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Ken Badley
Two 'Cop-Outs' in Faith-Learning Integration: Incarnational Integration and Worldviewish Integration[1]

There are at least six different approaches to integration adopted by educationalists in recent years. These interconnect and may partially overlap. Two kinds of confusion in talk of integration are identified, along with four other substantive questions that would-be faith-learning, integrationists need to address. **Neither incarnational integration nor perspectival integration are adequate on their** *own. Evangelical and Reformed traditions are both at their best when they combine incarnational and perspectival in their efforts to integrate faith and learning.*

1. Introduction

Twentieth century educators have had three waves of talk about integration, the most recent of which began about 1970 and continues today. Usage of the phrase of particular interest here, `faith-learning integration', has grown steadily and concurrently with this third wave of interest in the general term. Because the two terms connect in so many ways, anyone wanting to examine the second must continuously deal with the first. So what may look at first blush like a single task becomes a tandem one and will remain so.

Even after we have recognized that dealing with faith-learning integration implies some exploration of how 'integration' is used generally in educational discourse, we are left with an additional problem. That problem is simply this: most Christians who talk about faith-learning integration seem to have got only half of it.

Evangelicals who use integration language often fail to think deeply enough about the educational implications of the whole earth and everything in it belonging to God. They have piety, a word I use here without implying any negative connotations, but they lack reach.

On the other hand, many Reformed folk speak of integral learning and some of them of faith-learning integration—and they usually do so on a foundation of careful reflection about the educational implications of Biblical creation, the Biblical account of human sinfulness, and the Biblical picture of redemption. Having thought deeply and carefully about such matters as anthropology, epistemology, and ontology, they have fed and nurtured Christian education at all levels from primary through post-graduate education They have demonstrated the philosophical reach that evangelicals have often lacked. But one criticism must be registered: despite their reflective and careful work in the foundations of education, and the reach and influence they have achieved, Reformed folk often work as if thinking worldviewishly is sufficient, when it clearly is not. Scripture demands much more of anyone who would speak of integrating faith and learning. We will address these weaknesses in more detail later in the paper.

We begin this paper by asking what problems integration is meant to meet. In general, *educational integration* is meant to address the formidable subject and discipline barriers that, for many, divide knowledge artificially and hinder the progress of human thought. Undeniably, our ways of differentiating the forms of

knowledge have yielded for us certain economies and have facilitated the growth of human knowledge. Yet, among those who admit to or even defend the harvest we have reaped by making distinctions between the scholarly disciplines, some recognize that we may ultimately hinder the dissemination of knowledge when we structure our educational institutions along subject and disciplinary lines (to parallel those knowledge structures). Others identify increasing professionalism—especially in higher education—as the problem to be attacked. On this account, students seek to learn only that which will pay well, and they desire to make no connections between the disciplines or between their learning and their own value structures, let alone to larger questions of being and meaning. As evidence of the need for integration, still others point to the lack of unifying frameworks for knowledge, a situation worsening with the advent of post-modern critiques of modern epistemology.

Faith-learning integration is meant to address another set of problems. Some point to the secularization of the academy beginning with the founding of the University of Berlin in 1810, coming to fruit in the Protestant colleges of America late in the nineteenth century, and now affecting colleges and universities of all Christian persuasions. Others list conflicts between faith and various contemporary ideologies and intellectual movements as the reason we need to integrate faith and learning. In calling for integration, these folk seek both to discover what truth may lie in such ideologies and movements, but they also seek to provide some Christian response to the challenge which those intellectual movements present. Some who call for faith-learning integration enumerate various dualisms whereby ordinary life and learning fall outside the realm of faith. The world is divided into secular and sacred, and so these Christians call for some kind of integration instead of separation.

2. Six Approaches to Integration

To respond to the many problems identified above, in both secular and confessional settings, educators have suggested several approaches to integration. If one examines the literature on curriculum and on faith-learning integration, one can differentiate at least six kinds of proposals, models or attempts to bring about integration. These models are not iron-clad; many threads of connection run back and forth among them. Logical parallels and structural similarities abound. In fact, some of the paradigms may actually be sub-cases of others. The schema that follows is meant more as a first word than a last.

2.1 Fusion

In proposals for fusion integration, two things are simply joined or merged. Composition + Literature become Integrated English. Biology + Chemistry + Physics become Integrated Science. This model perhaps matches most closely the definitions of *integration* one might find in any dictionary. Interestingly, the two examples I listed both illustrate another point about many integration proposals: after integration, one can still distinguish the elements which went into the fused product.

2.2 Incorporation

Similar in some ways to fusion, in incorporation integration, one thing is incorporated into another. For example, proposals for literacy, numeracy or environmental awareness across the curriculum fit this model. Some who call for faith-learning integration mean that Christian faith should be visible in or even saturate not only all

areas of the curriculum but also the structure and administration of the whole school program. These calls may fit this incorporation model of integration. That some seek saturation and others only visibility illustrates an important characteristic of this incorporation model of integration: there are degrees.

2.3 Correlation

In correlation integration, the teacher points out or the student seeks to discover points of common interest, intersection and compatibility between two different fields. A college student takes a 19th-Century history class in the same term in which she studies the Romantic Period in literature or music. The cross-fertilization that results brings her both greater enjoyment and greater understanding in both courses. Correlation integration can range from a simple example like that of our student to a multi-disciplinary team of oncologists, church ministers, psychologists, sociologists, and economists who together examine the lives and aspirations of cancer patients. Some forms of inter-disciplinary enquiry (IDE) may also fit this model of integration, for example where the teacher develops a two to three-week theme such as `Sidewalks' or `The Thames.' This central driving theme is meant to direct the students' efforts over several weeks' work and to connect subject areas as diverse as geography, religion, economics, biology, sociology, chemistry, art, history and political science. Some enterprises such as the `integration of theology and psychology' may fit this correlation paradigm as well (although, as we will note later, many call this approach `compatibilism' and criticize it for its shortcomings).

2.4 Dialogical Integration

By dialogical integration, I mean that one thing comes to bear on the other, for example, when ethics constrains medical research. Faith-learning integration is arguably an example of dialogical integration, inasmuch as our work as students or teachers in the scholarly disciplines is constrained by Christian faith and all that this implies in ethics, in our view of the character of God's created world, in our views of human culture-making, and so on.

   The final two models become the focus of this essay (although, as we noted, there are many connections to the four paradigms already introduced).

2.5 Worldviewish Integration

Some describe a kind of perspectival or worldviewish integration in which the whole world makes sense because it is viewed through the lens of an acknowledged religion such as Islam or Christianity, or of an unacknowledged religion such as Marxism or humanism. Reformed Christians have articulated particularly clearly such a model for understanding faithful learning, a view that some call `transformational' because it speaks of the whole world of learning (and all of culture, in fact) being transformed by the redemptive power of the good news of Jesus Christ. St. Paul's talk of taking every thought captive to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5) often appears in these calls for transformation of the scholarly disciplines by people with a thoroughly Christian worldview.

2.6 Incarnational Integration

In incarnational integration, the Christian in education (and presumably in any other field) shows forth Christian character, or lives with integrity, authenticity and congruence between the hands, the head and the heart. By no means do I list this paradigm separately from perspectival integration because I wish to portray them as

necessary or *de facto* opposites. Rather, I am attempting to represent how faith-learning integration has been viewed by actual Christians in our own time. Some, mostly Reformed, scholars have stressed that one must view things in certain ways, that adopting a certain theological and philosophical approach to one's scholarly discipline will bear good fruit for the scholar and will simultaneously have redemptive affects on the scholarly discipline in question. Others, mostly those of Evangelical persuasion, have tended toward incarnational views of faith-learning integration; they have stressed the importance of character, of integrity, and of evangelism in the marketplace. As we will see later in this article, this stress on personal integrity often comes without much concern for the transformation of the scholarly discipline.

3. Problems with Integration Talk

Would that it were as simple as identifying which of six models was being proposed in a given situation. Of course numerous overlaps and connections exist between the models. Perhaps the whole schema needs revision.[2] The strengths and weaknesses of the above six-part schema notwithstanding, *integration* remains deeply problematic because it invites so many kinds of confusion in actual use. I will briefly list and treat some of the sources of that confusion and then address several other substantive questions that anyone wanting to understand faith/learning integration will necessarily have to answer (or at least be aware of).

3.1 A *Handful* of Confusions

First, integration is a positive and popular term. Like all such terms, it produces confusion and suspicion. Educators in all sectors and at all levels of education use integration, and educators in all forms and in at all levels of confessional education talk of *faith-learning integration.* In researching specifically Christian usage of integration, I found little variation in popularity between Roman Catholics and Protestants, or among a wide range of Protestants, including even fundamentalists whose actual theology of culture demanded separation, not integration. To refer to Niebuhr's categories (in *Christ* and *Culture),* one would expect those who talk about Christ as the transformer of culture to talk about faith-learning integration (or integral learning). One actually finds, however, that those who talk about Christ against culture and Christ above culture also like the language of integration.

This popularity crosses secular and confessional lines. Integration is as popular in public education as faith-learning integration is in confessional education. Both versions have become slogans, facing us with the question of whether slogans any longer carry descriptive meaning, once they are fully loaded with their prescriptive and programmatic meaning.[3] Slogans or not, the language of integration appears to be with us for the time being, and we had best come to understand it.

Second, integration has several psychological connotations, which may invade other intended senses. It carries mental health connotations (integrated persons, wholeness, adjustment) as well as connecting with the perennial questions regarding what should determine curriculum structure, i.e., with pedagogical and psychological questions (learning) or logical considerations (epistemology). Anyone using integration talk to refer to curriculum integration, inter-disciplinary enquiry, or a student's ability to see coherence in what she is learning risks having these senses—especially the second—invading their conversation. Yet the first retains some interest, specifically because the first psychological sense I noted connects in some ways with what Christians refer to as sanctification, that God-driven process of

personal reconstruction and restoration that one begins once one commits one's life to God. Presumably God-driven reconstruction would lead to some degree of psychological wholeness, or `getting one's stuff together' as the popular saying used to have it. Inasmuch as these two things connect, this first psychological sense of integration may not so much invade one's attempts to understand incarnational integration as it does aid or direct those attempts.[4]

Third, integration talk invites what I call concept-conception confusions. There is a sense in which we all agree that integration is about joining or harmony; we could get that much from any dictionary. But we don't all agree about what integration in education or faith-learning integration should look like. We have and love different conceptions of the good life, of the godly life and of the educated person.[5] Inevitably, we will argue for and against these different conceptions, and we may do so all using the same word or phrase: integration or *faith-learning integration.* As if that were not enough, we need to distinguish conceptions of integration (`this is what integration is: joining, correlating, co-operating, dialogue, etc') from integrative conceptions meant to provide coherence to part or all of a curriculum (`Sidewalks', `The Thames', etc.).

Fourth, integration talk invites what some have called the process/product confusion. Words ending in `…ion' notoriously become slippery as to duration. When is education complete, for example, or how long does salvation take? Is `integration' a process that can be completed or must it be always ongoing? This question relates to the source of confusion I raise just below (the `locus' problem) because to say that integration is an ongoing process implies something for our work as teachers quite different from that which is implied by our saying integration is a product that can be produced and finished. The one view seems to indicate that integration must somehow occur in students in an ongoing way, the other that it can take place in a curriculum we might produce and commit to paper.

Fifth, as I warned, we face the difficulty of agreeing where integration happens, what I call the locus debate. Does it happen in curriculum? If it does, then teachers, professors, curriculum committees and writers can produce coherence or integration by their own care in designing the course of the whole program of study. If the curriculum is the locus of integration then we must answer several questions. What conditions are necessary for an integrated curriculum to yield an integrated education for the student? Can a chaotic curriculum still produce graduates with a coherent understanding? Can a coherent, well-planned curriculum still have failures?[6]

What if integration or coherence is something that must develop or happen in the consciousness of the student? In this case, we recognize that what students take away from our curriculum must be integrated, and therefore is somewhat out of our control as curriculum writers or planners, as teachers or professors. This possibility raises several questions for us. If the student is the locus of educational integration, how much faculty support is necessary for success? What pedagogies are appropriate? Regarding faith-learning integration specifically, what is the role of doubt, what is God's role, and what is the role of the Christian community in supporting the student during times of doubt?[7]

3.2 Almost a Handful of Other Substantive Issues

To this point, I have suggested that these five sources or kinds of confusion make the task more difficult for anyone wanting to understand or attempt integration. A few other substantive matters still remain.

First, most work on integration has been too theoretical, especially with reference to the question of faith-learning integration. Dozens of books and articles call for integration of faith and learning, or even describe in general terms what needs it might meet or what its accomplishments might be. But a careful reading of the literature on Christian higher education will reveal there is simply not enough discussion about faith-learning integration in curriculum and in teaching within specific subject-disciplines.[8] We need to see the pilot plants and the working demonstration sites. Still with reference specifically to faith/learning integration, we also need to see explicit illustrations in administration, evaluation, classroom management, sports programs and definitions of teachers' professional development.[9]

Second, anyone dealing with integration in general and with faith-learning integration in particular will encounter resistance. What are the sources of that resistance? Some of it is sociological, having to do with professionalism and curricular turf protection. On this account, the fences that keep us working narrowly and uncollaboratively within our own scholarly disciplines provide us with safety and identity and they protect us from the anomie and confusion that would certainly ensue were there no such divisions or were we not to organize our educational institutions along lines reflecting the divisions between the forms of knowledge.[10] Some resistance is obviously psychological, having to do with learning the unfamiliar, with lacking the hooks on which to hang new concepts. We should not miss the irony that often appears at this point, that educationists, boards, or consultants tell teachers they must adopt integrative teaching, but fail to tie the new concepts involved to what those teachers already know about children, teaching, and learning.

Some resistance roots itself, no doubt, in epistemology. Those who accept that the scholarly disciplines as we know them are actually the way knowledge `is' will probably find themselves wanting to resist talk about integrating knowledge. Those who approach knowledge more in a psychological sense, as a structure that people develop in their own consciousness, will probably find themselves more open to talk of integration. This epistemological resistance, if I may call it that, is more important than it may look at first glance. If we grant that God's world and our life in it have many aspects (biotic, economic, moral, etc.), and that world and those of us who inhabit it function in modes reflective of those aspects, then we might well argue that the scholarly disciplines are windows (albeit limited windows, which we call biology, economics, ethics, etc.) by means of which we can gaze at those aspects.[11]

An additional theological/ontological question arises here: is the integration some seek of things that always have been separated (ontically) or is that integration of things that once were together but are now severed by sin?

Third, those who talk integration need to recognize the multivariate connections to inter-disciplinarity (and trans-, multi-, a-disciplinarity etc).

I noted in the schema of paradigms with which I began this paper that at least one (and likely more than one) model of integration connects to the currently popular idea of interdisciplinarity. An important theological question arises here: what does the human propensity to seek connections (through integration and through inter-disciplinarity) reveal about our place in this world? Many argue that this propensity shows that we belong in this world, or that the world's diversity of structure does not negate its coherence and meaning. Some even make the (Christian apologetic) argument that our search for coherence points to intelligent design in back of the whole cosmos.

But more is at stake here. We must ask, with particular reference to our work as teachers and scholars, whether faith-learning integration implies inter-disciplinarity? Is the Christian who understands deeply what it means to live in and study God's world not called to a kind of scholarship that transcends the disciplinary boundaries that bar so much other scholarship? Some say yes, that Christians are called to serve the scholarly community as a whole by making the connections others remain unable to make, having resisted integration for one reason or another.[12]

Fourth, anyone wanting to talk about integration will now need to address questions raised by post-modernity. Much of our integration talk so far has revolved around grand narratives meant to yield integration among broadly disparate subjects. For example, those in the encyclopedic tradition (such as Auguste Comte, John Dewey, and Mortimer Adler) have attempted for two centuries to provide organizing schemas (based on one conception or another) so we could organize and gain access to all knowledge. How will those seeking coherence in the curriculum respond to an era which disparages all attempts to furnish grand unifying narratives? Will inter-disciplinarity be the best anyone will attempt or can hope for when people suspect all `total' answers? The answer has yet to be seen. But in view of that question, another pressing question remains for anyone who actually teaches in a classroom, at any level: is Christian faith just `an answer'? Could we not live with such integrity that people would want to hear our story, even though it functions for us as a comprehensive worldview? In other words, would some form of what I called incarnational integration not carry some suasive weight in an era no longer wanting to talk about truth?

4. The Foreground: Two 'Cop-Outs'

We have spent a good deal of effort so far in this paper describing the contours of a rather varied landscape. This description allows us now to examine directly the double problem I want to raise here: that evangelicals and Reformed folk who talk faith-learning integration both often come up short, that, in addition to what strengths they already have, they both seem to need the best of what has traditionally characterized each other's positions to demonstrate fully what the integration of faith and learning actually looks like.

4.1 Incarnational Integration without Perspectival Integration

At our worst, evangelicals may view a teaching job as a meal-ticket so we can support the work of our own churches. When we do come to curriculum, perhaps we inject verses as illustrations in subject areas. Some actually fuse Christian language and categories with whatever wind of secular doctrine is currently blowing. For example, largely without reflection and criticism, Christians have adopted

behavioural objectives, ultimately rooted in the work of B. F. Skinner though they are. Likewise, we can trace the shifting allegiance of Christian counsellors from Carl Rogers in the 1970s to C. G. Jung in the 1980s (via the popular work of Meyers and Briggs). In both cases, these bodies of work have been presented as compatible with Christianity, and even helpful for Christians to understand themselves.[13]

Other evangelicals take a bifurcated `Christian witness' approach to integration: as long as they hold a Bible study among their colleagues they are integrating faith and learning. I have only praise for anyone who initiates a Bible study; my objection is that without transformation of teaching (and even the whole school program: sports, evaluation, administration, attendance policies and so on) or reflection on curriculum, such initiatives are inadequate. In other words, it is less likely that evangelicals will do the `wrong thing' as that we will not do enough. Our reach does not match our conviction.

Evangelicals often go on record for what we dislike in curriculum, whether that be sex, evolution, bad language or new age spirituality. Unfortunately, we are not as vocal for what we believe ... that creation is good or that culture is a result of God-given gifts, for example. What effect would we as evangelicals have on the secular educational establishment if we matched our efforts against various trends with effort put into the production of attractive materials that showed forth our high view of the creation and of human culture-making?

In sum, we are at our worst as evangelicals when we attempt incarnational integration without perspectival integration. If the faults I have listed here are indeed ours, then we must admit that when Reformed folk charge evangelicals with dualism, they are often right: we have divided the world into secular and sacred and, even in our educational efforts, too often have abandoned much of what constitutes education as we know it to the secularists.

All is not lost, however. As examples of evangelical approaches to faith-learning integration, I suggest two books. First, Frank Gaebelein has given us *The Pattern of God's Truth,* the book in which the phrase *the integration of faith and learning* first appears.[14] Though now over forty years old, this volume still presents us with a clear call for a comprehensive understanding of what it means to be Christian in education. Secondly, I name Arthur Holmes' book *The Idea of a Christian College* as a clear call to saturate the subject-areas of the curriculum, school administration, student evaluation and, in fact, the whole school program with Christian understanding.[15]

A reading of Gaebelein and Holmes, both self-described evangelicals, gives one the distinct impression that these Christians are not just talking about incarnational integration. Rather they are attempting to take the best of the perspectival or transformational outlook in all areas of education while maintaining the character-istically evangelical piety and personal devotion for God, what we might well call `Biblical character'. In other words, when evangelicals integrating faith and learning are at their best, they are living out both the incarnational and perspectival forms of integration.

The approach Gaebelein calls for and Holmes outlines, in fact, provides us with an opportunity to recall the list of models with which I began this article. Neither is calling for fusion, but both envision such a high level of incorporation of Christian conviction into educational practice that it should probably be described as *satura-*

tion. One might as easily argue that Gaebelein and Holmes seek an intense dialogue between Christian conviction and what we do in schools. These two possibilities illustrate how porous are the models I differentiated early in the article. On the one hand, then, I call for those who resonate theologically with both the transformational/perspectival model and with the incarnational model to take each other's best. But on the other, I point to the many logical connections between these models and at least two of the other four I differentiated.

4.2 Perspectival Integration without Incarnational Integration

What about Reformed approaches to faith-learning integration? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approach taken by those who talk perspectival or worldviewish integration, who like to talk about taking every thought captive to Christ?

At our worst, those who tend toward perspectival integration talk about the importance of worldview, perhaps think worldviewishly, maybe even show others how to go at things worldviewishly, but do all this without sufficient concern for personal transformation by the Holy Spirit's work. I noted earlier that perspectivalists sometimes condemn evangelicals for their truncation of the gospel to something with application only to ethics and evangelistic witness, not to transformation of curriculum and the whole educational program. I want to point out here that those condemnations boomerang on perspectivalists whenever they fail to show that God is at work transforming their personal lives along with their approaches to social and educational issues. In other words, those who want to define faith-learning integration strictly or mainly in the terms of perspective and worldview are at their worst when they lack the incarnational.

Those who talk perspective and worldview have nevertheless made a wonderful contribution to educational thinking. They have recognized and then reminded other Christians repeatedly that we should see the order and texture of God's world in all areas of life and that we should see that it shapes all our educational ideals and practices.[16] Were we to take seriously the call put forth by the perspectivalists, we would try to find ways to show forth in all our curricula—not just in confessional schools but in state schools as well—God's active presence in and call upon this world, humans, and our cultural life.

At their best, those who talk about worldviewish integration embrace these theological and cultural riches emphasized in their own tradition, and they also live by the gospel inasmuch as they demonstrate incarnational integration in their day-to-day lives. In this picture, we see not only a full embrace of the creation and the riches of culture, but we see people who strive to model in their daily lives the meaning of sanctification, or, if you prefer, the same kind of conversion, reconstruction and restoration I mentioned earlier with reference to psychological wholeness.
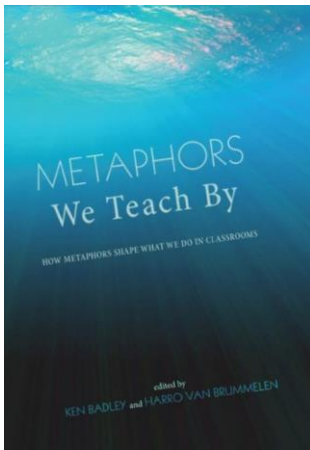
5. Conclusion

In other words, evangelicals, who tend to talk incarnational integration, and Reformed folk, who tend to talk worldviewish or perspectival integration, are at both at their best when they draw from both wells. Representatives of either view are capable of truncation and short-sightedness. But they are also both capable of becoming attractive and fetching illustrations of faith-learning integration.
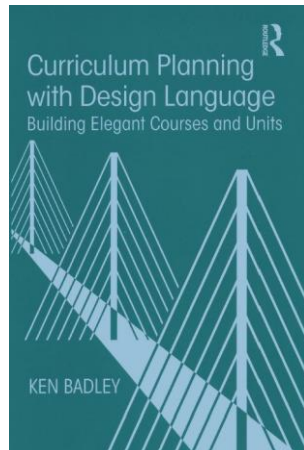
Endnotes

1. This paper is adapted from a presentation given at the Stapleford House conference, `Toward a Christian Theory of Education,' January 6, 1996. The author wishes to thank David Smith for the, title.. To keep this article accessible to a wide audience I have written if largely unencumbered by heavy reference to the literature on integration and faith-learning integration. Those wishing documentation on integration should sec my doctoral dissertation from the University of British Columbia, Integration and the Integration of Faith and Learning (1986), or the article `Integral Learning and Faith/Learning Integration: Competing Christian Conceptions,' in Journal of Research on Christian *Education* 3,1 (Spring 1994): 13-33.

2. In fact, students from the Toronto School of Theology enrolled in my *1995* course `The Integration of Faith and Learning' persuaded me to add `Incarnational' integration to my schema, which I had used largely without alteration since developing it in the course of the doctoral work I completed in *1986.*

3. The usual answer to this query is `yes.'

4. Thanks to John Shortt for pointing out this connection.

5. I argue, in fact, that those different conceptions are the life-blood of education as long as they keep us reflective, careful and intentional. Teachers' differing visions can undermine education if they serve only to confuse and frustrate students.

6. Briefly, I would argue that coherence in curriculum does not guarantee an integrated education for the student, just as chaos in the curriculum does not guaranteed a chaotic outcome for the student. Nevertheless we expect coherence to produce integratedness and chaos to produce confusion.

7. Briefly, I would argue that identifying the student as the locus substantially increases the student's responsibility for learning, without significantly reducing the teacher's responsibility.

8. The author recognizes that the present article both illustrates and perpetuates this problem.

9. Recognizably, such illustrations and projects may exist, but simply have not been reported. Our attention, in that case, perhaps should shift toward better dissemination of the stories of our attempts and successes.

10. "Good fences make good neighbours" from "The Mending Wall," by Robert Frost.

11. Thanks to my ICS colleague Bob Sweetman for this observation.

12. Perhaps, on the other hand, the tendency to equate curriculum integration with interdisciplinarity confuses our attempts to get clear about and to live out faith-learning integration?

13. Common grace dictates that we allow these various Carls to have insights into human nature; these psychologies may, in fact, be compatible with Christian conviction (and thus perhaps even illustrative of faith-learning integration properly done). That is not my objection. Rather, it is that whatever is popular in the secular world, we import to the Christian world as if this `is' the shape Christian thought ought to take at a given time.

14. Oxford University Press, *1954.*

15. Eerdmans, *1975, 1986.*

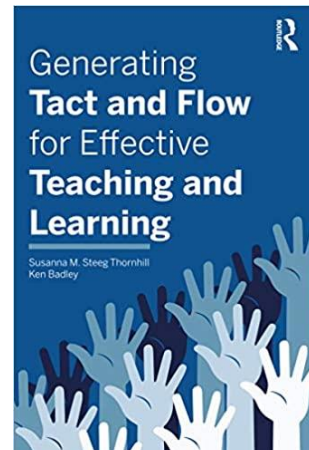16. Some call this the ontic basis for curriculum.

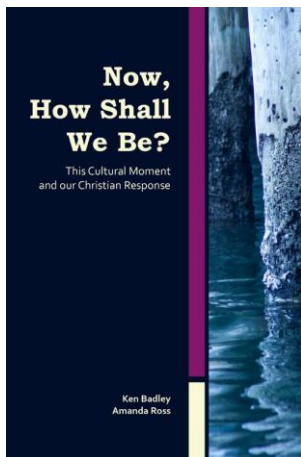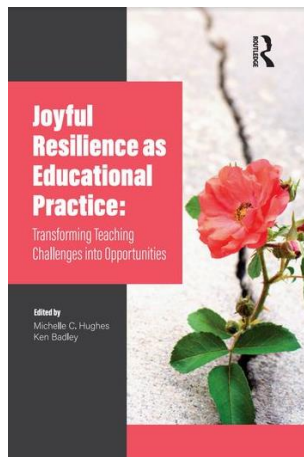**Other titles on education and culture by Ken Badley … available wherever books are sold**

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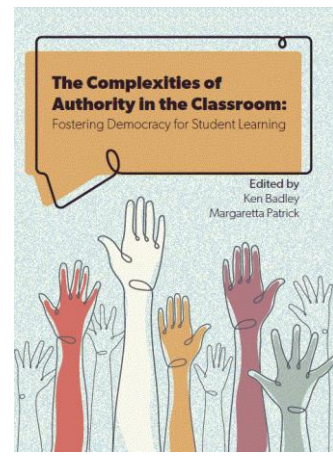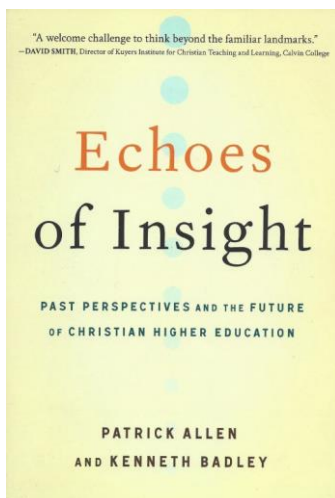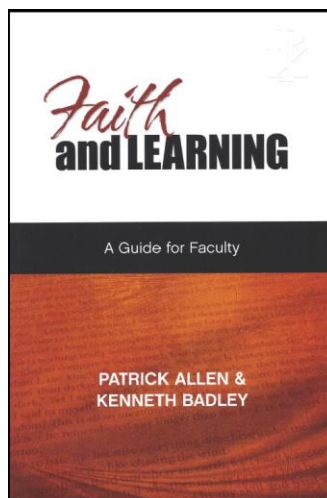Fostering Democracy for Student Learning
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