



Discernment

SO THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO DISCERN WHAT IS BEST. PHIL. 1:10

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Discernment aims to stimulate interest in the moral dimensions of contemporary issues; to provide a forum for Christian reflection; and to foster the teaching of Christian ethics across the curriculum. Published three times a year.

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Teens and Their Raggedy Questions

We were talking about television programs when my 14-year-old son asked: Dad, why do you laugh at the sex jokes on *Home Improvement*, but you don't like the sex stuff on *Dawson's Creek*? Well. . .son. . .ahum. . .one's a funny family comedy, and the other isn't."

How's that for a careful distinction?

In Tim Allen's long running Tooltime spoof, some of the jokes deal with sexual attraction, but in the end, whatever befalls, Tim and his wife Jill are together, committed to their marriage and family, reconciled and hopeful about tomorrow.

"However"—here I could tell the teenager was bracing for a fight—"the sex on *Dawson's Creek* is never in the context of marriage, never long-term. It tends to sap the strength and hope of its characters who don't reconcile because they never admit to a moral dilemma. Besides, they're all too young!"

Since the original question came from someone on the young side of adulthood, that last comment seemed like simple age-discrimination. Despite the setback, however, the conversation went on, and still does, because the issues raised by these two programs go on. And because we need stories to help us frame the distinctions by which we govern the one life we have.

But which stories? How far afield from the values we cherish and nurture? How close to the secrets we carry inside? How forthrightly educational? How closely allied with Christian truth?

This *Discernment* reflects a vigorous campus discussion conducted at the CACE spring Triologue Workshops. Visiting lecturers from London, Hollywood, Denver, and other sites of learning and culture came to Wheaton for this annual CACE event. Students heard new ideas in classes and at evening meetings. The campus was stimulated to think more intelligently about education, media, and values.

We cannot guarantee that Triologue contributors to this issue of *Discernment* will pronounce on all matters of culture and faith, but I intend to have a copy on the dinner table at all times, from now on. I want to face no more questions from 14-year-olds without armament nearby. ■

People today are victims of emptiness—devoid of meaning. Busy, but emotionally empty, open to all entreaties and in search of something to fill the inner void. For this we go to popular entertainment. We are available and ready to listen to propaganda. We are lonely.

—Jacques Ellul

Mark Fackler

The Soul in Cyberspace: The Ethical Issues

*Douglas Groothuis, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Ethics at the Denver Seminary. His latest book is *The Soul in Cyberspace* (Baker, 1997). Dr. Groothuis was keynote speaker at the recent ethics Triologue Workshops at Wheaton College.*

There's a tremendous push with Christian schools now to do distance-education through the Internet, to do as much as possible on-line. However, the only questions asked tend to be technical. How do we do it and do it quickly? How do we get an edge on competitors? How do we market something as unique?

The deeper questions concern the nature of education from a Christian point of view. What serves Christian education and what does not serve Christian education?

A seminary has advertised by saying it can help you complete your degree without disrupting your family, ministry, or lifestyle. Students and faculty can dialogue as members of the school's global community. Class is conducted in cyberspace.

Where can cyberspace be used successfully in education? I want to examine the nature of cyberspace and then see where it serves, or does not serve, education. Let me first talk about Christian imperatives in education.

We're obligated to know the truth, to make it known, to train people to obey God, and then follow individual callings that we have (i.e., business, journalism, architecture, etc.). The teaching environment must be structured so that people receive and live out the truth.

We cannot be passive receivers of culture; we must be cultural critics. Biblically, we're called to know the signs of the times. In the genealogy of the tribe of Issachar, it says that they knew the times, therefore they knew what Israel should do. Christians should understand the times so that we know what to do in service for Christ.

We cannot simply be reactionaries. Marshall McLuhan called it looking at culture through the rearview mirror. That is, we adopt technologies with abandon and then look in the mirror to see what happens. Instead, we need to ask what these technologies do to our soul and to the learning environment. With respect to the Internet and computers, this must be asked now.

McLuhan talks about technological sleepwalking. When technologies are created and absorbed quickly into culture,

we tend to sleepwalk. We move about culture in a stupor, not understanding that technologies have systemic effects. Critics cannot afford to be sleepwalkers.

The word cyberspace was coined by William Gibson in a novel called *Neuromancer*. It is from two words: cybernetics (the study of informational systems) and the word "space." We're talking about an area where human consciousness and computer augmentation overlap: computer-mediated communication.

Cultural communications media (such as cyberspace) are not mere forms into which we pour content. Every cultural medium of communication has a nature. To go back to

McLuhan's line: the medium is the message. Every medium shapes information.

McLuhan drew inspiration from the Psalms. He wrote: "As an extension and expediter of the sense of life, any medium at once affects the entire field of the senses. As the psalmist explained long ago in the 115th Psalm: 'the beholding of idols, or the use of technology, conforms men to them. They that make them shall be like unto them.'"

Human beings create culture and then culture affects us in various ways—oftentimes in ways that we're not aware of. Hence the danger of sleepwalking through modern technological culture.

Consider the conditions of sentience, or awareness. There's more to teaching and

learning than information transfer. Let me explain this using examples. I want you to distinguish propositional content from the conditions of sentience. Take the sentence: Jesus is Lord. That is a proposition affirming the supremacy of Jesus Christ; it is a true proposition that corresponds to objective reality. But think of that statement in different conditions of sentience. Someone says in front of you: Jesus is Lord. Someone says on radio or TV: Jesus is Lord. Someone posts it as a Webpage banner. Someone types it out in a chatroom.

The propositional content is the same. But the conditions of sentience—the medium used—affect how the message will be received. As Christians involved in education, are we matching the proper media to the proper messages? The proper medium for assimilating information must be considered.

Cyberspace technologies are appropriate in certain situations, such as learning skills in a simulated environment. Consider the pilot that uses a simulator to learn how to fly. Also, there are some areas where information is needed quickly. If there's scarcity that can be overcome to a degree through cyberspace, then that should be exploited.

Cyberspace has detrimental aspects, such as the eclipse of the book by the screen. The book is a particular way of



Douglas Groothuis

approaching reality. It has a sense of identity that persists over time. With a computer, the screens keep changing; you can change and move text. If you put all information on screens, and take it out of books, then your sense of reality could become detached.

Another concern is the precariousness of truth in cyberspace. How do you verify truth in cyberspace? It's not impossible to use the Internet for research, but it adds new temptations. One of the temptations is plagiarism; that's been a problem with students for a long time, but plagiarism is easier on the Internet.

We have to be aware of the perils of disembodiment. People talk about the Internet helping solidify the global community. Some wax rhapsodic about how on the Internet you don't have a gender, age, or color; you're just information.

The deepest learning relationships are when you know someone in real life. How else do you model what you're teaching to people? How do you discern where people are strong or weak, and where they need to repent? These things can't be touched in a cyberspace relationship. They can be hinted at, but cannot be duplicated.

My conclusion is that we need to analyze the technologies used in Christian education. We need to give them a close reading. We need to exegese them. We need to bring the background into the foreground. We don't want to sleepwalk through technological change. We don't want to just look through the rear view mirror and say, gee, that's just what happened to us—amazing. Let's be forward thinking; let's realize that the conditions of sentience matter. That the environment of learning and teaching matters, and that some things ought not to go on-line. Or if some things do go on-line, they're cheapened. Even if they're high tech, with plenty of bells and whistles, they are cheapened. Let's master understanding the nature of the media we use and let's correctly match the media to the message and to the particular educational situation in which we work.

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians: "Test everything, hold fast to the good; avoid every form of evil." ■

"We are not subjects in the midst of objects concerning which we may freely decide how to act. We are closely implicated in this technical universe. We are conditioned by it."

—Jacques Ellul,
The Technological Bluff

We are meant to portray the whole counsel of God. A test I use with students is to say, "What is more Christian? When Christ said the words of John 3:16, or when Christ talks to the woman taken in adultery?" Of course, John 3:16 is the nutshell, but it isn't more Christian than the rest of Christ's words. Often, we scream one note to deafen the audience. We ignore the whole counsel of God to get cheers from the choir.

What gives us any right to believe that people owe us a hearing? They don't—it's a noisy marketplace and we have to earn that right to be heard from our wisdom and the breadth of our topics. Skill, consistency, truth, humanity, honesty, quality. If I need someone to believe what I'm saying, then I need them to trust me. And when I get the proper moment to tell them about Jesus—it isn't all the time—then we stand a chance to have dialogue and understanding.

Excellence, not expediency. In television we throw out wisdom. We say, "We feel led, we can do that, sure. A feature film? My brother is good with a camera." What is this?! Bring your best, or back off and learn. Learn your skills and make your best better.

Don't compromise. I've come to accept the words "creatively adjust," but I can't spit out the word "compromise" easily. Which leads me to my next point: the ends never justify the means.

I made a film about black gospel music in the 70s. Some of what went on there was not good. I brought this up to one of the famous singers of that time, but he said, "Hey, we have to give a little to gain a little." Wrong. That isn't God's arithmetic. You have to be prepared to walk away from a project. The project does not rule us; Christ Jesus should rule us.

There will be a Christian difference. Don't be afraid of that difference. It'll be in your thinking and in your work practices. There'll always be a difference if you hold to Christ.

I asked a playwright friend of mine why he created. He said, "I want to make people feel so much that they can't help but think." With television and film you can make people feel—make them feel so much that they can't help but think. I commend that thought to you.

A BBC radio producer once told me, "Love your audience. Think of Christ. Not 'love your backers.' Not 'love your supporting gallery.' Not 'love your awards.' Love your audience."

Don't be afraid of not having all the answers. We're not meant to have all the answers; we're just discovering—we're just starting. We've barely got past the garden gate, and it's a long walk out there. Wrap up warm. Take a good pair of shoes. Don't forget your sandwiches. Listen to the guide. Now walk. ■

*Norman Stone has been directing for British television for 25 years. Among other programs, he directed the BBC's **Shadowlands**, **The Justice Game**, **Burston Rebellion**, and **Martin Luther-Heretic**.*

What's so Difficult About Making Good Entertainment?

Two Christian leaders in media production presented the Clarence Jones Lecture as part of CACE's Triologue Workshops.

The Ethics of Television Entertainment

by Coleman Luck

I'll never forget the first time I met someone who lived to do evil. He loved to manipulate people and lived to fulfill his lust on every level. He enjoyed destroying people and thrived on creating fear in the lives of others. If you fell into temptation and he could see you in that position, he would put his arm around you and be glad.

I worked for that man for a year. I was not prepared for it. My life in the evangelical world had not prepared me. My life in the military had not prepared me. I had met people who were evil and did evil things, but I had never met someone who was utterly committed to it.



Coleman Luck

"Creativity, human worth, the arts, cultural endeavor, the media, communication, enjoyment of creativity—these need no justification. They are good and gracious gifts from the Heavenly Father above."

—Franky Schaeffer,
Addicted to Mediocrity

God prepares people to serve Him. He will engineer our lives to take us into leadership or servanthood at various levels of society. I did not understand until I was in Hollywood how Satan does the same thing. We must not deny the fact that we face people in society in positions of leadership who are prepared by the darkness. I can guarantee this is true in Hollywood, because I know many of those people. They are in positions of power

and they are utterly destructive and they are evil.

The first response when you face someone like this is denial. The first thing for me was to say, "I'm not seeing this

correctly." That denial can continue, especially if the person is in a position of power and you want his favor.

The second response is fear. You realize that you are being caught in a web. Another response after that may be flight. A worse response is that you are caught up and enslaved.

There is a time to run and there is a time to confront. When we face evil in society there is a time to stand, to take blows, to not be afraid, and to watch the work of the Lord. The Psalmist says that he saw an evil man growing like a green tree who seemed so powerful; later, though, that tree was cut off from the face of the earth.

Wonderful things are happening in Hollywood. More Christians are in positions of leadership than ever before. Some are leading shows; some are presenting material for feature films; some are writers. Young directors are coming from Christian schools and are finding a place in the industry.

There is, however, one thing that a Christian must not do in Hollywood. There is one word you should never speak in your creative work: the name Jesus. So, I'd have to tell you that while wonderful things are happening, there is a division in our community concerning the role of Christians in Hollywood. Some

say, "Let's do whatever we can without making many waves; let's be Christians but not be overt about it." Others say, "Let's tell excellent stories and be commercial, but let's not be afraid of using the name Jesus."

There comes a moment, if you are doing what a Christian must be doing in story telling (telling stories of redemption), when you need to say His name. However, the instant you have the temerity to say in the right context: I'm going to use His name, a strange response comes.

In a series that my wife and I created—a series called "The Burning Zone" for the United Paramount Network—I created a central character, a doctor who had been the son of medical missionaries. His parents had died in Africa from the Ebola virus. In the second episode of the series, I had him in a flashback where he supernaturally saw his parents dying once again. In the scene his mother says to him, "I prayed to Jesus for you and he told me that you're going to become a strong man; you're going to help many people."

It was a moving scene and the actress who played the part did an excellent job. But before it made it to the screen, the executives at Universal called me aside and said, "Could we be a little more generic here?" I replied, "You know, I don't think so." So we shot it and did it. But, you pay the price with your image and reputation. If you do something so strange as to name the name of Jesus, you are going to suffer eventually.

Being a Christian is not about being silent. Being a Christian is for His name's sake. If career and success mean more to you, then something is wrong. All of the discussion about ethics and lifestyle comes down to this: is what we say true? Is He really who we say He is?

I love Hollywood because there's not much gray for a Christian. You will be pushed either into dark or light. Consequently, many of the Christians there are struggling. There are many who are also influenced by the attitude of the evangelical community, and the evangelical community's attitude is to say, "Let's run and hide, or boycott them."

Evangelicals do not deal wisely with the industry. All we care about is what comes on our screen at home. We don't care about the people creating those stories. This attitude affects all of us who are working in Hollywood. It causes us to say, "The people back home will never understand what it is we face here because they have no interest in understanding. All they care about is getting their family values on TV."

I'm in Hollywood to tell stories about redemption. I'm there to live a life of servanthood. That doesn't come naturally to me. But because I've been called to this and because Jesus has changed my life, I have to live a different way; that means being broken.

The issue is clear. On whose side do we stand? That issue will become clearer for every one of us—no matter if we work in Hollywood or not. The issue of the name of Jesus is all that matters in all of time.

*Coleman Luck has been a producer/screenwriter for television since 1980. He has written such shows as **Gabriel's Fire** (NBC), **The Equalizer** (CBS), and **Otherworld** (CBS).*

The Medium and the Message

by Norman Stone

As a Christian who has been a film and TV maker for 25 years, I've had to face a question which I want to face with you today. What are we to do as Christians with this area of God's creation as it billows into our lives?

I don't talk as an academic. I talk as a practitioner. You've before you an artisan in filmmaking and television. That's what I can bring to you.

If you are doers, I hope you find this useful. If you are not a doer of TV and are a watcher, I hope you find it useful as a Christian; we've seen some aberrations in the name of Christ put on TV. Maybe this will make a useful contribution to your thinking. If you say, "I don't watch TV because I'm a Christian," then, good—I hope this helps you pray. If you are none of the above and are a Christian, then check in at Head Office: there's probably a message waiting.

Respect and accept the limitations of the medium. There's such a thing as a communication seesaw. You can say a lot to a little, a little to a lot, or a medium amount to a medium amount. What do evangelicals do? We want to say an awful lot to an awful lot—snap!—the seesaw breaks. We want that five second Jesus commercial that will have the nation on its knees.

The medium is not meant to do everything. Optimism and enthusiasm are not faith. Only when we understand the limitations of our medium can we realize the potential. Those doers among you, remember that. Those watchers among you, do not demand that the medium gets broken.

One brick in the wall is enough. I used to want my programs to do everything. They can't. You know what the secret is? Trust the architect. Be prepared to leave it at one brick done well. If you get two bricks—great. Rarely will you be given the opportunity to do a whole wall.



Norman Stone (England) with graduate student Drazen Glavas (Croatia)

Obedience, not success. Please, America! I went to the National Religious Broadcasters Association one time and I sat down on a seat. I jumped up rather smartish because I sat on a little pack. The pack was called Ten Ways to Guarantee Success in Your Ministry. It had a razor, toothpaste and lots of stuff telling me how to guarantee that the Holy Spirit would bless my ministry. This is weird, this is wrong, this is not biblical—and it was certainly uncomfortable to sit on. What are we talking about when we worship success? Success with dollar signs, head counts? This is not right. Obedience and faithfulness are the true measures of success.

If it was up to me whether or not people were going to take that word and run to heaven, I would be making programs differently. It cannot be up to us. However, we have to be obedient; we have to be true; we have to be honest; we have to be faithful. We have to trust in God.

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A Tribute to a Man of Christian Virtue

by David B. Fletcher, Ph.D., CACE Steering Committee

With the close of this academic year comes a major changing of the guard at CACE. Dr. Alan Johnson, Professor of Bible and Theology and a major force in the shaping of the Center, will retire as Director with the close of the 1997-1998 academic year. Dr. Johnson will return to full time teaching and research.

Dr. Johnson's involvement with CACE goes back to the earliest days, when he served on the Ethics Across the Curriculum Task Force, the former campus organization that "birthed" today's Center for Applied Christian Ethics. This Task Force was formed in 1985, funded by the Pew Charitable Trust, at Wheaton as at other Christian colleges, to explore the teaching of "ethics across the curriculum." That nationwide project was under the general supervision of Wheaton's own Dr. Arthur F. Holmes. Wheaton's Task Force included Dr. Johnson as a founding member, along with Dr. Albert Smith of Biology, Dr. Mark Fackler of Communications (now editor of *Discernment*), and Dr. Mark Amstutz of Political Science, with myself as Chair.

Dr. Johnson became CACE's Director in 1989, originally for a three year term. His directorship has been marked by many achievements and by great growth in CACE's activities and influence. There have been programs on yearly themes of such topical importance as AIDS; the ethics of secrecy, lying and censorship; the American healthcare system; moral values in a pluralistic society; greed, fairness, and generosity; environmental ethics; families; welfare reform, and education. The many leaders he has brought to campus include V. Elving Anderson, Harold O. J. Brown, Tony Campolo, Rodney Clapp, David Cook, Paige Cunningham, David Gill, Wayne Gordon, Douglas Groothuis, Karen Mains, Alister McGrath, John Piper, Luci Shaw, Ronald Sider, James Skillen, Lewis Smedes, and Raleigh Washington, to name but a very few. The campus has been greatly enriched by the thoughtful approaches to controversial issues that Alan has insisted upon and by the caliber of people he has brought together to address them.

In Dr. Johnson's second year in office, he began a monograph series with the first title, *Understanding Homosexuality*. There are now seven very useful booklets in this series. Also that year, he began the Penner Lectureships to initiate spirited, intelligent debate on moral issues. In the following year, Alan convened for the first time the National Advisory Council (NAC), chaired by Dr. C. Everett Koop and containing outstanding leaders from the professions, business, and higher education to help provide guidance to the Center. The next year saw the beginning of the newsletter *Discernment*, which today reaches across the country with the message of applied Christian ethics. He has also supervised and presented in the many annual *Faith and Ethics Workshops* for faculty, enriching

the ethics preparation of scores of faculty and reflected in many courses across the Wheaton curriculum.

Those of us who have worked with Alan will know him as a patient, tireless advocate of serious ethics discussion and education, as a genuine leader on our campus and beyond. Provost Dr. Stanton Jones, who is incidentally author of CACE's first monograph, has said, "Alan is to be commended for his years of faithful and creative service as the Director of CACE. His passion for ethics has been a stimulus for almost everything good that CACE has done for the last 11 years."

Graduate student and CACE student assistant Morse Tan has commended Dr. Johnson as both teacher and supervisor: "Through having him as a boss, I have seen his desire for the Wheaton College community and surrounding areas, the Christian community, and indeed the nation to raise its moral caliber and consciousness. In various contexts, I've witnessed his strong integrity, purposeful diligence, and yes, his overall high standards of Christian character that testify profoundly to his own Christian ethics: Christian ethics have indeed been applied to this Director's life."

Morse goes on to "express appreciation publicly for his heart for students, his devotion to the Lord Jesus and the many people that he has poured himself into through CACE," and adds "Thanks for everything, Dr. Johnson; we'll miss you."

Dr. Bud Williams of the Kinesiology Department has been a long time member of the Steering Committee, the faculty group that helps the Director envision and execute plans for the Center. Bud praises Alan for having "been able to create a distinctive vision for the Center for Applied Christian Ethics during his tenure that has not only brought ethical thinking to a central position in the integration of faith and learning on campus but also significantly connected campus dialogue with practitioners and theorists engaged in ethical issues in the workplace. The ongoing programs in faculty development in ethical teaching and vehicles through which discourse can continue within and outside of the classroom have effectively raised the level of teaching ethics across the curriculum."

Bud traces his personal involvement with Alan and CACE to one of the Faith and Ethics Workshops, which he credits in helping him to integrate ethics into three courses, Issues in Health, Senior Seminar (Kinesiology Capstone), and Methods of Coaching. Bud goes on to say that, "Additionally, the yearly ethics themes supported by forums, debates, and Dialogue Workshops have enriched my freshmen experience courses, allowed me to bring off-campus lecturers into my classes who were currently dealing with certain ethical issues, and gave me the opportunity to enter a wider dialogue across campus that has enriched me both professionally and as an informed Christian citizen."

Bud says that "I owe much to Alan's leadership and his ongoing persistence to make all of this happen. He has functioned in a part-time role of director but has done more than full-time work that has proven to be extremely effective. My deepest

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Encouraging Christian Ethics

Readings in Christian Ethics, volume 2: Issues and Application, edited by David K. Clark and Robert V. Rakestraw, Baker Books, 1996.

Those of us who work in applied ethics are often asked to recommend books that will help pastors and laypersons understand the issues that face the Church and society today. This new volume, edited by Bethel Theological Seminary professors Clark and Rakestraw, will meet this very real need, and will be invaluable for courses in Christian social ethics and for the more ambitious adult Christian education program.

A sequel to their first volume on Theory and Method, the present anthology addresses specific challenges facing all of us today. The editors seem to be aware that certain topics are within the "comfort zone" of many evangelicals, addressing evils perceived to be the responsibility of nonevangelicals. Because of this, evangelical discussion of ethical issues can sometimes assume a self-righteous or triumphalist tone. The editors do include those "culture war" issues such as abortion, sexuality, and divorce, as well as war, reproductive technologies and genetics, and capital punishment, issues that have been given substantial attention by evangelicals. Yet they also force us to look at issues that cannot be classified as "us versus them," issues which cause us to do some soul-searching as individuals and as members of the evangelical community, such as our involvement with racism, AIDS, environmental concerns, materialism and economic justice, and gender issues.

The editors' aim is to encourage evangelical Christians to develop their own Biblically grounded views. They accomplish this by assembling articles expressing a variety of opinions about controversial matters to provide food for thought and resources for the construction of informed positions. The authors clearly identify themselves with what they consider to be a "centrist" evangelical perspective, and are undeniably committed to articulating and defending a Biblically grounded ethic. Rather than simply argue for their own views, they have adopted a strategy to stimulate their readers to greater understanding by including not only writers from a range of evangelical positions but also some who are neither evangelical nor Protestant. Thus, a salient feature of this book, which many of us will consider a strength, is that it is not a single-viewpoint text that encourages the acceptance of particular perspectives. Rather, it boldly presents a variety of points of view, including some that many evangelicals will wish to answer and refute. In framing responses to viewpoints different from her own the reader is stimulated to thoughtful Biblical ethical understanding. In the section on abortion, for example, the book includes not only pro-life positions such as those of Jack Cottrell and Robert Joyce, but also Christian pro-choice advocates such as Virginia Ramey Mollenkott.

The range of contributors includes evangelicals and nonevangelicals, both in academia and the ministry as well as

scholars. Evangelical scholars include such well known people as Donald Bloesch, Paul Brand, Richard Foster, Norman Geisler, Stanley Grenz, David Hoekema, Stanton Jones, J. P. Moreland, Ronald Nash, Charles Ryrie, Robert Saucy, Ronald Sider, Mary Stuart Van Leeuwen, Robert Wennberg, and John Howard Yoder, among others. They represent such institutions as Dubuque Theological Seminary, Azusa Pacific University, Regent College, colleges such as Calvin and Wheaton, and such seminaries as Bethel, Eastern, Westminster, Reformed, Talbot, Southern Evangelical, and Dallas. Evangelicals in ministry include Glen Kehrein of Circle Urban Ministries, John Piper of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Raleigh Washington of Rock of Our Salvation Church, and Spencer Perkins (recently deceased) of Voice of Calvary Fellowship. Authors include men and women, black and white.

Each section begins with a helpful introductory essay by the editors, and the readings are followed by case studies, which are very useful for teaching and discussion, a glossary of terms used in the readings, and a list of further recommended readings; there is also a general glossary at the end of the book. These features greatly enhance the usefulness of the text for teaching.

Although the editors consider themselves to be "centrist," it would be a mistake to think that they are "middle-of-the-road" or "wishy-washy." Their introductory discussions of the issues at hand are forceful and prophetic. In their discussion of race, for example, they take seriously the charge that "America, 'the land of the free,' reeks of racism," (p. 261) and includes in the definition of racism "white cultural ways that act as stumbling blocks to blacks," making it possible to consider our predominantly white Christian colleges as racist institutions. They suggest that many whites may perceive America as having been founded for "white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants," rather than for blacks and other minorities. They challenge "Christians (to) consider their response at both personal and social levels," including increasing their attempts to empathize with blacks and to break out of the cultural captivity of suburbia and to seek opportunities to experience the world of African-Americans.

This is a very helpful book, assembled with sensitivity and care, and it covers a great deal of territory in its 533 pages. The articles have previously appeared in books and periodicals and are all rather short, a number of them having been edited for brevity. This is not necessarily intended to be an anthology of the best evangelical thinking today; there are a number of important Christian ethicists who do not appear in this volume, such as Scott Rae, Arthur Holmes, Richard Mouw, Nicholas Wolterstorff, James Skillen, Calvin DeWitt, Alan Johnson, Nigel Cameron, John Kilner, D. Gareth Jones, C. Everett Koop, Harold O. J. Brown, and many others. Yet as a text designed to stimulate serious reflection on ethical issues, it is a remarkable success. ■

Reviewed by David B. Fletcher, Ph.D., Department of Philosophy, Wheaton College, and Chair, Steering Committee of CACE

CACE News and Notes

We are interested in your comments and contributions on this issue of *Discernment* or on any aspect of applied Christian ethics. Our emphasis for the 1998–1999 school year will be, **“Recovering Personal Responsibility.”** In coming issues, *Discernment* will reflect the range of campus discussion on this theme. We anticipate discussing personal responsibility in the areas of national health, corporate responsibility, genetic engineering, world religions, postmodern ethics, and more. We will continue to publish the highlights of our major on-campus events. Although plans are still being developed, we invite you to attend one or all of our sessions. Two major fall lectures/panel discussions will be held: on September 10 (with a stimulating panel featuring C. Everett Koop) and on November 12. Our annual Trialogue Workshops will be held March 17–19.

We are expanding our presence on-line. We recently have included audio and video of the 1997 Penner debates, “What is a College Education for? The Moral Issues” at <http://www.wheaton.edu/cace/Penner/1997/>. Over the coming academic year, we will provide more back issues of *Discernment*, and more features to assist us all to think more profoundly and Christianly about the nettlesome ethical issues facing our lives. ■

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respect goes to Alan. His vision has shown us that ethical thinking and action is not automatic even for a Christian, nor is it easy; but it is a necessity and a calling for everyone who has an allegiance to Christ. Thank you, Alan, for all you have done for me and our Wheaton College community.”

Finally, as Chair and member of the Steering Committee for a number of years and as participant in that early Ethics Task Force, let me add that I have always found working with Alan to be a personal pleasure. He has always been the model of a Christian gentleman in his interaction with others and has consistently manifest Christian love and courtesy to all. I appreciate Alan’s professionalism, his patience and genuine kindness, his concern for students and for his colleagues, and his passion for applying the ethical dimensions of the Christian faith to the issues that are faced by Church and society. In his many years as Director, Alan has left a very positive, and I trust, indelible mark on this campus and on the evangelical world. I too will miss him in this role. ■

The Center for Applied Christian Ethics is on-line, including recent issues of *Discernment*! Tell your friends. Watch for upcoming current issues pages with Dr. Koop and others responding. <http://www.wheaton.edu/CACE>



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