Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education

Volume 4 Article 3

10-1-1993

Letters to the Editor

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scholarship in the life of the Church. Perhaps most importantly, they will expose young faculty to outstanding intellectuals who have taken seriously their role as Catholic Christians in many areas of intellectual life. Young scholars can hear the stories of these senior faculty members and find out why they chose the path they did."

If any of the Jesuit colleges and universities have not yet gotten in touch with Collegium, they surely ought to do so right away. They can write to Thomas Landy SJ at Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT 06430 or at 15 Avon Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

This issue of *Conversations* provides the happy occasion of welcoming several people to what will be a new venture for them, membership on the National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education, and of expressing my gratitude for the contributions and the devotion to the work of the Seminar by our departing members. The new members are Peter Ely SJ, Gerald Fagin SJ, Samuel Harvey and Brennan O'Donnell. Three of them replace members who have completed three-year terms; one, Brennan O'Donnell, takes the place that Robert Miola had to leave early because of other pressing responsibilities.

The sidebar on the table of contents page gives the names and the schools from which these new members come and their responsibilities at those institutions. Our departing members are all among the original founding members of the Seminar: Robert S. Miola, who teaches English at Loyola College, Baltimore; James W. Bernauer SJ, who teaches philosophy at Boston College; Gregory F. Lucey SJ, who is presently rector of the Jesuit community at Marquette University and who will in January become president of the Jesuit Conference in Washington, D.C.; and David J. O'Brien, who teaches history at the College of the Holy Cross. The departing members worked long and hard to move the Seminar forward and to get *Conversations* into your hands; the new members with equal generosity have been willing to take on the same responsibilities.

Lastly, a reminder that conversations can be carried out not only face to face—or by computer—but also by letters. So, please do write to let your colleagues share in your thoughts, your ideas, your reactions to the journal *Conversations* and to its articles and the topics which it treats.

—John W. Padberg SJ
Editor
Conversations

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Enlightenment Fundamentalism

Dr. Alfred Lightfoot of Loyola Marymount wrote in the last issue of *Conversations* (Spring '93) about academic freedom in Jesuit institutions. He believes that two forces—the growing pressure of certain justice issues and a deepening conservatism in the Catholic hierarchy—will pressure Jesuit institutions "to conform to certain predetermined modes of thinking and expression." He fears that "the very essence of 'Jesuit education' is on the line."

Dr. Lightfoot was unsettled that one of his colleagues, evidently a fundamentally conservative Catholic, expressed a doctrinaire opinion in the university newspaper. While Dr. Lightfoot was fending off the fundamentalist right, his left was invaded by a series of opinions as dangerous to full academic freedom as that conservative's.

Item: "Doctrine has no place in the academic market place." Will we be able to discuss that, or does Dr. Lightfoot mean us to take it as doctrine? We might need to recall that in the invention of the university in the Middle Ages the "academic market place" was established by the Catholic Church precisely to hammer out doctrine in the full light of day. Conformism in this nation's universities is not specifically Catholic; it is specifically American. I happen to hold a number of doctrines, and I have gleefully insisted on my freedom to try to sell them in the academic market place of several universities, including Brown, Harvard, Seattle, and St. Louis,

Item: "I can only hope that all Jesuit universities will seek truth as an objective and relegate doctrine to the realm of suggestion, guidance, logic, and caring rather than defining truth itself." Personally, I have no intention of retreating with my doctrines into this prescribed "realm" of interpersonal mush, a New Age parody of my tradition's academic marketplace. Dr. Light-

foot's hope for that rises from unspoken presuppositions, one of which seems to be that truth and doctrine stand opposed. I trust that Dr. Lightfoot did not mean to close off discussion about how truth and doctrine are related. Institutionally, the Jesuit universities (to which he has dedicated his years) stand in a tradition that has been investigating the relationship between doctrine and truth for nearly a thousand years. Nothing much frightens them by now, unless perhaps a political correctness concerning what opinions may and may not be expressed.

Item: "The freedom of academic inquiry should and must prevail." Kant would purr at such a categorical imperative, with the likes of which he was indoctrinating students two centuries ago at Königsberg, in great academic freedom. For academicians are as liable as ordinary people to reach firm conclusions and after reasonable inquiry to come to hold doctrines. As Dr. Lightfoot's letter (like the letter of his fundamentalist colleague) plainly demonstrates, academic freedom does not preclude defending conclusions or expounding doctrines. Certainly, I can accept such restriction on my conclusions and doctrines, most pertinently on my belief in the doctrine of academic freedom, which I did not invent or discover but accepted from my predecessors after considerable critical reflection and practice—the same way I have accepted and hold any doctrine whatsoever.

Item: Efforts are "meaningless" to help students reach moral decisions "if the very foundations of choice to make such decisions are already predetermined." That's fairly subtle, but it sounds like a fundamental stance. If anyone holds firm opinions in morality, it is meaningless for him or her to try to help students reach moral decisions. Are we at the heart of this matter? Is the real issue the fear that a Catholic can subscribe to foundational truths and still claim academic freedom? Perhaps that is reading too much into Dr. Lightfoot's letter. But if that is the real issue—whether a convinced Catholic can claim academic freedom for his truth—Dr. Lightfoot must surely be prepared to discuss the foundation of his answer to it, whether yea or nay.

Dr. Lightfoot's letter points up the danger to academic freedom from the left. In its ill-liberal moment, the left cheerfully acquiesces in the expression of any opinion or truth whatsoever—as long as it does not claim any ultimacy. For that would contradict the foundation of ill-liberal orthodoxy that there are no ultimate truths. This is Enlightenment fundamentalism. It is clearly doctrinal and emphatically a "predetermined mode of thinking."

I hope it will be understood that I do not object to having Enlightenment fundamentalism represented on a Jesuit campus. I even see value in having it there. I just hope to be around to contest some of its dogmata.

Joseph A. Tetlow SJ
Visiting Distinguished Professor
Saint Louis University

25 Best Universities

A letter in your Spring '93 issue of *Conversations* stated "there is not a single Jesuit or Catholic university among the best 25 universities of the United States."

Best by what criteria? I maintain undergraduate students get a better education in any Jesuit school which has a solid core curriculum in humanities, especially philosophy, than in those top 25 chosen by "publish or perish" standards. For example, our freshmen at Seattle University are taught by more PhD's than the average undergraduate sees in some prestigious universities, where big-name professors do research and lead grad seminars and never see undergraduates personally (they may lecture to 500 at a time, if at all).

Harvard made headlines a few years ago by adopting a core curriculum. What do the headline writers think Jesuit schools have been doing for the past century? A truly educated person differs from a trained technician precisely by the kind of education we demand.

If the top 25 were chosen because they got more federal grant monies for research, or have bigger libraries without teaching their students the meaning of life, I am not impressed.

James E. Royce SJ
Professor Emeritus
Seattle University

Catholic and Jesuit Values

I am very pleased to receive the copies of *Conversations*, the publication of the National Seminar on Jesuit Higher Education.

I personally and other members of the academic community here have found the articles very appropriate in providing our personnel and students with principles and concepts and practical experience and tools that will help us to promote discussion of our Catholic and Jesuit values. We are translating some of the articles from *Conversations.*

Javier Gonzales SJ
Vice Rector
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Numbers and Characteristics

At times we may forget the Jesuit manpower contribution to the work of Jesuit higher education in the United States during almost two hundred years. It would be a long, and perhaps impossible research task to put together a complete inventory of such contributions. However, one example may give a sense of their extent and of some of their characteristics, and I think readers of *Conversations* will be interested in the results of that research. It is an analysis of such involvement of the Jesuits with Fordham University from their arrival in 1846 up to 1992.

The main finding was that in those 146 years some 1344 Jesuits have been assigned to administer, teach, or work in special capacities at Fordham. Of that number, 194 were lay brothers and the rest, 1150, were priests or scholastics. Some people who know that these days there are few such brothers at Jesuit institutions will be surprised to learn that in 32 of the college's first 44 years there were more lay brothers than the combined number of priests and scholastics.

After World War II, the collegiate boom in the student body at Fordham, as elsewhere, was accompanied by a dramatic increase in Jesuit personnel. For the 24-year period from 1947 to 1972 the average number of Jesuits serving Fordham was 130; the peak year was 1964 when 162 Jesuits were active at the university while Fr. Vincent O'Keefe was president. Latest figures report a dramatic drop to only 54 Jesuits now (1992-93) engaged in the university. The total number of years that those Jesuits gave to work at the university comes to some 10,035 academic years of service (persons times their years at Fordham).

Another way of grasping the extent of those years might be to try to translate them into current financial terms. For that purpose, using reports in the March-April, 1992 issue of *Academe*, and assuming that Jesuits over the years would have been assigned in equal numbers to the four faculty ranks, we note that an average compensation midway between the middle ranks is currently $61,150.

Taking that figure and multiplying it by the years of service, we come to the figure of $613,000,000 as an indication of the monetary impact of the service of those men. Even if total living and community expenses of one third of that income were subtracted from this figure, the remainder is over $408,000,000. Of course, such translation of years of service into current financial terms aims simply to get some quantitative sense of the extent of such dedication.

To look next at length of service, the man who clearly deserves the laurels here is the late Fr. Harold Mulqueen ("Father Fordham") with 59 years, followed closely by the well-known seismologist, Fr. J. Joseph Lynch, with 57 years. Some 44 Jesuits have dedicated 30 or more years of their lives to work at Fordham.

A last note on an international and ethnic characteristic: Of the 26 Jesuits who have occupied the Fordham presidency, ten were born abroad, four in Ireland, two in Canada and one each in England, France, Germany and Italy. All of the other Fordham presidents were born in the United States; but, be it noted, all those born in America had surnames which most people would identify as Irish.

Thomas E. Hennessy SJ
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Conversations welcomes letters from its readers as an important part of the dialogue it is designed to promote. Letters may be edited for reason of space or clarity, and publication is at the discretion of *Conversations*. Please send letters to:

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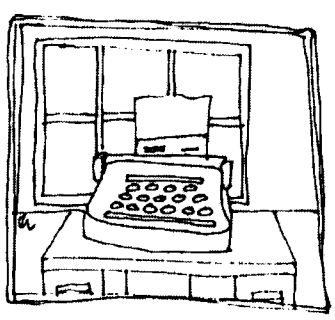

A Basis for Consensus

Steven M. Barkan in the Spring '93 issue of *Conversations* suggests that the first and fundamental distinctive characteristic of the Jesuit law school is its religious dimension: "Religion should permeate" its program. Given the "diverse and pluralistic student body and faculty [and administration]" it is also a "problematic characteristic" to be "addressed with great care, sensitivity and subtlety." And, in the context of a medical school, I would suggest it must also be addressed differently. For I question the possibility of arriving at consensus, not only about this characteristic of a school's mission but about the others as well if it is assumed that they derive their "coherence" from the school's religious dimension which is expected to provide "the motivation for the participants and the foundation upon which the program is built."

When Diego Ledesma, about four hundred years ago, stated the purpose of Jesuit schools, he first referred to the obvious on which all could agree. The schools were "to

help their students, first, to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary for a productive career" (John W. Padberg SJ, *Conversations*, Spring 1992, 5. See also Robert F. Harvanak SJ, *The Jesuit Vision of a University*, Loyola University of Chicago, 1989, 11). Having secured a basis for agreement, he further specifies and lists three other objectives which even in his time may not have been that obvious but which become more plausible on the strength of the first. The fourth objective—"a vision and a destiny for humankind that goes beyond the simply human—" may very well have been what Ledesma had in mind in the first place. But he places it fourth, in good Ignatian fashion.

These objectives are by no means unique to Jesuit education. For example, see *Clinical Education and the Doctor of Tomorrow,* edited by Barbara Gastel and David Rogers, New York: The New York Academy of Medicine, 1989, for trends in mainstream "secular" medical education concerned with how to provide the best possible training to future physicians "who are prepared to provide, and committed to providing, health care for the underserved (Thomas H. Meikle, MD). It is pointed out that schools "are failing in too many instances to produce socially responsible doctors who unequivocally recognize medicine as a social good, not a commercial commodity." Again, it is commonly agreed that "most, if not all, medical schools should specifically declare the education of the broadly educated physician to be their primary mission" (David E. Rogers MD). One participant in the discussion speaks of medical education as "something akin to a religious transformation," or—undoubtedly thinking of days gone by, —"a deeply mysterious process akin, say, to the process that transforms raucous teenage boys into Jesuit priests." (Uwq Reinhardt, PhD). Finally, the role of the teacher, a given in Jesuit education, is being emphasized: "Teachers must first of all be "facilitators" of learning rather than pureyors of knowledge and expertise." (V.R. Neufeld MD, Sh. Bearpark MD, Claire Winterton, BA).

On the basis of representative participants in this discussion, one could advance the thesis that, in order to be distinctive, a Jesuit medical school will not have to add as much as to emphasize certain aspects of medical education as it is envisaged today by the academic world at large. If this can be demonstrated, then a basis for consensus may be established for an understanding of the school's mission in terms of academic excellence which is inclusive of the religious dimension.

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The Woman Jesuit

In 1554, Princess Juana, the then Regent of Spain, became a Jesuit as an "approved scholastic" of the Society of Jesus. She was the daughter of Charles V, King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, and sister of the future king, Philip II. During the years 1554 to 1559 she was, as Regent, a very effective ruler of Spain.

To further dynastic politics Juana had been married at the age of seventeen to her half-idot first cousin, Joao, the heir to the Porugese thrown. Juana gave birth to a son a few weeks after Joao died; she returned to Spain and remained a widow despite other plans for further marriages. Juana originally wanted to become a Franciscan nun but decided on the Jesuits because through Francis Borgia she had come to know about them and greatly to respect them and their work. Ignatius was reluctant to accept her but was well aware of the implications of refusing such a request from such a person. Jesuit advisors recommended that Juana be admitted to the Society and be given the simple perpetual vows of a Jesuit scholastic. With simple vows Juana retained ownership of property and could be dispensed from the vows if circumstances should demand.

Ignatius himself wrote to inform her of her acceptance as a Jesuit scholastic. It was to be a secret analogous to that of the confessional. Juana's life was not exactly that of the ordinary Jesuit scholastic. As to poverty, she lived rather simply. As to chastity, she never did wed again. Obedience seemed to consist at times in giving orders to Ignatius and Borgia. On the other hand, she protected the Society in Spain against a host of bitter and determined enemies.

In 1559, Juana turned over to Philip II her position as Regent. As far as is known, she remained a Jesuit until her death in 1573.