decided it was not a sin to attend this cinema, even though there was no such consensus at church.

All this made eccesiastical politics no the politics of the nation, and in those years Juan **Domingo** Perón had begun to project his powerful

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required.

In February or March 1945, we finally moved to Paraná, where my parents rented a house on Misiones Street. The secretarytreasurer of the Central Conference still would not budge from his post. To resolve the situation, the ecclesiastical authorities asked my father to become the manager of the book agency that supplied denominational books, magazines, and pamphlets to all the churches in the conference, as well as to the **different from** canvassers who sold literature door to door.

> It was certainly a humiliating experience for my father, but being the marvelous person and Christian he was, he took it in stride and continued to serve his church faithfully and contentedly. His superiors, however, did not reward his good spirit. A few years later, they forced him out before he had reached retirement age or was ready for it. He did not belong to any camarilla, or clique, that took care of its members within denominational politics.

> As I watched what happened to my dad, I made a solemn promise to God in the privacy of my prayer that I would never become an employee of the Church. I could already see that there was constant infighting at the conference offices, favoritism for friends and relatives, and gossip about what someone was doing to someone else. All this made ecclesiastical politics no different from the politics of the nation, and in those years Juan Domingo Perón had begun to project his powerful personality on the political horizon.

araná is a prosperous provincial capital perched on the high palisades of the eastern bank of the Paraná River. The city has two centers. One is the Plaza San Martín. The Cathedral, City Hall, the Social Club, the Savoy Hotel, and the Teacher's College all faced the square.

The most popular entertainment was the retreta at this plaza on Saturday nights. Soon after sundown, men would start walking counterclockwise on the outer perimeter of the square. Women walked in the interior half of the same sidewalk in a clockwise direction. The object was to see and be seen. As soon as you spotted a lovely lady walking around, you had to come up with the appropriate piropo (a playfully flattering phrase) for her. Usually at the next encounter, half a circumference later, she would have something to say in response. Or you could just go to the retreta and walk around talking with your friends.

No one walked on the retreta by himself. On the sidewalks across the street, the tables at the bars and confiterías would be full of people also watching the scene. The doors and French windows of the social club would be wide open and the local aristocracy exhibited themselves on plush chairs and sofas smoking cigars, talking, or playing checkers, chess, or cards. Luckily for us, the retretas began after Sabbath sundown worship at home.

The other center of town was the provincial Government Building, a solid Italianate palazzo that occupied a whole block and had two plazas, one on the north and one on the south. The Adventist church and the Central Conference offices were one block from the north plaza of the Government Building, on the corner of Cervantes and Córdoba Streets.

While we lived in Paraná, the Church had its services in a hall in the second story of the office building, which had a totally separate entrance, with a large stairway giving access to the hall. After one year, my parents bought a house three doors down the street from the church entrance on Córdoba Street. My life soon revolved around my studies and the church next door.

s soon as we had arrived in Paraná, my mother learned that there was a music conservatory and a school of beaux arts. and she enrolled me to take piano and drawing lessons. My efforts at making music proved a total waste of time. I seemed to have no natural ability to play the keys.

At the Escuela de Bellas Artes, the curriculum was very old-fashioned. The first year was spent at a table copying drawings with a pencil. The second year we worked on an easel doing still life with a pencil. In the third year, we did still life with charcoal. In the fourth, one graduated to tempera. In the fifth, oil. Not until the sixth year did students work with live models using charcoal, pencil, tempera, or oil. Of course, the live models were properly dressed.

I lasted only to year three. Still, my experience drawing at the school alerted me at an early age to the significance of human achievements in the arts. It was a healthy counterweight to the continuous denigration of the human race that was the premise of all the sermons at church and the religious literature at home. The Calvinist notion of the total depravity of humanity after the fall into sin made it a requirement to look with suspicion at any expression of human achievements that did not openly render glory to God.

When my mother enrolled me at the Escuela de Bellas Artes, she had to do quite a bit of explaining to other members of the church, who looked with suspicion upon my development in that area. Besides, as several church elders pointed out, painters were notorious for their loose sexual mores.

Paraná, with its retreats and art schools, was where I went through the excitements of puberty. I was, however, unlike some painters and musicians, a very bashful, introverted kind of guy who agonized in the presence of girls, even though in my daydreams I imagined delightful intimacies.

The first year after our move to Paraná, the Church brought in an evangelist to conduct meetings at a public hall close to downtown. He was Victor Aeschlimann, a Chilean of German descent. In Argentina, the Catholic Church is the official church. The Constitution specifies that the president, besides being a natural citizen of at least thirty-five years of age, must be a Catholic.

Every official state function, like the celebration of

Independence Day, or Flag Day, began with a high mass officiated by the local bishop. In public secondary schools, Catholic priests taught the students religion. Among the ministries of the national government, there was a ministry of religion and worship. This meant that religious freedom was a prerogative of the Catholic Church only. For the other religious communities, there was only religious toleration. They had to register with the federal government in order to function in the country, and they could do only what the ministry of religion and worship allowed them to do.

Knowledge that their registration could be revoked at any time had a big impact on how Protestant denominations, including Adventists, functioned.

To facilitate interest in his lectures, and neutralize prejudices against Protestants, Aeschlimann's first three or four lectures dealt with topics of general interest and health matters. Eventually, however, they turned to the presentation of the Adventist apocalyptic gospel.

I had, of course, been indoctrinated in the Adventist interpretation of Daniel and Revelation at an early age. It has been part of me for as long as I can remember being aware of myself. Sabbath School lessons dealt with it on a regular basis, and Sabbath sermons were exceptional if they did not refer to several texts of Daniel or Revelation.

The lectures by Victor Aeschlimann in that rented hall in Paraná were the first time I heard what I considered our private possession presented to "outsiders." It was a strange experience, full of conflicting feelings. On one hand, I felt our knowledge of the meaning of these prophecies was too precious a thing to be given out freely. On the other, I tried to put myself in the shoes of the "outsider" who was being told about the Bible's picture of humanity's future, and of the sacrifices he or she would be required to make to be counted among the blessed at the Second Coming.

Accepting our version of the gospel was not easy. In fact, I was assured, it was not supposed to be easy. I was somewhat amazed, therefore, that people who had not been born in the faith would actually join. Deep inside, I could not understand how anyone would accept our interpretation as valid.

Aeschlimann had bigger-than-life depictions of monsters from Daniel and Revelation on cardboard. By that time, I knew all the narratives of Daniel by

heart, as well as the Adventist interpretation of them. But when I attended Aeschlimann's lectures I began to sense that there was something manipulative about the interpretation, even though my knowledge of world history was almost non-existent.

What the evangelist presented as obvious was thought such only by Adventists. Why was it that what was assumed to be absolutely clear was not accepted by most students of the Bible? Could it be that those who did not identify the apocalyptic symbols as we did were not obtuse but wise?

I had a hard time understanding why these prophecies, according to our interpretation, made reference to events that historians did not consider very important. Still, I felt satisfaction from knowing I belonged to a very special, blessed, minority with a special message to give to the world, even if it was quite esoteric.

n Paraná, I completed grade school in public schools and was accepted to the Colegio Nacional for my secondary education. Unlike grade school, where a group of twenty to twenty-five students had all the subjects taught by a single teacher, at the Colegio the small group of students was always together in the same classroom under the supervision of a celador, who took care of discipline during breaks and until the professor entered the room. Different professors taught subjects in the curriculum.

It happened that on my first day at the Colegio the first subject was botany, and the professor was Dr. Guzmán, a medical doctor who lived around the corner from my home. His son had been my classmate in fifth and sixth grade, and I had been in his home a time or two.

Dr. Guzmán entered the classroom, took the roll call, and stepped to the back of the room. He then called me to the front. I was perplexed. It was our first day of classes. We had not been given a reading assignment for which I could be held responsible. Once I was standing at the front of the class with strangers looking at me, Dr. Guzmán asked, "What is life?" I explained that I did not know this was our subject for that day. He explained that he was not expecting me to have done a special study of the subject. He just wanted to have my answer.

I answered, "Life is a gift of God." He said my answer would probably be acceptable in a theology class, but this was a class in botany, an area in biology. He wanted a scientific definition. I had no scientific definition to give him, so I remained silent, making it look like I was thinking hard in search of an answer. The minutes passed slowly and everybody was silent. Twenty or thirty minutes passed in total silence. I was still standing at the front of the class wishing I were anywhere else.

Dr. Guzmán then asked if anyone in the class could offer a definition for life. One or two students made suggestions with which Dr. Guzmán found fault. After more minutes of silence, he repeated the question to me, still standing at the front of the class. I repeated my original definition, which he again rejected as unacceptable in a botany class.

Finally, the bell rang. Dr. Guzmán stepped up to the front of the class, turned around to face us all, and said, "I want you to know that we will spend the year in this science class studying life, but there is no scientific definition of life." Then he walked out of the classroom.

Of all the hours I have spent in classrooms, both as a student and as a teacher, I think that first hour in secondary school was the most memorable. Dr. Guzman never told us exactly what point he wished to make on that first class. Was it that science has its limits? Was it that theology and science should be kept separate? Was it to emphasize the irony of spending so much time studying something we could not define?

Many years later, I have wondered whether Dr. Guzman that day had been brilliant, pedestrian, or pompous. In any case, I have always been grateful to him for having called my attention to one of the most important aspects of life in our times. If you are a person of faith, you must squarely face the necessity of determining how to relate your faith to the knowledge made available by science.

he secondary school curriculum included a religion class twice a week. Non-Catholic students were offered an alternative class in ethics. During my four years in public secondary schools, I found myself in ethics classes with four or five other students who were Protestant or

Jewish. Professors trained in classical philosophy who were, for the most part, conservative Neothomist Catholics taught the classes.

During my first year at the Colegio Nacional, I learned about the ethical teachings of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The following years, we studied the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Neoplatonists. Later, we studied some of the Scholastics, Descartes, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietsche. Of course, we did not read primary sources. It was a matter of taking notes from the lectures given by the professors.

I have always been grateful to the school that taught me at an early stage how the perennial questions facing humans who endeavor to live a good life had been answered in the past. These studies certainly influenced the way I was trying to answer some of these same questions in the middle of the twentieth century. They also demonstrated that I needed to wrestle with how my faith was to be related to the knowledge made available by reason.

During my second year at the Colegio Nacional, a new student joined our class. He had transferred to the Colegio from the local Catholic seminary. It soon became obvious that he knew more than the rest of us. The educational authorities had dealt him the same card they had given me when I arrived from Uruguay. Because he had not taken some subjects that were part of the national curriculum, he was forced to catch up in lower grades.

At the seminary, of course, he had studied theology. My classmates knew I was an "evangelical" who studied the Bible, therefore, some of them were eager to have a debate between the seminarian and the evangelical. At the time, I felt comfortable with my ability to explain God's will as expressed in the Bible, so I was confident I could hold my own with Catholics, who, according to what I had been told, didn't read the Bible. (It must be remembered that this was Latin America pre-Vatican II.)

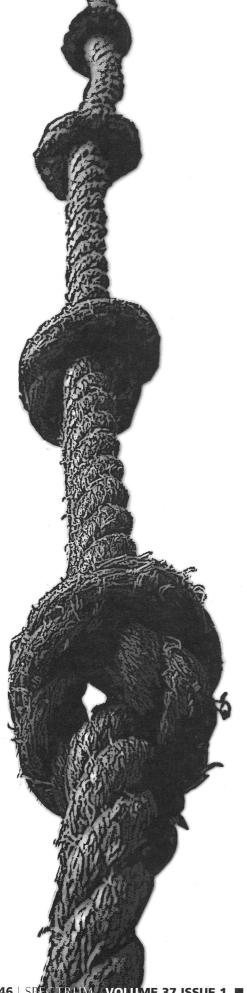
As it turned out, five or six of our classmates arranged for us to go to Plaza San Miguel after school for our expected debate. I have no recollection of the content of our conversation, but I remember well what happened. I was able to quote Bible texts, mainly from Daniel and Revelation. He was able to argue his points logically while also quoting Bible texts.

I left the encounter totally deflated and perfectly aware that I had not been up to the challenge presented by someone trained not just to memorize, but to think. I had to come to terms with the fact that there was another way of interpreting the Bible that seemed at times more logical than the way I had been taught. I also realized that I needed to rethink my understanding of Catholicism. After all, a Catholic theologian with advanced training had not challenged me. I had been talking with a boy, just like me, at most two years older than me.

Catholic bashing was an everyday occurrence among Adventists. According to our reading of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, Catholicism, and especially the Papacy, is the evil power that persecutes the beleaguered people of God. Here I had faced a peer who had been going to school at a Catholic seminary (where students entered at the secondary level) and had been put to shame by my parochial views. It was obvious that his training in philosophy placed him at a distinct advantage. It was sobering.

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I also realized that I needed to rethink my understanding of Catholicism.



## The Knotted Cord of Faith | BY GARY GILBERT

ewly converted Adventists are lucky. The message is clear to them, twenty-eight beliefs in a bound volume, with support for those beliefs beaming out from a library of red leather-bound books. Second-, third-, and fourthgeneration Adventists must try to disentangle the eternal Adventist truths, the prophecies, promises, and failures from the personal experiences that all get added via family history.

My mother is a third-generation Adventist and it seems that for her—and for me—the threads of personal narrative also have become braided with the yarn of medical accounts. I can describe the elements of our family's faith tradition as they appear to me, detailing the way that some scenes rely heavily on coarse yarn, and others fine thread.

My mother would point out different details and might insist that different threads or different elements of weaving were what made a scene vivid.

MY GRANDMOTHER, Trevie, became an Adventist when she was a young girl—a consequence of her widowed mother being comforted by a breadbaking Adventist neighbor. Within a few years, her mother had remarried-to an Adventist widower named Mr. MacBee. Trevie was four years old, the youngest of eighteen kids on a farm near Vinita, Oklahoma. Mr. MacBee favored her—with her curly hair—over the older kids. He helped her escape early from picking cotton, bringing her hidden candies when he came back from town.

Grandma learned that preparing for the Kingdom of Heaven meant abandoning "flesh food," and abstinence from tobacco, coffee, and alcohol. It was essential to observe the Sabbath and pay heed to the writings of Ellen White. The health message and the message of sanctification were substantial, promising good health and elevated thoughts that would pass the scrutiny of a heavenly auditor. She believed that in a few short years—possibly before she married—Jesus would descend to earth and reward the faithful Adventists. I can't help but wonder whether her childhood image of Jesus' return wasn't similar to Mr. MacBee's return from town with hidden candies.

Grandma Trevie arrived late for the fall term at Keene Bible College. She had been engaged playing the piano and singing for an evangelistic meeting. Rumors of her beauty and musical talent preceded her and young men were eagerly waiting.

Roy Griffin, from Houston, walked confidently into vespers—a few minutes late, his shoes shined and his pants pressed.

Roy was a star in elocution and he knew it, preparing for a life in the pulpit. He had occasionally stood behind the pulpit of his home church since he was eleven years old. He had won the Texas state oratory contest for his high school in Houston. Grandma Trevie accepted Roy's attention and within a few months their private conversations had grown serious. Grandma Trevie told Roy that if the Time of Trouble broke she wished to be with him rather than alone or with anyone else. Roy bought Grandma Trevie a cedar chest as a token of commitment.

Grandma Trevie wanted to ensure that her future life would be at a minister's side—at the piano or singing on the platform of an Adventist Church. She warned Roy, in a note, that if he were not preparing for the ministry she wasn't sure that she could care for him. Roy responded.

Dearest... Was glad I got to Young People's Meeting in time to hear you sing. But blue—that's no name for what I've been all day—Trevie I can't understand your attitude the last few days. You told me a while back that if the Time of Trouble broke you wanted to be with me. And now you say unless I'm on a Conference payroll you cannot care for me.... Trevie what does it mean?

Trevie eventually accepted Roy's pleading of commitment to Seventh-day Adventist ministry as well as to her. She was nineteen years old when she and twenty-year-old Roy were married. They had already accepted their first assignments as elementary school teachers in Dalworth, a suburb of Dallas.

Roy was called to be a minister in Kansas two years later. He started evangelistic meetings, teaming with his brother, Albert. When it was Roy's turn, he preached about love and God's plan for the family. His scholarly appeal, delivered from the heart, coupled with his

dynamic style won converts. Grandma Trevie watched him in the pulpit, committing his most effective phrases to memory. Her husband, Elder Roy Griffin, taught an Adventist message that provided insight into world events and promised peace and love for the home, elevated thoughts to fill the imagination, and good health for the bodies and minds.

The first daughter, Ramona, arrived four years after the wedding. Ramona didn't breathe for long minutes after her birth. The doctor's wife rubbed her with a towel, spanked her bottom, and slapped her cheeks while her skin transitioned from pink to blue. Finally, while upside down, she screamed. By this, she announced that she would stay in the world, sing at her father's evangelistic meetings, guard her mother's confidences, and watch silently from a dark room when her father lay on the sofa, clutching his abdomen and groaning with pain.

Roy established his own evangelistic agenda, holding "efforts" in Kansas, Iowa, North and South Carolina, and Virginia. Handbills proclaimed titles, which included, "Don't Miss Heaven! What and Where is It?" "Will Japan Fight the United States? (Hear about Japan in Bible Prophecy. Is she destined to control the Orient and then conquer the world?)"; and "Unemployment, Hard Times and the Money War: What Is to Be the Outcome?"

My grandfather, Roy, in horn-rim glasses and a bow tie, leans confidently forward into the photograph. He is identified as "Roy Edward Griffin, Bible Lecturer from Houston, Texas." A newspaper clipping from the Durham Sun, dated April 22, 1939, shows a photograph of an audience apparently exceeding six hundred, labeled "typical tabernacle audience."

A second daughter was born to the couple. After a time, Grandma played the piano and Ramona and Maurine sang in a quartet with their parents at the meetings. By almost any metric, ministry in the Adventist message was paying gratifying dividends.

She warned Roy, in a note, that if he were not preparing for the ministry she wasn't sure that she could care for him.

In the midst of these joys, a darkening cloud drifted toward the meetings. Grandpa Roy had developed stomach pain; sometimes it was severe. Usually the little girls didn't get to drink milk. It was reserved for their daddy because the doctors had prescribed it for his ulcers. Grandpa and Grandma both sensed that his stomach pain was not responding to a simple vegetarian diet and trust in divine providence.

Grandpa had his first emergency surgery for a bleeding ulcer when he was thirty-one years old. The surgeon removed a portion of his stomach and later warned him that his job—as an evangelist—produced too much stress. He should change for the sake of his stomach. His doctor also advised him that he should change his diet to build his blood. He should eat meat every day. Weeks later, Grandpa returned to the pulpit, paler but still dramatic, determined to gain his strength from the Adventist message rather than from eating meat.

A third daughter, Wretha, joined the family evangelistic team. During a flourish, Grandpa Roy once preached that Jonah spent three days in the "whelly of the bale." His girls giggled and never let him forget the gaffe.

On Saturday afternoons, other ministers and church members were guests at the Griffin home. The group would laugh and talk—with Grandpa Roy at the center of the most engaged group. After the guests left and the girls went upstairs to have their hair brushed, Grandpa Roy would lie on the sofa, clutching his abdomen, unable to resist the pain that had been present all evening.

Grandpa Roy had a second surgery for a bleeding ulcer one year after the first. He was pale and weak after the surgery. The doctors advised that he needed meat in his diet to build his blood, preferably at every meal. Roy was ambivalent. How could he speak with conviction about vegetarianism if he ate meat? But what hope was offered by fidelity to the Adventist Health message. The consequence of his fidelity, it seemed, had been another surgery and weakness he had never known.

Grandpa Roy first fainted when he was in the upstairs bath. Ramona heard the thud. She and Grandma ran up the stairs. The door caught on Grandpa's unconscious form. Grandma reached her leg through the door and moved Grandpa Roy to the side. They called the doctor, who ordered them to give Roy sips of orange juice. He soon awakened and didn't seem significantly worse than before.

Grandpa's stomach pain and fainting worried Grandma. She became vigilant about protecting him from worries and stress. She warned Ramona not to bother him with news from her studies or stories she overheard about church members. Ramona was to clear things first with Grandma.

While on vacation in Florida, Grandpa saw an advertisement recruiting a college elocution teacher. Perhaps this was for him. Grandpa was a gifted speaker and a college teaching job would provide the relief from stress that the doctors had advised.

Grandma could see only see the hand of temptation in the offer. She asked Grandpa if he remembered the way that God had led him to the ministry. Finally, she asked if he remembered the note she had written to him while they were students at Keene. She wouldn't have welcomed his attention, she said, if he were not determined to have a career in the ministry. Grandpa relented and the vacation ended with him determined to return to evangelism.

Roy fainted again at home, and later at a rented hall where evangelistic meetings were planned. He had a third surgery for a bleeding ulcer. This time, the doctor told him that more than 75 percent of his stomach was gone and that eating meat was essential to his health.

His bed claimed him for the next month, and then for three weeks more. He was tired and pale when finally able to walk around. Was it finally time to try eating meat? Grandma brought soup on a tray, his Bible, and Ellen White's Testimonies for him to read. Gently, she reminded him that God was the giver of strength and that God expected him to do his duty. God had made it clear that meat was not to be the source of his people's strength.

n evangelistic series was planned in Richmond, Virginia, and, although he was the conference evangelist, Grandpa Roy thought he might be too weak to lead the meetings. However, Grandma Trevie reminded him that her nephew, Wayne Hooper, had wanted to lead the choir for one of his campaigns since he was ten vears old.

How could Grandpa Roy disappoint him when he was finally out of school and able to come? Grandpa

Roy went to work, preparing to be the lead evangelist. In the course of the Richmond campaign, he fainted in the hall, fainted at home, and was so tired that he was sometimes unable to finish the day's work.

Retirement came as a heavy blow. Grandpa Roy was only thirty-nine years old in 1943, when the ministerial secretary and conference president saw, during the Richmond campaign, how weak he was. He could no longer carry the load of an evangelist. Initially, the plan was that he would take a one year rest before returning to evangelistic duties.

The drafty farmhouse in New Market, Virginia, was all they could afford on the meager stipend. There was also the promise of supplemental income from non-strenuous work from the Conference.

"Get up girls," Grandma would call. "There's lot's to do today. I've already been weeding the garden for two hours." Grumbling, brushing out their hair, the girls came downstairs and looked through the window at the biggest vegetable garden in New Market.

At breakfast, Grandma read out loud from the Morning Watch and prayed. During the fall, she sorted apples in the packinghouse, earning cash to pay the rent of fifteen dollars per month and to buy flour, oil, and cloth. On Friday evenings, she would bake apple pan doughty. When the smell of baking apples and sweet dough filled the house, everything was OK.

After the first year, Grandpa Roy was still weak; it seemed there was no prospect of returning to full-time ministry. In the morning, he rose after his daughters and didn't work in the garden. When he felt strong enough, he would drive the old car from one house to another, selling pictures framed at the Atherly Shop. Sometimes, the Conference sent a colporteur for him to train, and sometimes he was called to advise on the organization of evangelistic meetings or to coach a young preacher.

In 1945, two years after Grandpa Roy's retire-

ment, sixteen-year-old Ramona was the youngest freshman at Washington Missionary College, and her transcript sported all As. She fell in love with a tall, angular, twenty-five-yearold junior who couldn't keep his eyes off her. In the spring, Harold proposed and Ramona agreed to marry him. Grandpa Roy obtained Harold's transcript from the college registrar. After examining Harold's grades, he told Ramona that this man was no match for her.

Grandpa Roy grew adamant that Ramona break her engagement. Finally, he threatened that he would leave Ramona and Grandma and his other daughters. No one was listening to him, he said, and no one was telling him anything. This dramatic threat was out of character. Ramona was shocked, but she didn't tell anybody. Ramona broke the engagement, keeping secret her father's threat and the condition to which he had agreed: If she still loved Harold after one year of separation, they could marry.

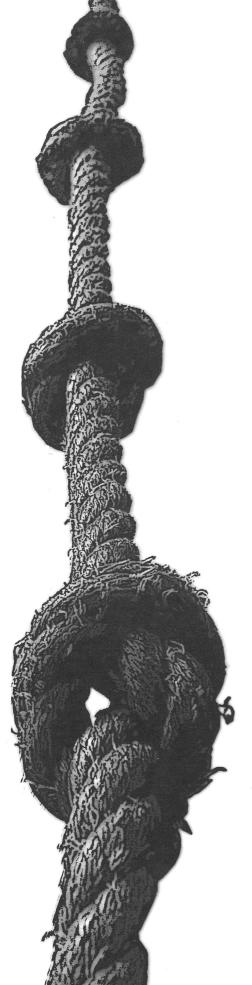
Grandpa Roy continued to sell pictures when he felt well, sometimes developing an unreasonable fervor. "He almost sounds crazy," Grandma whispered to Ramona after hearing him go on about the picture-selling business. Then his weakness returned. He was in bed for six weeks, lacking the will or the strength to work.

Grandma soldiered on, tilling the garden, mending clothes, arranging jobs for her daughters. She still read the Morning Watch and prayed at breakfast. She rarely looked admiringly at Grandpa Roy and it seemed that he seldom talked with her in front of the girls.

That summer, Grandpa Roy drove a female colporteur understudy to her home. Her estranged husband arrived while Grandpa Roy was praying with her. The husband walked into the living room carrying a Colt 45 revolver. He held the pistol against Grandpa Roy's head. "You've been after my wife," he said. "I don't like it."

The man started to rant, keeping the pistol at Grandpa's head. Grandpa Roy was, at first,

Ramona broke the engagement, keeping secret her father's threat and the condition to which he had agreed...



frozen with fear. After the man talked for a few minutes, Grandpa Roy collected himself.

Finally he saw his chance. "Say," he said, "that looks like a nice gun."

"It is a nice gun," the man said, adamant and surprised.

"How much did you pay for it? I've been wanting a gun like that," Grandpa Roy continued. "If you ever want to sell it, I'd be interested." The man began to talk about his problems, his debts, and the pistol.

Grandpa Roy said, "Now you don't want to hurt anyone...that will only add to your troubles." He talked about how God could see the troubles and God could help. Finally, the man lowered the pistol, then kneeled with Grandpa for prayer.

Grandpa Roy left the home carrying a Colt 45 pistol in trembling hands. He had emptied his wallet, buying the man's box of ammunition as well as the gun.

At home, he told the story to Grandma Trevie, Ramona, Maurine and Wretha. He told it again, showing the pistol to his daughters. Later in the evening, he told the story again. The next day he told it again and again, talking with intensity that made it uncomfortable for his daughters to listen.

Grandpa's health was still fragile and now he was obsessed with recounting the gun incident. The home atmosphere was palpably strained with a pattern in which Grandma sheltered Grandpa Roy from unpleasant news about the unpaid grocer's bill, the broken latch on the door, and the dress that his daughter was begging for.

arold was drafted and completed basic training in California but he couldn't quit thinking about Ramona. He left his base in California and hitchhiked across the country to plead for Ramona to marry him. A year had passed and Ramona didn't need time to reflect. They were married the next week in the Endless Caverns, with Grandpa Roy presiding.

After the wedding, Grandpa Roy borrowed ten thousand dollars from Dr. Young, in North Carolina. He bought a fur coat for Grandma and dresses for his daughters. He fixed the car, bought gallon jugs of hot fudge syrup and boxes of candy. Now they would celebrate, he said, they had lived like poor people long enough.

Grandma said she felt sick, receiving the fur coat and surveying the lavish food inventory. How would he pay the money back? Why should they have these things that they didn't need and couldn't afford? Grandpa said he wasn't worried; things were going to work out.

Instead of making everyone happy, Grandpa's loan added strain at home. Sometimes, Grandma's eyes were red and puffy in the morning. She smiled less frequently, worked harder in the garden, and sometimes sounded angry when she read aloud from the *Morning Watch*.

Grandpa entered the hospital for medical tests. He felt weak and his stomach bothered him. He recognized the nurse, a woman he had met while he was an evangelist. Why don't you and I meet up, he asked? We could have fun on a trip to Florida.

"Sure, honey," she said, indicat-

ing that he would have to get well first. Otherwise, how would he go with her anywhere?

The nurse was distressed several weeks later when Grandpa Roy arrived at her house. He had his suitcase in his car, he said, and was ready to take her to Florida. "Elder Griffin." she said. "I'm surprised. I was just teasing in the hospital, trying to help raise your spirits." She recognized that Grandpa wasn't thinking clearly.

Thinking quickly, she arranged a ploy in which her brother accompanied Grandpa Roy back across the North Carolina-Virginia border. At a service station in Virginia, the police were waiting. Grandpa Roy looked startled, then quickly appeared to understand. Submissively, he climbed into the back of the police sedan.

Grandpa Roy was secluded in the mental hospital for almost two months. Grandma worked the garden, helped Maurine get a job caring for small children, taught Wretha piano, and fretted over the large debt. There was little time to reflect.

Grandpa's cheeks were pink, his step was quick, and he was delighted when Ramona visited him in the asylum. He picked her up and swung her around. "It's the meat," he said, winking. "They have been feeding me meat three times every day. I haven't been this strong in years." He introduced friends to her. He wanted to go home with his family.

The medical staff apologized as they told Ramona and Grandma that they hadn't completed Grandpa's mental evaluation. There were too many patients, they complained. Please come back next week. As Ramona and Grandma walked to the car, they saw Grandpa Roy in a third-floor window. He held his arms out between the bars and sang, "Don't fence me in."

Grandma, Ramona, and Maurine went back to the asylum the week before Christmas to take Grandpa Roy home. Sixteen-year-old Maurine waited behind a curtain on Floor 7 while Ramona and Grandma went to complete the paperwork. On the other side of the

curtain, she could hear her father saying good-bye to one inmate after another. She heard some of the men crying as he said good-bye. His voice rose and he talked about heaven—with the glassy sea, the tree of life, healthy family members who had been resurrected, and the joy of Jesus' presence.

The doctors told Grandma and Ramona that Grandpa Roy was not mentally sound. However, he wanted to go home and they didn't believe he needed to remain in the hospital. They warned against crossing him if he were "determined to do something." Sometimes he would feel depressed, they told Grandma, sometimes full of optimism and energy.

Grandma was happy that Grandpa could return home, but she also had misgivings. She knew that two of Grandpa's older sisters had long been confined in a mental hospital. Grandma wanted Grandpa to have support at home. She was willing, now, to provide meat for her husband.

He held the cigarette comfortably between his fingers, staring at the hills, as smoke drifted slowly heavenward. The sight, a statue at the corner of the barn, paralyzed grandma. She had never seen him smoke, never suspected it. She was certain that he had never smoked before his stay in the mental hospital. She didn't say anything to him; her tongue wouldn't move. He didn't see her watching him smoke.

The next morning she called Ramona in Washington, D.C. Ramona must go tell the conference office and tell the secretary or the president that Daddy was smoking, she said. To do otherwise was to side with evil.

Elder Dart, who had training in psychology as well as in the ministry, lent the book on mental illness to Grandma. Grandpa Roy liked to read, and knowledge about his illness must surely be helpful to him also. Maurine found him with the book one afternoon, looking toward the horizon.

He had been reading from the chapter on manic-depressive illness. He had underlined a passage that included "...this type never

It's the meat....They have been feeding me meat three times every day. I haven't been this strong in years.

improve...." She sat beside him, touching him slightly. She talked to him several times but he shook his head and stared into the sky. He had never seemed so far away.

he gunshot blasted the humid morning quiet. Seventeen-year old Maurine was still in bed, sick with the mumps on that Thursday in July. She thought that twelve-yearold Wretha had thrown shoes down the stairs. Wretha, who was downstairs with Grandma Trevie, thought that Maurine had thrown shoes down the stairs.

Grandma Trevie also mistook the gunshot for the sound of banging shoes. She walked upstairs some minutes later with Roy's breakfast on a tray. When she opened the bedroom door, she gasped and her legs became unsteady. Grandpa Roy lay on a rug beside the bed. His head gaped; his face was in spasm and his body was contorting. Blood had soaked the rug and a trickle of blood led to a dark spreading spot on the floor. The gun had dropped from his hand. After agonizing moments she heard herself whispering, "So, Roy Griffin, this is how it all ends."

She shut the door and walked downstairs, sitting down to call Dr. Parrot. Slowly she walked back upstairs and opened Maurine's door. Her face was pale as she spoke.

"Oh, Honey!" she said. "There's been an accident! Daddy shot himself!"

Maurine was stunned. "Was he cleaning his gun?" "No, child."

"He's going to be alright, isn't he?"

"Oh, Honey! I don't think so."

Maurine started to shiver, suddenly cold in her bed.

Dr. Parrot came to the house, then policemen and an ambulance crew. Maurine heard Dr. Parrot tell the police that Elder Griffin had shot himself through the temple. Dr. Parrot was saying that it looked like Grandpa Roy got out of bed and lay on a rug, probably so he didn't mess up the bed.

AFTER THE FUNERAL, there was little time to mourn. Without Grandpa Roy's stipend, the accounts didn't balance. Grandma drove the old car to Washington, D.C, to sell it at the best price. The proceeds went to Dr. Young, yet afterward they still owed a great deal. Grandma and her

two younger daughters moved to Shenandoah Valley Academy and, in August, Grandma assumed responsibility for the eight-grade elementary school.

The next year, Grandma and Maurine got jobs at the "Voice of Prophecy." They drove a beat-up coupe with all of their belongings to Glendale, California. From there, they mailed fifty dollars each month to Dr. Young, past due payments on the fur coat and the hot fudge syrup in rusting tins in Virginia.

Grandma moved to Oklahoma when courted by an Adventist widower. Her youngest daughter, Wretha, had left home for Union College and Grandma was living alone. The emotional center of her second marriage lost its luster before the honeymoon ended. There would be little admiration or affection this time.

However, on a failing Oklahoma farm, Grandma forged a stubborn economic alliance with her second husband. They were both determined to survive and help their children. They packed their belongings into the old car and drove to California.

Grandma got a job selling garbanzos, buckwheat, and pink lentils behind the natural foods counter at Loma Linda Market. Grandpa Joe answered a newspaper ad, carrying a sledgehammer to knock down an old building. Grandpa Joe started work before dawn each day, building a multimillion dollar demolition business.

Each morning, he left Grandma reading from the Morning Watch as she ate breakfast. She continued to work at the market. At dusk, she served soup and bread and tomatoes to Grandpa Joe. He sprinkled sugar on his tomato slices and, after exchanging a few words, he went to bed.

he divorce was a relief. Afterward, Grandma talked more freely. Illness was a strange force, she acknowledged. Mental illness might make people do things they couldn't help. Perhaps God wouldn't hold them responsible for beliefs and actions when they were ill. She pondered, apparently for the first time, the possibility that Grandpa Roy might be resurrected for heaven.

In her post-divorce open-mindedness, Grandma entertained possibilities that had formerly been off limits. Aspirin had been prescribed for her, to reduce the risk of a stroke. She had never taken medicine,

and she had believed that Ellen White strongly discouraged it. However, she tried the aspirin. Aspirin made Grandma feel dizzy... and she just couldn't continue.

Some months later, Grandma heard on the news that drinking red wine reduced the risk of heart attack and possibly stroke. In an unimagined streak of adventurousness, Grandma tried drinking red wine. The wine made Grandma feel strangely light, but also unnatural. After a couple of weeks, she stopped. The Adventist message was embedded too deeply in her habits. When the force of the message was weakened, the habits held true.

After her second stroke, at age eightysix, Grandma no longer recognized me; she probably didn't remember she had grandchildren. After a time, she quit recognizing her daughters. Finally, she forgot that she had been married. She would address Beulah, a childhood friend she hadn't seen for more than twenty years. She would ask the nurses aides if they were enjoying camp meeting. The Adventist biases, Adventist habits, Adventists beliefs were deeper in her memory than most of her family memories.

Grandma never told us how much the cord of her faith had stretched, how it had been twisted until she couldn't trace the way through the knots. She had witnessed a personal failure of the Adventist health message. Adherence to a vegetarian diet and abstinence from stimulants and prescription medicines hadn't kept her young husband from burning ulcers, weakness and fainting, mental illness, and, finally, suicide.

Despite the fidelity of Grandma and Grandpa to the health message, he had developed reckless behavior that strapped her to years of indebtedness. Furthermore, his suicide had shamed her family. Jesus hadn't returned to earth to save Grandpa Roy from the demons in his mind or deliver her from years of debt and fatigue.

tories are told by the conceited, people who think they understand what happened, feel that they can explain. Grandma rarely told stories. When I asked about her hard times in Virginia, California, and Oklahoma, she gave short answers and evasive generalities. One of the stories that Grandma was willing to tell was about Grandpa Roy—the dandy—courting her at Keene Bible College.

She would tell the story of his early successes in the ministry, how she admired his strong voice and clear message from the pulpit, and about how she and her little girls sang for the meetings. This was the part of her life that she understood, the part where God led. She and Roy obeyed God's messages and he blessed them. Most of the stories ended there, at the junction where Grandma's conceit had long ago been abandoned.

Technology and incremental insights, accumulated into my Adventist consciousness. allow me to look back at Grandma Trevie and Grandpa Roy with a condescending smile. The notion of a moral struggle about whether to eat meat, with a doctor's advice, seems quaint, historical. The titles of apocalyptic sermons appear naive. The confusion of manic indulgences with moral corruption seems pathetic, and the need for medication appears obvious.

Yet I am in awe and sometimes envious. Grandma and Grandpa had something of great consequence in their lives: dietary challenges with eternal consequences, human beings tugged across a divide that separated damnation from grace. And they had divine providence leading them from Texas to Kansas to North Carolina. It is no wonder that, when the cord of faith frayed, Grandma held on, preferring raw, tired fingers to the less-defined, less-urgent meanderings of people whose lives don't affect eternity.

I am in awe and sometimes envious. **Grandma and Grandpa had** something of great consequence in their lives.

Gary Gilbert writes from Boston, where he is a physician and researcher.

## THE SPECTRUM STORY 1

### In the Hollow of His Hand: A portfolio by Dirk Kerst Koopmans

from vol. 1, no. 4, 1969



#### **Editor's Note:**

uring the tumultuous year of 1969, Richard Nixon assumed the presidency of the United States. Czech Jan Palach burned himself to death in Prague in protest against government repression. There was sectarian violence in Northern Ireland. The United States began covert bombing of Cambodia. The Saturday Evening Post ceased publication. And in Adventism, a new journal—Spectrum—was born.

The fact that Spectrum continues the conversation that the Association of Adventist Forums started forty years ago gives us reason to celebrate. As part of that celebration, we will feature material from our past online and in the journal this year. We will culminate with a party November 6-8, 2009, at Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, California, to which you are cordially invited. We also invite you to enjoy our archives this year as we review our past.

The covers of Spectrum's early issues had no illustrations or art, only solid colors with the flag words "Spectrum: a quarterly journal of the association of adventist forums" at the top and the year printed at the bottom. The entire journal was printed in black and white, which made woodcuts and black-and-white photography choice mediums for giving Spectrum's scholarly pages an elegant and sophisticated look.

Repeatedly, Spectrum's first editor, Molleurus Couperus, turned to an artist friend of his from the Netherlands, Dirk Kerst Koopmans, for illustrations. This portfolio, "In the Hollow of His Hand," appeared in the autumn of 1969. Given the world events, from massacres in Vietnam to bloody protests in the United States and Europe and the landing of Apollo 11 on the Moon, finding oneself "in the hollow of his hand" was comforting.

Poetry from that first year appears on the back cover of this issue.

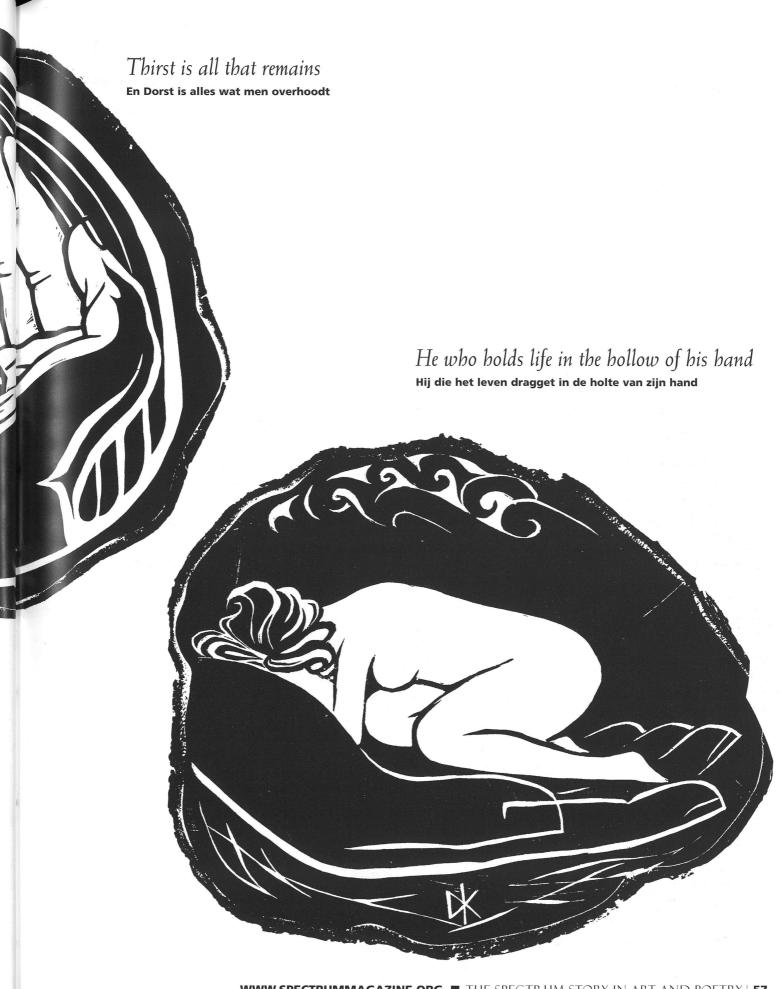
# IN ART AND POETRY



**Bescherming** 

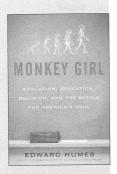
Art has in its nature a religious essence, in the field of painting this is transmitted by what the eye sees and by the hand which directs the artist's brush. Thus an encounter with the transcendental is possible. The closer this becomes, consciously or unconsciously, the more the meaning of art is fulfilled.



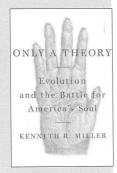




#### Steven Goldberg. Bleached Faith: The Tragic Cost When Religion Is Forced into the Public Square. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008.



Edward Humes. Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion and the Battle for America's Soul. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.



Kenneth R. Miller. Only a Theory: Evolution and the Battle for America's Soul. New York: Viking Penguin, 2008.

## Three Books on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design | BY DAVID PENDLETON

n 2009, observances of the birth of Charles Darwin (1809) and the publication of his Origin of Species (1859) will provide occasions for public conversation and controversy about evolution, Intelligent Design (ID), and faith.

Already, from Honolulu, Hawaii, to Dover, Pennsylvania, school boards have been making legal headlines in recent years. Although public school science classes have for decades taught evolutionary theory, constituents have increasingly asked that Intelligent Design be included in the public school science curriculum.

Three authors have recently contributed to the discussion with their respective books about faith, evolution, legal battles, and ID.

These three books were inspired, at least in part, by the December 2005 case of Kitzmiller v. Dover, which was tried before U.S. District Court judge John E. Jones III after the school board of Dover, Pennsylvania, voted to require ID in its science curriculum. Wrote Judge Jones:

To preserve the separation of church and state mandated by the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Art. I, § 3 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, we will enter an order permanently enjoining Defendants from maintaining the ID Policy in any school within the Dover Area School District, from requiring teachers to denigrate or disparage the scientific theory of evolution, and from requiring teachers to refer to a religious, alternative theory known as ID.1

STEVEN GOLDBERG'S Bleached Faith: The Tragic Cost When Religion Is Forced into the Public Square chronicles more generally the church-state implications of posting the Ten Commandments in government buildings, teaching ID, and the promotion of private faith through public (that is, government) means—all from the perspective of a law professor.

The account of ID curriculum in Dover, Pennsylvania, is only one example of many he discusses as an illustration that supports his argument against a "bleached faith," that is, a faith emptied of its vibrant color and thereafter merely an "empty symbolism that diminishes the power of real belief." He acknowledges that the intent of some of its proponents may be benign, but he doubts that the consequences for religion or the public square will be beneficial.

Goldberg confesses in Bleached Faith that he came to the conclusion that religion could provide him with "a sense of humility, faith, and values that science and secularism cannot." Although Bleached Faith is mainly concerned with efforts to display the Ten Commandments on government property, his remarks on the legal controversy involving ID are worth considering.

He reminds readers, for example, that creationism and ID are not necessarily identical. Although there are literal seven-day-creationweek creationists that promote ID, there are also supporters of ID who do, indeed, believe in theistic evolution.

"In its broadest outlines," Goldberg explains,

intelligent design does not dispute that every organism on earth, including humans, might have evolved from earlier organisms or that this might have taken place over millions of years. But supporters of the theory want to teach public school students that only an "intelligent designer" can explain the gaps in current Darwinian accounts of certain features in living organisms.2

Although Goldberg is sympathetic toward faith, on the legal issue before the court, he agrees with Judge Jones that mandatory inclusion of ID in a public school science curriculum fails to pass constitutional muster:

The court found that "the overwhelming evidence at trial established that ID is a religious view, a mere re-labeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory." Leading scientific groups had rejected the notion that ID was a science. It was not testable, nor did it lead to peer-reviewed publications. ID was based, the judge said, "upon a false dichotomy, namely that to the extent evolutionary theory is discredited, ID is confirmed." The court had no difficulty in concluding that the board members who put ID in the Dover public schools were not interested in raising the level of scientific literacy in the student body. One had openly called "creationism" his number-one issue....The judge concluded that the Dover policy had the purpose of advancing religion and that it endorsed religion in violation of the non-Establishment Clause of the Constitution, as that clause had been interpreted by the United States Supreme Court.3

The Kitzmiller v. Dover decision did not make new law but only determined that inclusion of ID in a public school science curriculum violated the Establishment Clause.

Goldberg's contribution to the conversation consists of (1) his situating of Kitzmiller v. Dover and ID in the context of Establishment Clause doctrine and, perhaps as important, (2) his sobering indictment of what ID does to religion:

With intelligent design God is introduced to explain gaps in Darwinian explanations of organisms. Of course, there are such gaps, and scientists are always working on filling them, either with existing theories or with new ones. Until they do, God is the explanation for the bacterium's flagellum. But he's not called God. He is an "intelligent designer."...No one believes this. It does not represent the real religious faith that nourishes millions of Americans. That faith exists outside science, because it does

not speak to questions that science can answer and it does not turn on the results of laboratory experiments. Science can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God, the divinity of Christ, the nature of the soul, or any of the other teachings of actual religions. Science cannot provide the sense of humility or the guidance on how to live our lives that these religions provide. 4

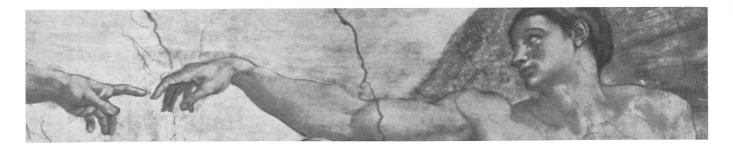
EDWARD HUMES'S Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion and the Battle for America's Soul is the most readable of the three books and chronicles the ID controversy of Dover, Pennsylvania, as only a journalist can. Humes views Kitzmiller v. Dover as a modern-day Scopes Monkey Trial. His is an imbedded reporter's frontline account of the culture war between impassioned devotees of religion and dispassionate practitioners of science—neither of which proves as impassioned or dispassionate as some would think.

Moreover, Humes points out that the combatants were not necessarily the true believers versus worldly atheists. Indeed, there were believers on both sides of the debate. A leading opponent of ID in Dover, for example, was a devout Catholic. Believing God is Creator evidently does not necessarily lead to belief that ID should be part of a public school science curriculum:

Catholics generally have no problem with evolution, and church doctrine warns against taking the Bible too literally. Catholic theologians emphasize the metaphorical nature of the Old and New Testaments, so scripture and Darwin are not on a collision course as far as the Vatican is concerned.5

Humes arrives at a position not unlike that of the late Stephen J. Gould's NOMA (non-overlapping magisteria). That is to say, there is no clash between the scientific method and faith, because they deal with separate aspects of reality. The objects of faith (that is, virtues, values, morals, matters of the spirit) are not readily amenable to measurement by the instruments of science.

Science doesn't rule out the supernatural—it doesn't rule out God as a cause—because scientists are small-minded or conspiring to cover up evidence of design, as creationism and ID often allege. Science rules out the supernatural because it is science that is limited, whereas God is not.6



KENNETH R. MILLER'S *Only a Theory: Evolution and the Battle for America's Soul* is a firsthand account by a Christian biologist and expert witness who actually testified in the *Kitzmiller v. Dover* trial. The book's title comes from a derogatory term that some creationists employed in their critique of evolutionary theory.

Miller's expert opinion was that ID was not science and therefore should not be required of a public school science curriculum. A Brown University biologist, Miller takes issue with those who would criticize science for focusing exclusively on material or naturalistic answers to scientific questions:

So, what of the true design of life? We live in a material world. In many ways that realization is at the very heart of science itself. By seeking material, or natural, explanations for what we see and experience, science has changed the world—or at least our view of it. We no longer look for gods to pull the sun across the sky, or evil spirits to explain our daughter's illness.<sup>7</sup>

Miller's input to the narrative is not limited to the scientific issues, for he also sheds light on the heated emotions involved. Miller recounts:

When I served as the opening witness in the September 2005 trial in federal court in Pennsylvania on the issue of teaching "intelligent design" in public schools, I was critical of the notion that ID is authentic science, and I opposed the attempts of political authorities (the local school board) to force teachers to insert it into their lessons.... What struck me about the reaction to Dover, however, was the religious character of almost every hostile comment. In addition to being told where I would likely spend eternity (no need for warm clothes, one e-mail assured me), I was repeatedly lectured about the disrespect that I and other scientists had shown for the Almighty. Evolution, according to these critics, takes God out of the picture, and therefore must be opposed by people of faith at all costs. How dare I call myself a Christian and speak on behalf of Darwin?

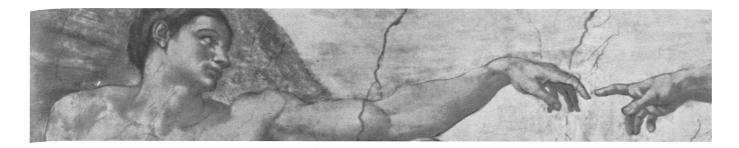
It is apparent from Miller that at least some of the heated exchanges were due not to actual friction between faith and reason but to the assumptions brought to religion and science. The Creation Narrative in the first chapters of Genesis, for example, says what it says. What the narrative leaves unsaid, however, is what the text means.

The answer depends, like any other text, on the sort of genre of literature one assumes one is reading. If the text is a historical-scientific text, it will require arguably a fairly literal reading. If, in comparison, it is a text concerned with matters of ultimate concern, meaning, and purpose, then perhaps a less literal (that is, metaphorical or poetic) reading is appropriate. According to Miller,

Some of this hostility has surely been generated by those who choose to read the creation accounts of Genesis literally....Genesis was written in a prescientific age, in the language of the day and in an attempt to communicate great truths to the people of that age. Those truths include above all the notion that we are here along with all other existence as the result of the creative power of God. They do not include an attempt to teach science.<sup>9</sup>

Although these opinions are rendered perhaps outside the area of a biologist's expertise, they nonetheless reflect patterns of thought adopted by many who seek responsibly to reconcile faith and reason, religion and science.

n conclusion, space permits three final observations regarding Intelligent Design. First, *Kitzmiller* v. *Dover* is not the last word on ID or on evolution versus religious faith. It is part of the ongoing discussion whereby the public through its actions and even elections must strive to avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of either a government-enforced secularity or government-compelled religiosity. It is not just the



job of judges, board of education members, or state legislators; it's the obligation of all citizens, individually and collectively, to safeguard our freedoms, including religious freedom, as we seek to educate the next generation.

While freedom of religion does not mean freedom from religion, the government's role is neither to promote nor to prohibit faith. Goldberg underscores for us that the

strength of real religion in America today is not undercut by the limits on government-supported religion in public settings. The true power of religion flows from restricting the embrace of government while protecting free exercise. We are neither France, where secularism reigns supreme, nor Iran, where one faith rules the roost. In France, students in public schools cannot wear the Muslim head scarf; in Iran, they must. In America, the American Civil Liberties Union and the religious right agree that every public school student has a right to wear religious garb if and only if he or she so desires. 10

Second, intelligent design may not yet be ready for introduction into public school curricula. But that does not mean it will never lead to scientific theories appropriate for inclusion in public school science curricula. Centuries, if not millennia, passed before scientists were able to determine the borders between alchemy and chemistry, astrology and astronomy, superstition and modern medicine.

It may be that at some point the handiwork of a Designer is not otherwise explainable than by reference to, well, a Designer. Until then, churches, mosques, and synagogues—and their religious schools—have their work cut out for them.

Third, in this age where "American Exceptionalism" is so often derided, when pride in one's Nation is considered intellectually embarrassing, it is fitting to recall that "the unique blend of free exercise and non-establishment—our insistence on avoiding both intolerant secularism and suffocating theocracy—should be a source of pride."11 School boards have of late focused on scientific literacy; perhaps an equal amount of attention to civic literacy is in order.

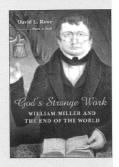
In the end, the Creator we seek to understand and faithfully serve is greater than any scientific theory can describe or circumscribe. And we are blessed to live today in a society where, as Humes and Miller implicitly remind us, we can pursue truth of science and Truth of Savior free of persecution by the government.

#### **Notes and References**

- 1. Consulted at <a href="http://www.pamd.uscourts.gov/kitzmiller/">http://www.pamd.uscourts.gov/kitzmiller/</a> kitzmiller\_342.pdf>.
- 2. Steven Goldberg, Bleached Faith: The Tragic Cost When Religion Is Forced into the Public Square (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008), 49.
  - 3. Ibid., 49-50.
  - 4. Ibid., 51.
- 5. Edward Humes, Monkey Girl: Evolution, Education, Religion and the Battle for America's Soul (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), 36.
  - 6. Ibid., 267.
- 7. Kenneth R. Miller, Only a Theory: Evolution and the Battle for America's Soul (New York: Viking Penguin, 2008), 118.
  - 8. Ibid., 158-59.
  - 9. Ibid. 159-60.
  - 10. Goldberg, Bleached Faith, 5.
  - 11. Ibid., 11.

David Pendleton, an administrative law judge, formerly served as an elected state legislator and a policy advisor to Hawaii's governor. His wife, Noemi, a Seventh-day Adventist, served as an elected member of the Hawaii State Board of Education from 1996 to 2000, when Hawaii addressed ID and its public school science curriculum.

## William Miller Revisited | BY LEIGH JOHNSEN



David Rowe. God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World. Grand Rapids. Mich.: Eerdman's, 2008.

o we really need another book about William Miller, the student of Scripture who predicted the end of the world in the 1840s? David Rowe, a professor history at Middle Tennessee State University, thinks so, and I agree. Rowe has filled the need admirably with his solid and well-written biography, God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdman's, 2008).

Rowe takes his title from a statement that Miller made toward the end of his life when reflecting on the prophetic movement that carries his name: "this work," he called Adventism, "this strange work."

Miller was expressing awe over the work that he saw God accomplishing through his crusade, but others have attached different significance to the "strangeness" of Miller and his movement. To many contemporaries, Miller and his followers were divisive, deluded, and dishonest. Eighty years after the Great Disappointment, author Clara Endicott Sears solidified this attitude in a book about Millerism titled Days of Delusion: A Strange Bit of History (1924).

Sears described Millerism as a "strange religious hysteria." She considered Miller's followers "seemingly sensible people who suddenly accept preposterous theories and become fanatics and run hither and thither propounding vagaries." Basing her book largely on tradition and the memories of participants, she depicted Adventists of the 1840s donning ascension robes, climbing roofs in preparation for lift-off,

giving away their property, and going insane.

Miller's spiritual heirs have viewed him and his movement more sympathetically. Joshua V. Himes, Miller's colleague and publicist, published the earliest favorable book about him in the 1840s. Other positive treatments by Apollos Hale and Sylvester Bliss, James White, and Francis D. Nichol followed over the next century. Miller's apologists depicted him as a courageous and powerful messenger of God who played a crucial role not only in the interpretation of biblical prophecy, but also its fulfillment.

God's Strange Work does not fit into either of these two categories. It neither holds Miller up for ridicule nor casts him as a theological hero. Instead, it contextualizes him, depicting him as a flawed human finding his way through an array of currents in society, thought, and religion that buffeted early nineteenth-century America. One reason Rowe can take this approach is the effort he has taken to study more sources on the subject in greater depth than any of Miller's previous biographers. As a result, he meets Miller on his own terms and offers readers a more plausible and compelling portrait.

Rowe digs deeply into Miller's family history and places him in the vortex of two major developments in early America. The first was the wave of immigrants from New Englandmany of them Calvinist Baptists, as was one branch of Miller's family—that swept west into upstate New York shortly after the American Revolution. The second was the Enlightenment, which penetrated American culture and society in a variety of ways and found adherents throughout the country, from small cities to large towns.

Rowe sees Miller climbing the ladders of local politics and society on the New York-Vermont border shortly after his marriage, falling under the influence of frontier deists, and experiencing a conversion that led him back to his spiritual roots while serving as a militia officer during the War of 1812. The fact that countless contemporaries could have come close to replicating Miller's story suggests to Rowe that Miller was not atypical.

Nor was his spirituality. Rowe depicts Miller's conversion leading him to study Scripture, as with other converts of the time, where he searched for evidence in support of Christianity and consistency within it, in keeping with his tenure as a deist. Of crucial importance, as well, were his exposure to popular prophetic literature, political discourse of the day permeated with millennial themes, and his own longstanding fascination with history.

"Miller did nothing to stand out from the crowd," writes Rowe of Miller's spiritual growth. "[A]ll the evidence points to a religiosity that was conventional, private belief in the imminent second coming of Christ notwithstanding."1

According to Rowe, Miller also experienced personal shortcomings all too typical of fallible humans. In Rowe's view, Himes and other publicists learned early in the 1840s that Miller could be easily manipulated. He could also be adamant, combative, forgetful, and indecisive. According to Rowe, Miller's decision to prioritize the preaching of his message at the height of his popularity deprived his family of attention they needed and opened him to accusations of neglect.

Often stricken with illness, Miller periodically succumbed to erysipelas, a debilitating skin condition characterized by boils and rashes, which left him in agony for weeks and interfered with his preaching appointments. Rowe suggests a relationship between this condition and "[a] certain hypochondria . . . not unknown among people finding themselves thrust into public notice."2 Perhaps the most telling evidence of Miller's human fallibility came after the Great Disappointment as Millerism splintered into factions, partly as a result of its founder's inconsistent response.

Readers of this book can be forgiven if they see similarities between its approach and that of Ronald Numbers in his controversial biography of Ellen White, Prophetess of Health. Rowe admits to being interested in Miller since the 1970s, but he acknowledges a special intellectual debt to Numbers and thanks him for his friendship during the book's research and writing. The publishers also see parallels, and they have decided to time the release of Rowe's book to coincide with their own republication of an updated version of Numbers's study.

Both books are part of the Library of Religious Biography, a series of Eerdman's Publishing edited by Mark A. Noll, Nathan O. Hatch, and Allen C. Guelzo. Other subjects in the series include Aimee Semple McPherson, Thomas Merton, Billy Sunday, Roger Williams, Charles Finney, and George Whitefield.

"The books in this series are well-written narratives meant to be read and enjoyed as well as studied," claim the publishers.3 With Rowe's book, they have succeeded, producing a study that will most likely be the standard biographical treatment of William Miller for years to come.

#### **Notes and References**

- 1. David Rowe, God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdman's, 2008), 90.
  - 2. Ibid., 171.
  - 3. Ibid., 270.

**Leigh Johnsen** is the associate editor of *Spectrum* magazine.



Above: Preacher William Miller

Few if any periods in human history can equal ours in the magnitude of change to which we are subjected nor in the degree of tension and chaos that are interwoven. These disjunctions and alterations are evident in the political, economic, and ideological struggles that tear at the very roots of man's existence. Science, technology, philosophy, and religion, all, are involved in our feverish striving for change.

#### He concluded,

It is in this search for new visions and better answers that we feel impelled to participate. Spectrum is dedicated, from a Christian viewpoint, to probing the questions that trouble the minds of modern man and to examining the illnesses that sicken our society. We are much concerned about God's relation to the human situation, about what the truth is about God, and about how to speak the truth in language that is fresh and pertinent to today.

Our discussion of the important issues of our time ought to be frank, sincere, tolerant, and charitable. As much as we are able, we hope to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, to be critical only if we can do so constructively, and to stimulate discursive interchange among readers. In all this, our purpose is to promote growth and development.

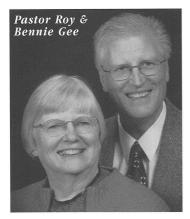
ike Couperus, Joan Didion was also writing in 1969 about the issues of the day. Her statement, "We tell ourselves stories in order to live," is the first sentence of an essay titled The White Album, in a book by the same name in which she recounts the events of the 1960s, like the murders on Cielo Drive in Los Angeles, the paranoia, the stories without a narrative, the thing(s) "that suggests the extent to which the narrative on which many of us grew up no longer applies."

Now, forty years hence, whether or not the narrative of that time is more clear, we have a deeper understanding of it that informs who we are as a community today. Our conversation has strengthened our lives together.

And yet, we continue to "search for new visions and better answers." And so we will continue to tell ourselves stories in order to live....

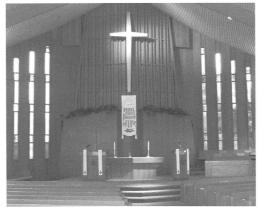
Pastor Rick

## "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brothers to live together in unity!"

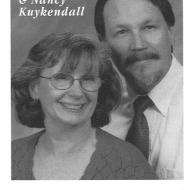


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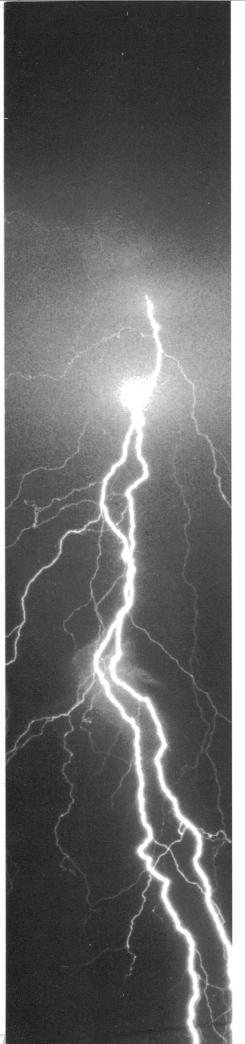
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#### The Silent Word

Rusted peaks and green valleys Witnessed the covenant then And are here now

Would God again split rocks divide

waters

Tear the earth?

All alone you are
Into the wind
The stationary figure
in

The swirling dust and blowing mantle

Challenger of kings and Gods In the name of Yahweh

The crack of lightning
Answers the whispered prayer
Not throats hoarse from screaming
Or bodies criss-crossed with blood

You taunted them well. . . After all, courage was your virtue

Where then did you learn to run, Elijah? Run from a woman And from Yahweh

Had you forgotten the whisper The quiet voice Had you become deaf to God?

Only one voice, one voice you hear Shrill and vengeful Pursuing you into the wilderness

How you have forgotten. . . Fire and earthquake make you listen Not the whisper Sky-thunder and jet-whine Volcano-rumble and tractor-scrape We hear distinctly

We listen to threats of war And peace and elections and jazz

Can we hear the voice
of morning
and twilight
Whose microphone is the wind
Whose platform is the cloud?

We, the Elijah?

James J. Londis Spectrum, 1969 vol.1, no. 3

When James J. Londis wrote this poem in 1969, he was teaching religion at Atlantic Union College and studying at Boston University for a doctorate in philosophy of religion. In the years since then, he pastored Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Maryland, worked in health care, and returned to Atlantic Union College to be president. Currently, he lives, writes, and teaches (online for Kettering College of Medical Arts) in Ooltewah, Tennessee.