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In Response: A Call for Bold Leadership

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practice of their profession; such as, counselors and social workers who work with victims of violence or the homeless, educators who work in literacy programs, nurses working with AIDS prevention and treatment, etc.

All faculty do not have to be involved in such political/moral action, of course. However, I suggest that a university which lays claim to providing a moral atmosphere, promoting moral development of its students, achieving the Ignatian view of educating students in "ethical behavior and service to others" and the "faith that does justice" (see Shelton) must encourage its members to act as moral agents, models of these ideals.

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A Call for Bold Leadership

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Shelton's article challenges us to examine how bold we want to be as institutions to fulfill the Ignatian vision and help college students become moral decision makers.

Important issues raised in the last third of Shelton's article lose impact

due to the length and negative tone of his opening comments.

That tone, used when discussing the consumeristic culture, and the use of "insidious influence" as a cultural impairment seem to be drawn from a white-male perspective. American Indians empowered by their own culture may not agree with this term. Most student role models perpetuate the "insidious" aspect. Role models need to make a conscious decision whether to perpetuate the consumeristic culture.

Who attends our Jesuit schools in greater numbers, those who can afford it or those who can least afford it? Have Jesuit institutions fallen into the cultural impairment trap? Next fall, one Jesuit high school will counter the impairment by moving from standard tuition to fair-share contribution, thus offering value-oriented education to anyone.

Students come to campus with complex life histories and differing needs. Fulfilling our mission becomes difficult as a result. Shelton quotes philosopher Christina Hoff Sommers: "Perhaps for the first time in human history, the young have from their parents no message about sex." However, our incoming students in general are products of the 1960's sexual revolution. In fact, today's students are more informed about sex and its consequences than students (their parents) 20 to 30 years ago. That young adults act differently today is not a reflection of what little they know about sex.

Faculty alone cannot be responsible for the moral and ethical education of students. An integrated and systematic approach is needed. All university personnel must be committed to raising value-related issues and addressing the ethical implications of decisions in a student's life.

Shelton never mentions the role of student-development professionals. It is difficult to operate when faculty, student-development professionals, and general university staff are divided. Student-development personnel can help define the integrated approach toward the common goal of helping students grow intellectually, morally, socially, and spiritually.

*Faculty must engage
in moral activism
to be a credible voice
among young people.*

Student-development professionals help students face Shelton's "insurmountable odds" daily. Thus, integrating student-development expertise with faculty and staff knowledge and commitment will help students develop academically with a moral perspective.

Jesuit institutions must become leaders in developing ways to assess students' developmental growth, thereby implementing a "core experience," not just an academic "core curriculum." This experience would combine the academic core with the developmental, moral, and ethical experiences that support overall student growth.

If Jesuit institutions want to help students develop a vision, fashion a consciousness that embraces compassion, and appreciate the intrinsic value of service to others, it is imperative that Shelton's suggestions and questions be discussed on each campus.