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# E-Learning and the Academy: A New Paradigm for Training Youth Ministry Students

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This research is a product of the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) program at George Fox University. [Find out more](#) about the program.

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

E-LEARNING AND THE ACADEMY:  
A NEW PARADIGM FOR TRAINING  
YOUTH MINISTRY STUDENTS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF GEORGE FOX EVANGELICAL SEMINARY  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY  
RICHARD CHROMEY

APRIL 2007

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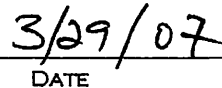
**E-LEARNING AND THE ACADEMY:  
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Three years ago I entered into this Doctor of Ministry program with a desire to learn new leadership skill within an emergent culture. I never imagined that my journey would lead me to question all that I am, including where I have been, what I have become and, ultimately, where God is leading me. If it were not for those trusted guides along the path, my travel surely would have ended in trouble and tragedy.

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Rick Chromey

February 3, 2007

## SECTION ONE

### ABSTRACT

The technological revolution of cyberspace has forced various institutions to reinvent. In recent years, many colleges and universities have converted partially or wholly to distance education or “e-learning.” However, countless other schools and learning institutions (especially ministry training) remain firmly entrenched within site-based, seat-time, lecture-rooted, modern educational frames.

And therefore, the problem arises: *how can cyber technology and on-line educational delivery systems train and equip youth and family ministry students for professional or lay ministry?*

The purpose of this work is an investigation of electronic learning in order to propose alternative strategies for future youth ministry education. Ultimately, readers will gain a better understanding of a digital environment and its impact upon potential youth ministry e-training systems for future improvement and expansion of a ministry school’s youth worker education.

In order to address this problem, it is proposed institutions of Christian higher learning proactively seek conversion of traditional site-based learning platforms to nontraditional distance learning strategies or risk future obsolescence. In particular, there is a need for entry-level youth ministry education that is available solely on-line; especially since many churches seek effective, affordable, flexible training for volunteers, lay teachers and ministry leaders.

It is an obvious assumption that most current institution leaders in academics, especially within ministry training schools, remain firmly committed to seat-based, time-rooted educational approaches.<sup>1</sup> E-learning, however, is a rising alternative that many Christian colleges are investigating.

The project will be a designed distance learning course on *Children's Ministry* available for use in multiple ministry schools. This CD resource will include thirteen brief (25-30 minute) learning video sessions on children's ministry, suitable for those who lead and work with children, birth through fifth grade. The resource will be distributed via the Consortium of Christian Colleges Distance Learning (September 2007 release) and was filmed at Good News Productions (Joplin, MO) in August 2006.

In addition to this project, additional ministry courses will be converted into full-service e-learning frames under the E-TRAIN™ philosophy of timeless, relevant, academic, Internet-based and networked practice.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> At a conference for distance learning instructors and leaders (The Christian College Consortium of Distance Learning), held January 4-6, 2007 in Joplin, MO, the clear feeling was the "brick and mortar" form of education would remain for some time. Electronic and distance learning was clearly adding and even replacing, but it was not going to completely reinvent the Academy. However, there were voices of dissent, mostly from the younger, under 45 age, that believed ministry training would morph into electronic learning (with students still working within a local ministry context) or return to a twenty-first century form of the monastery where a small group of students would intimately study, year-round, with a special guide. This might be the only remnant of "modern" education.

<sup>2</sup> E-TRAIN™ is a further innovation that customizes ministry training through a contextualized, project-based, local church environment (with no specific time frames). While there may be a video component (such as the Consortium model), it is neither currently relevant nor required. The following courses have been converted to an E-TRAIN™ frame: Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry and Spiritual Development. Interested Christian ministry training schools may adopt E-TRAIN™ courses for college credit beginning spring 2007. E-TRAIN™ courses feature a full syllabus, learning experiences and reading materials.

The Consortium Course on Children's Ministry and the E-TRAIN™ syllabi will serve as an initial response to the overall ministry problem.

## SECTION TWO

### THE PROBLEM

In late December 2006, *Time* magazine honored the venerable “Person of the Year.” Normal decorum reserved this notoriety for a significant individual who remarkably influenced and changed societal paradigms in the previous year. For the first time ever, the tribute fell to “you” and “I” (the common man). Richard Stengel, managing editor for *Time* explained:

. . . individuals are changing the nature of the information age, that the creators and consumers of user-generated content are transforming art and politics and commerce, that they are engaged citizens of a new digital democracy. From user-generated images of Baghdad strife and the London Underground bombing to the *macaca* moment that might have altered the midterm elections to the hundreds of thousands of individual outpourings of hope and poetry and self-absorption, this new global nervous system is change the way we perceive the world. And the consequences of it all are both hard to know and impossible to overestimate.<sup>1</sup>

In similar perspective, Thomas L. Friedman titled his tome to the web-based universe beneath the banner that the “world is flat.”<sup>2</sup> Yet Friedman’s cyber-culture is more than level, it is also obese or “fat” (fast, accessible and temporary).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rick Stengel, “Now It’s Your Turn,” *Time* (December 25, 2006): 8.

<sup>2</sup> In his best-selling *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, Friedman writes: “If the prospect of this flattening—and all of the pressures, dislocations, and opportunities accompanying it—causes you unease about the future, you are neither alone nor wrong. Whenever civilization has gone through one of these disruptive, dislocating technological revolutions—like Gutenberg’s introduction of the printing press—the whole world changed in profound ways.” Thomas L. Friedman, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 46.

<sup>3</sup> Rick Chromey, “The World Is Flat and Fat,” *Christian Standard Online*; Internet Online. Available at <<http://www.christianstandard.com/articledisplay.asp?id=357>> [03 January 2007].

The guiding thesis of this study and the central component for the project is this shift in paradigm will have lasting consequence upon educational institutions and, in particular, the training of ministerial candidates (most specifically in youth and family ministry) for the coming century. The rise of electronic learning and digital education may overhaul, if not completely reinvent, the popular assumptions, practices and structures in the learning institution.

After all, the world is currently undergoing a significant cultural shifting. For the past five hundred years civilized societies have been modernized via technological innovations that propelled culture forward. Nevertheless, specific and unique technology is capable of breaking social paradigms and forging new cultural languages (a phenomenon that occurs every few centuries or more). The introduction of television, the Internet and, most recently, the cellular phone have altered and rearranged cultural voices.

A cyber-civilization utters new social dialects of relational, experiential and image which, consequently, requires the institutions that service society—whether in commerce, politics, education, entertainment and the church—to reinvent its communication or face increasing irrelevance and, for some, even eventual death.

Peter Drucker, in the watershed work Post-Capitalist Society, astutely noted this current shifting:

Every few hundred years in Western history there occurs a sharp transformation. Within a few short decades, society rearranges itself—its worldview; its basic values; its social and political structure; its arts; its key institutions. Fifty years later, there is a new world. And the people born then cannot even imagine the world in which their grandparents lived and into



which their parents were born. We are currently living through just such a transition.<sup>1</sup>

Several examples will be introduced as evidence for this shifting and serve as notice to the Church and learning institutions that change is imminent.

### The Rise of New Cultural Languages

Technology creates cultural voices. Historically, there have been many significant innovations that vaulted society into new enlightened thinking, structures and practices. For example, the creation of the wheel, alphabet and papyrus all provided new opportunities for societal change. The modern world (loosely defined as A.D. 1500 – 2000) hinged upon two significant fourteenth and fifteenth century technological innovations: the mechanized clock<sup>2</sup> and the printing press.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As quoted by Jimmy Long, *Emerging Hope: A Strategy for Reaching Postmoderns* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 20.

<sup>2</sup> While clocks and time-keeping have a long history, it was the rise of the “mechanized” clock sometime in the fourteenth century that featured a minute hand and a systematic structure for accuracy that changed culture. According to *Wikipedia*, there were “four key elements” to a mechanized clock (up until the digital clock):

- the power, supplied by a falling weight, later by a coiled spring
- the escapement, a periodic repetitive action that allows the power to escape in small bursts rather than drain away all at once
- the going train, a set of interlocking gear wheels that controls the speed of rotation of the wheels connected between the power supply and the indicators
- indicators, such as dials, hands, and bells

*Wikipedia*, “Clock History.” Internet online. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clock#History>> [27 December 2006]

<sup>3</sup> The printing press was invented by Johannes Gutenberg, circa. A.D. 1447. Gutenberg was named by the A&E Channel as “Person of the Millennium” in 1999. *Wikipedia*, “Printing Press.” Internet online. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gutenberg\\_press](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gutenberg_press)> [27 December 2006].

However, in the twentieth century, three new technologies were birthed that significantly impacted culture<sup>4</sup> and invited a “post-modern” perspective: television,<sup>5</sup> Internet,<sup>6</sup> and the cellular phone.<sup>7</sup>

The following table outlines the differences in technology and subsequent cultural languages (which frame a society) for the Modern Era and Post-Modern Period:

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<sup>4</sup> *Wired* magazine recently named “the top 10 gadgets that changed the world” in the “modern era.” No particular order was given except the date they were released: The RCA Model 630TS (1946) television, Western Electric 500 desk telephone (1949), Kodak Brownie 127 camera (1953), Bell and Howell Director Series Model 414 Zoomatic 8-MM Movie camera (1962), Amana Radarange microwave (1967), JVC HR-3300 videocassette-recorder (1976), Atari 2600 video computer gaming system (1977), Sony Walkman TPS-L2 portable cassette player (1979), IBM 5150 Personal Computer (1981) and the Motorola Startac cell phone (1996). Ironically, four have direct connections to television while another two are completely extinct (Brownie camera and Walkman cassette-player). Christopher Null, “The 10 Gadgets That Changed The World” *Wired-Test*, (Fall 2006), 24-27.

<sup>5</sup> Ironically, the emergence of television was a global matter. Building upon the work of Italian physicist Guglielmo Marconi (who invented radio telegraphy), a number of scientists, operating independently, commenced to build technology to transmit images. Popular legend credits the invention of television to American Philo T. Farnsworth (who developed the cathode ray tube), but evidence suggests other players. In 1923, Russian scientist Vladimir Zworykin (working for Westinghouse) invented the “Iconoscope” and later a picture display tube known as the “Kinescope.” Meanwhile, British inventor John Logie Baird pioneered true television when he transmitted “a moving silhouette image” for the first time in 1924 and, a year later, actually produced a moving “live image.” The following year, in America, the National Broadcasting Corporation is formed (1926). An excellent timeline for television history can be found at <http://www.civilization.ca/hist/tv/tv02eng.html>. [27 December 2006].

<sup>6</sup> Primitive forms of web-based technology existed in ARPANET (a 1969 UCLA-Stanford University file-sharing community), International Telecommunications Union (1974) and University of North Carolina’s Usenet (1979). Largely constrained to educational and military purposes, it was not until 1994 and the innovation of the *Netscape Navigator* that the worldwide web became accessible to average people. *Wikipedia*, “History of the Internet,” Internet online. Available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet\\_history](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_history) [27 December 2006].

<sup>7</sup> While portable phones (or mobile technology) have existed since the 1940s, the rise of the cellular phone can be traced to a proposal to the Federal Communications Commission by AT&T in December 1971 (which granted allocated frequencies and cellular service). Motorola issued the first generation of cellular phones in 1983, largely for cars and affluent individuals. The first digital phone call happened in 1991. *Wikipedia*, “History of Mobile Phone” Internet online. Available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_cellular\\_phones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_cellular_phones) [27 December 2006].

Table 1. An Outline of Modern and Postmodern Ages

MODERN		POST-MODERN	
Mechanized clock (c. 1300s) Printing press (c. 1400s)		Television (c. 1930s) Cellular Phone (c. 1980s) Internet (c. 1990s)	
LANGUAGE: MECHANIZED		LANGUAGE: RELATIONAL	
Dialects	<i>System</i> <i>Science</i> <i>Class/Creed</i> <i>Industry</i> <i>Logic</i>	Dialects:	<i>Community</i> <i>Connection</i> <i>Tolerance</i> <i>Global</i>
LANGUAGE: PASSIVE		LANGUAGE: EXPERIENTIAL	
Dialects	<i>Lecture/Sermon</i> <i>Hierarchical</i> <i>"In the Box"</i> <i>Destination</i> <i>Religious</i>	Dialects:	<i>Authentic</i> <i>Participatory</i> <i>Extreme</i> <i>Journey</i> <i>Spiritual</i>
LANGUAGE: WORD		LANGUAGE: IMAGE	
Dialects	<i>Literacy</i> <i>Static</i> <i>Print</i> <i>Audio Mono-Task</i> <i>Foundational</i>	Dialects	<i>Digital</i> <i>Instant/Live</i> <i>Visual Multi-Task</i> <i>Fluid</i> <i>Imaginative</i>

The significance of television, the Internet and cellular phone technology cannot be understated. These three innovations are radically rearranging civilized cultures and a new post-modern societal frame is emerging. The “natives” to post-modern culture are technologically-adept<sup>8</sup> and prone to framing truth via personal relationships, experiences and images, as opposed to “immigrants” who can view this high-tech, wireless, visual culture with ignorance, insolence or tepid interest.<sup>9</sup>

In 2007, according to one high-tech expert, “roughly 146 days, or five months” will be exhausted ingesting media (television, Internet, cellular phones, digital music).<sup>10</sup> The evidence also suggests “multi-tasking” (using more than one form of media at the same time) is common. Paul Saffio, a “technology forecaster” observed that Americans are “making a smooth transition from a couch potato to a

---

<sup>8</sup> A study of 18-24 year-olds (Greenburg Quinlan Rosner International Research and Consulting) discovered “the average age for first Internet use was 12 years, 3 months” and nearly a quarter of the 1,021 survey indicated they were under ten years of age. These young adults also averaged 21.3 hours online weekly and another survey by Educause of 28,000 students at 96 universities and colleges revealed “some” were online ten to sixteen hours a day. Activities include social networking, digital downloads, fantasy sports and instant messaging. One collegian commented on “second-nature” of technology: “I can’t even think of when I use it and when I don’t. It’s such a part of life.” Sharon Jayson, “Totally Wireless on Campus: Today’s ‘Digital Natives’ Can’t Live or Study, Without Technology,” *USA Today* (Tuesday, October 3, 2006): 1D.

<sup>9</sup> Leonard Sweet suggested in *Carpe Manana* that while multiple generations coexist in American culture (G.I., Builder, Boomer, Gen X, Millennial) that, in essence, our current society (modern/postmodern) is drawn along a clear cultural demarcation of age: those born prior to 1961 (“immigrants”) and those born in and after 1961 (“natives”). Sweet identifies those currently under age 45 as culturally comfortable within the postmodern context. It’s their “native” world. Older Americans, over 45, tend to be more “modern” in their cultural outlooks (as it’s a world they’ve “immigrated” into by necessity, not choice). Leonard Sweet, *Carpe Manana* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 14. “Natives” tend to have iPods, MySpace accounts, TiVo and IM or text-message using their cell phone. “Immigrants” may enjoy some technological innovations (HDTV, cell phones) but rarely venture too far into high-tech culture without frustration.

<sup>10</sup> These numbers reveal an increase since 2000 when Americans used media 3,333 hours in a single year (3,518 expected in 2007) and 1,467 hours in front of a television (1,555 hours forecast for 2007). Janet Kornblum, “Americans Will Devote Half Their Lives to Forms of Media Next Year,” *USA Today* (December 15, 2006), 6A.

mouse potato” and exercising only his or her legs between the television and computer.<sup>11</sup>

This author would like to propose the transition from “analog” to “digital” (for the “natives” born since 1961) is also worth distinguishing. An individual who was born in 1965, for example, would have a completely variant experience with technology than someone born in 1985. In a sense, there are three categories of “digital natives” and one category that comprises anyone born previous to 1961. This author affectionately refers to these groups as the “analog,” “danalog,” “analigitals” and “digitals,” as outlined by the table on the next page:<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> These categories are also arbitrary and fluid. Within each category are “first adopters” (individuals who purchase new technology first, even though more expensive), “second wavers” (individuals who wait a year or two until “first adopter” technology falls to half or more its original price) and “reluctants” (individuals who only adopt technology when it becomes absolutely convenient or ultimately necessary).

**Table 2. Comparison of Media for Four Analog-Digital Groups**

ANALOG	DANALOG	ANALIGITAL	DIGITAL
Born Pre-1961	Born 1961 – 1975	Born 1976 – 1990	Born Since 1990
Radio, Black and White Television <i>Today Show, Ed Sullivan, Elvis</i>	Color Television, Remote Control <i>Kennedy/King Assassination, Woodstock, Vietnam, Man on the Moon, Watergate</i>	Cable Television VCR <i>Iran Hostage Crisis, Lennon's Murder, Reagan Revolution, Challenger</i>	Satellite Television TiVo HDTV <i>L.A. Riots, O.J. Trial, Gulf War, Columbine, September 11, Tsunami, Katrina</i>
Arcade Pinball	Atari <i>Pong, Pac-Man Space Invaders</i>	Nintendo <i>Super-Mario Brothers, Tetris</i>	PlayStation, Xbox, Wii <i>Grand Theft Auto, Halo, Guitar Hero</i>
Vinyl Records <i>Mono</i>	Vinyl Records Eight-Track Tapes Cassette Tapes <i>Stereo 8-Track Player</i>	Vinyl Records, Cassette Tapes Compact Discs <i>Digital Audio Sony Walkman</i>	Compact Discs MP3 <i>Digital Re-Mastered iPod</i>
Rotary Phone	Touch-Tone Phone	Cordless Phone Car Phone	Cellular Phone
Black/White Film	8 mm Color Film <i>Polaroid Land Camera</i>	VHS and VHS-C <i>Disposable Cameras</i>	MPEG, DVD+R <i>Digital Cameras</i>
N/A	Room-Size Computer 12" Floppy Disk	Personal Desktop 5¼ and 3.5" Disk <i>Gaming, Personal Productivity</i>	Laptop, Blackberry CD-R, DVD-R 300 + Gig Hard Drive <i>Internet, E-Mail</i>

Digital and visual media are changing culture.<sup>13</sup> But is that a beneficial matter? Tech futurist and guru Marshall McLuhan,<sup>14</sup> who coined the popular phrase “the medium is the message,” astutely identified “Four Laws of Media” to help “discern our culture and the power and effects of media”<sup>15</sup>:

- What does the medium extend?
- What does the medium make obsolete?
- What does the medium reverse into?
- What does the medium retrieve?

For example, television is an extension of the camera and radio. It has largely eliminated radio as a central fixture in the home for news and entertainment.

Television can also possess dangers (“reverses”) such as the transmission of sex, violence and inappropriate language into all homes. Finally, television has “retrieved” the power of icons, largely lost within a Protestant print culture. Every piece of technology, according to McLuhan, should answer these four inquiries.

Futurists Joel A. Barker and Scott W. Erickson argue against a single “high-tech” notion and instead assign “technEcology” to five “regions” in the future: Super Tech, Limits Tech, Local Tech, Nature Tech and Human Tech. These

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<sup>13</sup> “In the past decade, the Internet and cellphones have changed the way people interact with each other, the way they work, the way they spend their leisure time,” says Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Internet and American Life Project. Social networks, blogs and other peer-to-peer networking also impact the way people “share their stories.” Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Many venerate Marshall McLuhan as one of the most valuable and imaginative thinkers on 20<sup>th</sup> century technology. His legendary work *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964) earned him rave reviews and the *New York Herald Tribune* announced he was “the most important thinker since Newton, Darwin, Freud, Einstein, and Pavlov...” As quoted by Shane Hipps, *The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture: How Media Shapes Faith, The Gospel and Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 31.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 41.

“technEcologies are the inevitable result of accumulating discoveries, inventions, and innovations of human beings,” say Barker and Erickson. Each region is rooted in value statements regarding material wealth, science and technology, relationship with nature and work and leisure.<sup>16</sup>

### The Growing Obsolescence of Modern Education

The issue facing modern educational institutions is an assumption that blossoming technologies are only *evolving* culture but have not, and may not, radically *reinvent* it.<sup>17</sup> The failure to recognize the difference is the key to either prolonged adaptation (with increasing irrelevance) or spontaneous metamorphosis into a whole new paradigm.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, electronic learning in schools may simply be digitized correspondence or distance education, focusing on video lectures (still seat-based under a primary professor), print formats (syllabi, reading and papers) and largely non-relational projects and learning activities.<sup>19</sup> The Internet is an

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<sup>16</sup> Joel A. Barker and Scott W. Erickson, *Five Regions of the Future: Preparing Your Business For Tomorrow's Technology Revolution* (New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2005), 14.

<sup>17</sup> Micro-evolution is the idea here, where changes occur within a species. To the contrary, macro-evolution (or complete reinvention) evolves one species into a completely new one. Many modern institutions argue for the former but technological history suggests the latter will result.

<sup>18</sup> Leonard Sweet writes in the preface to *eMinistry*: “In the past thirty years the Internet has gone from something nonexistent to something nobody took seriously to the driving force of the dawning world. Two million new Web pages of pavement are being laid every day, a superhighway transporting a global renaissance of innovation and invention. Think what the next twenty, fifty, or seventy-five years will bring. Like the printing press before it, the Internet is forcing us to rewrite the rules of every game.” Andrew Careaga, *eMinistry: Connecting With the Net Generation* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001), 7.

<sup>19</sup> An example is the *Christian College Consortium for Distance Learning* (affiliated with the independent Christian Church/Church of Christ and located in Joplin, MO) is a progressive video driven (lecture and paper) format. Nearly every course is seat-based education relying upon textbook reading and paper-driven assignments. Additionally, some schools (such as Johnson Bible College in Knoxville, TN) continue to publish correspondence courses (non-video) that rely solely upon reading and writing pedagogy.



“adapted” tool but not a signal for a radically new blueprint. Modern education uses the web as an extended classroom and visual technology to project the professor into a different context.

The quandary with this approach is that culture is quickly moving beyond authoritarian, systematic (time- and space-based) approaches.<sup>20</sup> The failing music industry and slumping compact disc sales are significant examples.<sup>21</sup> Overall disc sales are five percent behind for 2006.<sup>22</sup> The only glimmer of hope resides in “listener customization” that allows musicologists to create their own versions of an artist’s song (after purchasing the album with a USB memory stick enclosed).<sup>23</sup>

Further examples can be found in other entertainment media. The meteoric rise of NetFlix against a once-dominant local neighborhood rental market

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<sup>20</sup> An odd, yet useful, comparison might be the local county fair. Still popular among older generations for “social networking” and entertainment, younger audiences find the fairs boorish and irrelevant. Prior to video gaming and computers, the fair was an annual event to enjoy friendships, compete, play games and ride attractions. But in a 24/7/365 entertainment culture, rich in virtual experience, amusement parks, and online social networking, the local fair no longer draws. The ones that have survived are larger state events that feature popular music artists and unique events. Educational institutions who rely upon traditional modern educational strategies may survive this coming technological tsunami but probably more due to size and specialties involving sports teams and program reputation. Judy Keen, “Fairs Find ‘You Have To Change,’” *USA Today* (July 11, 2006), 3A.

<sup>21</sup> The age of purchasing a whole artist’s album is over, as sales have declined in four of the last five years (with no sign of reversing fortune). However, as in-store album sales fall (down 4.2% since 2005), digital downloading of single tracks have exploded by 77% in the same time frame. Consumers are moving online to purchase their music, whether as music streaming (listening live to music online) or through web warehouses like iTunes or Rhapsody. Ringtones are another revenue as cell phones are customized to favorite songs. In the first half of 2006, 280.9 million songs were digitally downloaded (compared to a mere 55 million in 2004). Edna Gundersen, “Without A Superstar, Album Sales Dip,” *USA Today* (July 13, 2006): 1D.

<sup>22</sup> Edna Gundersen, “Musicians Put New Spin on the CD to Boost Sales,” *USA Today* (October 10, 2006), 1D.

<sup>23</sup> Artists like Beck and the Barenaked Ladies are budding examples of this pioneering spirit, although skeptics note “there’s only a certain kind of fan who wants to play with the bells and whistles and change the mix of songs.” Ibid.

(BlockBuster, Movie Gallery) has garnered attention.<sup>24</sup> Sirius radio, iPods and Internet music stations have all but sentenced traditional AM and FM radio to a long painful death.<sup>25</sup> Satellite television is besting local cable companies through “on demand” customizable programming (like DirectTV’s “NFL Sunday Ticket”).<sup>26</sup>

Newspapers and magazines are morphing digital to retain audiences through “publishing 360.”<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, a recent study does suggest web media is supplementing rather supplanting print media. The around-the-clock connection encourages individuals to stay abreast of headline content online, but research reveals most still seek print media for more meaty analysis and coverage.<sup>28</sup> “The power of

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<sup>24</sup> NetFlix continues to grow in popularity and even forced Blockbuster to offer a two for one rental over the 2006 Christmas holiday season for NetFlix customers who bring in their “red mailing envelope” as a coupon. This author recently engaged a local Blockbuster employee about their rental business and he confessed that they *sell* more used DVDs now than they rent. While this is anecdotal evidence at best, it does suggest the rental business is facing serious competition from online movie rental houses like NetFlix.

<sup>25</sup> *Wired* magazine announced the “death of radio” in a 2005 cover feature. The popularity of portable MP3 and DVD players, plus subscription services to satellite radio (that never lose their signal and can be transferred from vehicle to vehicle) is costing land-locked radio stations their listeners. At this point, satellite radio is a luxury but, as with most improved technologies, will become standard features in most cars (along with global positioning systems). The prediction is, at this time, local radio will die as advertising dollars no longer flow toward this medium (since fewer will be listening).

<sup>26</sup> Personal “customization” is a blossoming trend. In August 2006, Microsoft released XNA Game Studio Express, the initial step toward allowing gamers to completely customize their own video games for use on personal computers and Xbox 360 systems. Mike Snider, “Microsoft to Let Players Design Own Games,” *USA Today* (August 14, 2006), 1D.

<sup>27</sup> Magazines are bolstering sales through e-mailed digital editions, special downloads and online stores. Interactivity and instant access are key features. “A magazine is very portable,” says Olivier Griot, managing director of *Hachett’s* mobile services, “but it’s not interactive. With (digital), you can ask a poll question in the magazine, and readers can answer then and there with a text message.” Laura Petrecca, “Magazine’s Experiment With Digital Platforms,” *USA Today* (June 23, 2006), 2B.

<sup>28</sup> The research also reveals “since 2000, there has been virtually no increase in the percentage of 18-24 year-olds who say they regularly get news online, while older groups have seen growth.” Meanwhile, daily readership of printed newspapers has fallen seven percentage points in the last decade (from 50% to 43%). Television evening news has also seen a modest decline in viewership, dropping two percentage points (from 30% to 28%) between 2000 and 2006. This implies a more sinister suggestion: younger generations may no longer be accessing news through time-based media. Anecdotal surveys of this author’s students suggest few watch the evening or morning news

ink and paper will remain,” says Samir Husni, chair of University of Mississippi’s journalism department, “but it can’t exist by itself.”<sup>29</sup>

Clearly, the Internet is changing how people receive the news (a lesson that modern educators need to understand). A decade ago only 2% used the net for news. Today, one-third of Americans seek online news services.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, as digital technology ages with “native” generations, and improved paper-less media<sup>31</sup> emerges, traditional “paper and ink” may fade.<sup>32</sup>

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programs. Most learn of news events via conversations online, e-mailed news nuggets or accessing television and newspapers websites. It is also argued that in a information-saturated age, useful knowledge is given priority. Consequently, it is expected for students between the ages of 18-24 years of age to eschew traditional news programs. After all, many of these same students learn of news through college classrooms, work places or home conversations. Peter Johnson, “Internet News Supplements Papers, TV,” *USA Today* (July 31, 2006), 5D.

<sup>29</sup> Petrecca, “Magazine’s Experiment,” 1-2B.

<sup>30</sup> Johnson, “Internet supplements,” 5D.

<sup>31</sup> Many television stations now allow users to download a personal news feed (with immediate and continual updates on breaking stories, weather and sports. Newspapers also issue daily e-mailed editions with live links to deeper stories through the Web. These forms of media are popular with “digital natives” and may actually mark the difference between “native” and “immigrant” (who prefers news in a time-based, print format).

<sup>32</sup> “May fade” could be an understatement. There is little doubt that literacy (reading) skill will remain a high value in the technological skill domain. The question remains as to whether “paper and ink” will be a part of that future. In a Gutenberg world, where print media is overwhelmingly dominant, it is difficult to comprehend a “paper-less” world. However, just as debit cards are slowly ending the era of “personal checks” and e-mail has all but finished off traditional letter-writing (except at Christmas and special occasions), it is certainly possible for a future of digitally-delivered newspapers and magazines. As tech-friendly “natives” enjoy digital formats (MP3, MPEG, JPEG) over print formats (plastic, videotape, photograph) it is only a matter of time before an innovation emerges (like the iPod) that allows users to read digital formats (e-books) in an “enjoyable” manner. This is the key to successful technology rooting in culture: pleasure. All forms of media that have thrived and survived do so from the pleasure principle. Vinyl records are no longer “pleasurable” (except to hardcore collectors who enjoy the memory of a record more than the audio fidelity). Cassettes are no longer enjoyable. In 2006, the VHS format took a serious blow when all major manufacturers ceased production of VHS players (vinyl’s death can be traced to a similar decision a decade ago). Compact disks, in comparison to digital formats, are less pleasurable and sluggish sales signal the day of the disk may be over. Downloadable movies will eventually spell the same demise for DVD. The future of both CD and DVD is in user-generated content and file-sharing. The media will remain (until something better surfaces) but only for its usefulness.

Ultimately, ministry schools and training institutions will need to reinvent as “information managers” (as opposed to the current model of “information dispensers”).<sup>33</sup> The Information Age is in bloom and unlimited possibilities exist to digitize data and manage information. In fact, one tech expert suggests in a few short years the average computer will contain enough hard drive space to literally “slice” the Internet to save momentarily on a laptop (ending the need for a hot spot or landline to surf the web).<sup>34</sup>

Fortunately, such storage may already be irrelevant as wireless networks blossom in coverage and free access.<sup>35</sup> Digital “natives” expect complimentary wireless access, especially in activities where they financially foot the bill (learning and travel). Consequently, like airports, eateries and hotels, most universities and colleges are offering gratis “hot spots” if not overall wireless access (largely as recruitment strategy). “Students expect high-bandwidth information, and if you can’t deliver it, you’re at a competitive disadvantage,” notes Dan Reed, the Information Technology chief for the University of North Carolina.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> While the lecture method (“information dispenser”) model is not advocated or taught within schools of education, the strategy remains standard (and even popular) among Bible and ministry professors—many of whom have little, if any, training in educational praxis.

<sup>34</sup> In the summer of 2006, Freescale introduced “the first commercial memory chip based on a new technology called magnetic random access memory, or MRAM” which will put “unimaginable amounts of data on something smaller than an Advil tablet.” Storage capacity continues to grow at a rate of up to 70% every year. In fact, in 1991 a 2.5 diskette had 100 megabytes of storage space. This year, Seagate sold a 750 gig hard drive. In the future, iPods are expected to hold “10,000 movies instead of 10,000 songs.” Kevin Maney, “Download Net On Your Laptop? Maybe Someday,” *USA Today* (July 12, 2006), 3B.

<sup>35</sup> While nearly every airport now offers wireless Internet access, only a minority are free. For many business and air travelers, complimentary access (while between flights) should be available without charge. Several businesses, including restaurants like Fazolis, advertise free wireless.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Davidson, “Gadgets Rule On College Campuses,” *USA Today* (March 29, 2005), 2B.

A technological “disadvantage” will be the bottom line for institutions in the future.<sup>37</sup> Many schools (and students) are already feeling the pain of technology on campus, where technology fees can be as much as three grand annually.<sup>38</sup> In 2005, Duke University purchased a half million dollars in iPods to service 1,650 freshmen with digital technology.<sup>39</sup> However, digitizing content has some professors growing nervous. “Once you post lectures to the Web, it implies the face-to-face encounter of the classroom doesn’t matter,” notes Elizabeth Fenn, professor of history.<sup>40</sup> This sentiment reflects modern sensibilities but misses the point. A digital web-connected culture no longer requires a classroom (or even a professor) to access information and, in fact, to many post-moderns the idea (of a required classroom or even a professor) smacks of elitism and arrogance.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Smaller Christian universities and Bible colleges, in particular, have been financially strapped by exploding technology needs. Many institutions still use obsolete networks for data entry, grades and financial transactions. Meanwhile, conversion to web technology initially demanded land line development in classrooms and offices (only to now be obsolete in light of wireless networks). Furthermore, to service faculty and staff with computers to stay relevant both in the classroom and competitive in recruitment, public relations and website development is costing thousands of dollars annually. Many faculty in smaller institutions still use older computers and software (partly from familiarity but mostly from necessity). Laptops have grown in favor among faculty but their shelf life is markedly less (many replace laptops every two to three years). Software innovation and digital upgrades also hurt institutions. Not only must faculty be serviced with the latest software for presentations and word processing but also virus protection. Nearly all these expenses are passed on to the students through higher tuition and fees.

<sup>38</sup> Paul Davidson, “Some Schools Have Separate Tech Systems,” *USA Today* (March 29, 2005), 2B.

<sup>39</sup> Many Duke Professors create podcasts of their lectures. Davidson, “Gadgets Rule,” 2B.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> This does not mean the post-modern student will eschew face time with a professor. However, as user-generated, self-styled and participatory paths continue to emerge and shape cultural institutions, educators will discover that “face time” will be re-defined on the student’s turf. Furthermore, it is entirely possible, as hologram technology blossoms in the twenty-first century, that “face time” will take on a whole new meaning.

In contrast, the new economy of learning will seemingly reinvent to equip students to critically evaluate information,<sup>42</sup> reproduce learning outcomes and master skills through virtual and actual reality.<sup>43</sup> This is the Achilles' heel for modern educators—particularly within Christian schools bound to absolutist theological underpinnings—who cannot fathom an “education” without a “dispenser of knowledge.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Modern education, especially within Bible colleges and undergraduate Christian schools, has for many years tied itself to lower thinking skills. Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives (1956) suggests six levels to understanding: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Common evaluative practices (e.g., tests) tend to rely heavily upon knowledge regurgitation and comprehension of course material. Application tends to be accomplished through outside course projects (if such work is assigned). Unfortunately, higher critical thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) are rarely employed, except in graduate school learning. In an information age, where knowledge is abundant and comprehension is quick, learning will require immediate applications (“use it or lose it”) and assistance in proper analysis (strengths and weaknesses) of information with a view towards synthesis (combination and assimilation) and evaluation (overall value judgments). Donald Clark, *Learning Domain' or Bloom's Taxonomy*. Internet online. Available from <<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html>> [28 December 2006].

<sup>43</sup> WSAZ Channel 3 news in Huntington, WV ([www.wsaz.com](http://www.wsaz.com)) televised a feature on the Southern Ohio Medical Center's new training program for hospital employees (Wednesday, December 27, 2006). Designed by a local Huntington tech company called TickStorm, virtual reality training was created that allowed employees to enter a virtual copy of the hospital and handle various dangers and emergency responses, from fires to patient exit drills. The program designers emphasized that younger generations train better under a virtual experience (if actual experience is not available or possible) due to their video gaming background. In fact, as one programmer confessed, whereas many students may “freeze” in a traditional paper and pen testing, they freely engage and successfully demonstrate mastery in virtual reality. *Code Red: Fire Safety and Training Game*. Internet online. Available from <<http://www.tickstorm.com/game.html>> [28 December 2006].

<sup>44</sup> A further complication for modern educators is the continual need to control information dispensed and learning outcomes, primarily through lectures and testing. Many students openly use their laptops for extracurricular activities—from e-mail to games to movies—during class lectures. Cell phones, with web access, create a concern for cheating. Plagiarism is a common problem among younger students who “cut and paste” web content into their own papers. Outright deception is common as students purchase online papers. Some professors worry that “heavy cellphone and instant-messaging use could produce a generation of worker ‘who won't develop the face-to-face communication skills needed to be successful.’” However, such concerns are premature and pessimistic. The reasons for cheating or even complacency while in the classroom may tied to how students are motivated to learn. While inappropriate and illegal practices are always wrong, many students who engage in cheating and other questionable activities tend to do so for survival purposes within a rewards-based learning system. Grades no longer reflect evaluative marks but serve as “dessert” or “money” to win desirable things. High grades can earn awards and rewards—both now and in the future—for a student. Many students are weaned on such practices in public education (e.g., Pizza Hut's “Book It” program, prizes for “Student of the Week” honors). Consequently, a rewards-

In summary, the “native” student is constantly accessing information via web sites, cell phones, social networks, podcasts and countless television channels. The dilemma for educational institutions is how much *control* can they lose and still remain a viable brand. Many schools are tattooed by an inherent territorial nature (school logos, names) that does not bode well in a collaborative marketplace.<sup>45</sup> *USA Today* tech columnist Kevin Maney penned “the ‘company,’ as we’ve known it for almost a century, is about to go the way of vinyl albums, floppy disks and perked coffee.”<sup>46</sup> He argues the emergence of user-generated technology is flattening the traditional company as internal research and development is being out-sourced to the common person.<sup>47</sup>

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based learning system encourages cheating to win favor, satisfy wants or meet needs. Technology has only given students more tools. Of course, cooperative testing (several students work together on an exam), “essays” to show mastery of course content rather than traditional “fill-in-the-blank” and other innovative evaluative practices may be more productive. As for in-class activities, many professors have lost touch with the “usefulness” of their information to today’s student. For many collegians, the only “use” for professor knowledge is the “test.” Professors who successfully engage their learners tend to also effectively transmit useful knowledge. Davidson, “Gadgets Rule,” 2B.

<sup>45</sup> The natural competitive spirit and inter-school rivalries will fail in the new economy much like K-Mart and Wal-Mart in the business model. Both companies have reinvented their brand to remain financially solvent, but the introduction of other chains like Target, Shopko and Value City forced these fighting siblings to cooperate, merge or die. The airline industry also reflects this collaborative spirit as frequent flier miles can be earned on competitor’s flights and many airlines share flight plans, especially to smaller markets. Northwest and Delta routinely “code-share” their flights. Educational institutions will eventually realize that territorial practices will cost them students (who are naturally consumers). Students of tomorrow’s schools may earn collegiate credits through a variety of institutions before amassing enough credits to formally graduate. Collaboration and cooperation will be desirable and valuable.

<sup>46</sup> Kevin Maney, “Mass Communication Could Change The Way Companies Operate,” *USA Today Online*. Internet online. Available from <[http://www.usatoday.com/tech/columnist/kevinmaney/2006-12-26-wikinomics\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/columnist/kevinmaney/2006-12-26-wikinomics_x.htm)> [28 December 2006].

<sup>47</sup> Maney cites a new book titled *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything* by Don Tapscott and Anthony Williams (2007). In this work, Tapscott and Williams share anecdotal evidence from businesses that “flatten” and outsource their work to the common man via the web. “This new form of innovation and production can be harnessed for spectacular growth and profitability,” says Tapscott, “but companies are going to have to change their business models to embrace it.” For many modern educational institutions—particularly within the Christian

Maney's implications for the ministry training school (which often operates under the influence of current business models) could potentially result in a collapse of modern biblical education as currently known. The rise of "outsourcing" may allow ministry schools of tomorrow to be millions of students strong, relying upon the expertise of learned individuals who free-lance their knowledge to multiple schools on a global platform.<sup>48</sup>

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marketplace—such a notion may seem to ominous and daunting. Nevertheless, its entirely possible for schools of tomorrow to train students using faculty who never physically set foot on their campus. Outsourcing faculty to teach is a viable and valuable solution to schools losing students due to geographical location. Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> The influence of Christian schools will continue to grow, many predict. Recent trends already reveal the significant growth of four-year Christian colleges and universities. Whereas, public campuses grew a healthy 12.8% between 1990 and 2004, evangelical Christian colleges mushroomed an astronomical 70.6%! The primary reasons include lower tuition and an academic community where religions are respected. G. Jeffrey MacDonald, "Christian Colleges Rebound: Students Seek Community of Believers," *USA Today* (December 15, 2005): 11D.



## SECTION THREE

### OTHER PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

#### Introduction

To forecast the future is as the Apostle Paul said to “see but a poor reflection” and to “know in part” (I Cor 13:12, NIV). Consequently, to envision how emerging technologies (particularly those yet to be introduced) could impact learning (and, specifically, the training of youth workers) in the twenty-first century can be naturally limited to current examples, wide counsel and hopefully keen insight. Consequently, the possibilities of other perspectives and their viability are worth valid notation.

The fact that electronic learning is here to stay is without argument. *U.S. News & World Report’s* annual college guide documented the “explosion” in e-learning citing over three million students currently pursuing degrees online and how this form of learning is “rapidly transforming the education landscape.”<sup>1</sup> The guide offered three essential questions regarding an institution’s electronic learning offerings:

- Is the program legitimate?
- How much personal computing skill is required?
- What is it like to take a course?<sup>2</sup>

The digitization of textbooks and peer-to-peer web networking (where students share textbooks online) is also rearranging the student’s backpack.<sup>3</sup> Many

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<sup>1</sup> Alex Kingsbury and Lindsey Galloway, “Education Online,” *U.S. News & World Report* (October 16, 2006): 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 68-69. These inquiries are important as many schools operate with proper accreditation and academic credential.

professors consider centralized textbooks obsolete and choose a collection of current essays to satisfy reading requirements. In the summer of 2006, a cohort of fifty “leading teachers, technologists, and scientists” collaborated to investigate the nature of tomorrow’s textbook. The group concluded the “next texts will look more like guidebooks travelers use to explore new cities than textbooks.”<sup>4</sup> Richard McCray, a retired professor in astronomy at the University of Colorado, grew so agitated at the high cost of printed textbooks that he and several peers authored their own online texts. McCray noted the obvious, in an age of information overload, “I want my students to learn the skills of finding information and discriminating between good and bad information . . . They are going to use the Web anyway; you want to teach them to use it in a discriminating way.”<sup>5</sup>

Of course, electronic learning does not imply modern education will change. In an essay for *Time*, Claudia Wallis and Sonja Steptoe relate the following “dark little joke” currently popular among educational dissidents:

Rip Van Winkle awakens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century after a hundred-year snooze and is, of course, utterly bewildered by what he sees. Men and women dash about, talking to small metal devices pinned to their ears. Young people sit at home on sofas, moving miniature athletes around on electronic screens. Older folk defy death and disability with metronomes in their chest and with hips made of metal and plastic. Airports, hospitals, shopping malls—everyplace Rip goes just baffles him. But when finally walks into a schoolroom, the old man

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<sup>3</sup> Website examples of free and reduced textbooks include Textbook Revolution ([www.textbookrevolution.org](http://www.textbookrevolution.org)), Varsity Books ([www.varsitybooks.com](http://www.varsitybooks.com)), E-Campus ([www.ecampus.com](http://www.ecampus.com)), and Freeload Press ([www.textbookmedia.com](http://www.textbookmedia.com)). Many of these sites can lower a student’s book bill by hundreds of dollars. Some colleges even run in-house textbook swapping websites (Pomona College) or rental services (University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point).

<sup>4</sup> Further predictions included “slimmer, customizable and more challenging” texts that “will more likely point out interesting sights along the way, rather than drown the reader in monotonous detail.” Ibid., 65.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 64.

knows exactly where he is. “This is a school,” he declares. “We used to have these back in 1906. Only now the blackboards are green.”<sup>6</sup>

Wallis and Steptoe, consequently, initiate an academic conversation that suggests public education (kindergarten through twelfth grade) is inadequate to prepare students for a global economy and cyber-community. The authors identified four life skills a student in the twenty-first century must possess: a global awareness and understanding,<sup>7</sup> innovative thinking,<sup>8</sup> managing information<sup>9</sup> and competent people skills.<sup>10</sup> To summarize,

In this media-drenched era of blogs and podcasts, Google searches and instant messages, young people need to acquire a new set of literacy skills that allows them to locate information, sort through it quickly and, most important, determine which sources are reliable and with ones aren't.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This joke could equally, and tragically, apply to many churches today, too. Claudia Wallis and Sonja Steptoe, “How To Bring Our Schools Out of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century,” *Time* (December 18, 2006): 50.

<sup>7</sup> Mike Eskew, the CEO of UPS, offers the need for workers who are “global trade literate, sensitive to foreign cultures, [and] conversant in different languages.” The curriculum of future schools of higher learning will require more global study, international history and even travel. *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>8</sup> In the new economy, the positions least likely to be “outsourced or automated” will be those that require a creative and innovate spirit and skill set. Cross- and inter-disciplinary learning will be required, as most new technology and web content are a mixing of “design and technology, mathematics and art.” *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> “It’s important that students know how to manage it [knowledge], interpret it, validate it, and how to act on it,” says Karen Bruett, a Dell executive. *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>10</sup> The importance of collaborative learning is rising. “Most innovations today involve large teams of people,” notes Norman Augustine, former CEO of Lockheed Martin, “we have to emphasize communication skills, the ability to work in teams and with people from different cultures.” Ironically, many schools—especially in ministry training—equip young leaders to be “lone ranger” pastors through practices that involve taking individual exams, writing individual research papers and emphasizing individual grades. *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

## The Alternatives to the Emerging New Learning Economy

### *The Traditional Model Will Continue*

Another alternative, less likely but still plausible, is the current conventional model will continue, with little if any serious changes, for the future. This option argues that while electronic learning is an undeniable new source for educational revenue and training, that conventional educational (brick and mortar) institutions will remain popular, especially for post-high school graduates.<sup>12</sup> Proponents cite limited statistical evidence such as a 2001 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll that revealed two-thirds “disapproved of cyber learning” for elementary and high school students.<sup>13</sup>

The traditional model is facing new scrutiny, however, especially under the auspices of educational reform, as Deborah Wadsworth notes in the critically-acclaimed work *Declining By Degrees*:

A growing host of critics, including legislators, business leaders, and many who believe deeply in the importance of an educated citizenry, have called on higher education to stop its obsessive competition for specious ratings and start looking seriously at its own assumptions. Does 120 credit hours really mean that an undergraduate student is educated? Does the structure of departments, increasingly professionalized and isolated from one another, really advance student learning? Is it really true that, as one professor interviewed for a Public Agenda study said, “teaching college is like playing a

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<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, this assessment reflects how far college education has changed. In many respects, it is largely “high school, part two” where young people enjoy four (or more) additional years of personal freedom, entertainment and passionate pursuits without regard to serious training and learning for a future job. The million dollar collegiate sports industry further exasperates this situation, as it becomes a source of significant revenue for successful athletic institutions. Even in smaller ministry training schools there is a clear disconnect between academics and social/athletic lives. For many students, weekend ministries are sources of income, not a calling and internships are an academic hurdle rather than an opportunity for personal development and growth.

<sup>13</sup> This disapproval is misleading for several reasons. First, it reflects polling data that is over five years old. Second, it only notes disapproval of cyber-learning for children and teenagers. And, third, it largely reflects a traditional bias toward classroom education. A hundred and fifty years ago, one might have had the same result for putting children into public education, since the majority was home-schooled at that time. Gene I. Maeroff, *A Classroom of One* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 18.

Mozart string quartet; 250 years later it still takes four people and can't be done any faster," or could technology revolutionize the delivery of higher education.<sup>14</sup>

The two issues facing higher education are access and affordability. Nine out of ten Americans believe "the opportunity to go to college [is] a virtual right."<sup>15</sup> At the same time, tuition rates have exploded.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, the opportunity for electronic learning to supplement or even supplant the traditional model is rather good.

The likely adherents to retention of the traditional model may be those with the most to lose: educators, administrators and staff who recognize a complete reinvention of higher learning could effectively enact their own obsolescence.<sup>17</sup> For many tenured university professors (especially those who prefer the research component more than the classroom) this prospect is, undoubtedly, daunting. Even electronic learning enthusiast Gene I. Maeroff, in *A Classroom of One*, concedes "attendance in a classroom remains the standard by which most people define 'going to school,' and they will do so for the foreseeable future."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Deborah Wadsworth, "Ready or Not? Where The Public Stands On Higher Education Reform," *Declining By Degrees: Higher Education at Risk* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 23.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>16</sup> Tuition rates are a growing concern for enrollment-driven schools who find flat-lined recruiting and class sizes are hurting the bottom line. Consequently, tuition is raised to compensate (which results in fewer students recruited). It is not uncommon for tuition to range from \$300-400 a credit hour. This vicious "tuition tunnel" has caused some ministry training schools to re-think tuition matters and at least two schools, following the tradition of Moody Bible Institute, have gone "tuition-free" for full-time students who live in the dorm: Central Christian College (Moberly, MO) and Saint Louis Christian College (Florissant, MO). In both situations, enrollments rose dramatically.

<sup>17</sup> Because electronic learning requires minimal physical space and has no need whatsoever for cafeterias, dormitories, student union buildings, gymnasiums and even libraries, the physical plant of a school would also be obsolete, except for use within a local community as needed. Many administrators and staff exist to service the physical plant. Electronic learning renders these positions obsolete, too.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

*Expansion of Distance Learning Via Multimedia and Web-Based Instruction*

The next most likely response will be a slow expansion by learning institutions into distance (and electronic) learning that features a direct connection to a traditional brick and mortar school. In other words, in time, e-learning will be the dominant educational option but it will be a slow process. Proponents of this position view the Internet like the American Frontier: simply another place to conquer.

Therefore, while most students will select traditional schooling (and learn within conventional classrooms under primary professors), there is a growing opportunity to reach a segment of the population largely removed from traditional educational choice: older, established learners who seek to commence or upgrade their knowledge and skill sets. These learners, due to life circumstance, simply cannot sacrifice their time and situation for desired educational advancement. Consequently, many schools (via the Internet) are building a bridge to inconvenienced adult learners and, as a result, garnishing impressive enrollment results.

Furthermore, proponents argue, distance education is hardly a recent innovation. The Englishman Isaac Pitman taught shorthand through postal mail in 1840. The University of London's 1858 decision to permit students to pass a course exam (without class attendance) for credit led to the first correspondence courses (ironically to prepare students for the exam!). Correspondence courses have been regular offerings at Chautauqua College and the University of Chicago since the late nineteenth century. Penn State featured a correspondence school for farmers as early

as 1892.<sup>19</sup> One current popular example is “The Video Professor” under the direction of computer trainer John W. Scherer.<sup>20</sup>

As technology in the twentieth century emerged—telephone, radio, television, computers—so did their stamp upon distance education. Media evolved and was, subsequently, incorporated into distance learning. Correspondence schools created recorded lectures on vinyl, cassette, videocassette, compact disk, DVD and, most recently, in digital formats.

Television was a tremendous boon for distance learning, allowing a learner to witness his professor personally lecture. In the 1970s, public television positioned itself as an “educator” for the home and has regularly programmed instructional television for college course credit. More recently, specialized television channels serve as aids to learning, including The Learning Channel, The Discovery Channel, The History Channel and the Arts and Entertainment Channel.<sup>21</sup>

The problem with televised courses was they lacked the crucial element for many education specialists: *interactivity*.<sup>22</sup> Until the Internet, synchronized communication (from a distance) through a visual lens was impossible. Therefore, it

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<sup>19</sup> Maeroff, *Classroom of One*, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Scherer’s website boasts over forty courses (computer instruction) with over seven million students in a nineteen year span. John W. Scherer, *Video Professor*. Internet online. Available from <<http://www.videoprofessor.com/>> [29 December 2006].

<sup>21</sup> Unlike public television, however, these channels do not provide extensive college-credit courses. At best, they are merely supplemental learning. Many home schooling families use educational television to supplement and instruct their children.

<sup>22</sup> Marc J. Rosenberg cites several reasons why televised courses failed. The first reason was because it was easier for educational institutions to defend the cost of technology than truly produce excellent video instruction. Second, most institutions could not produce engaging instructional videos. But the primary reason, according to Rosenberg, is “television...lacked the very essential quality of teaching: the ability to interact with the learner, provide feedback, and alter the presentation to meet the learner’s needs.” Marc J. Rosenberg, *E-Learning* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2001), 21-22.

is not surprisingly, that those who recognize this new cyber-frontier proclaim enthusiastic endorsement:

The next big killer application for the Internet is going to be education. Education over the Internet is going to be so big it is going to make e-mail usage look like a rounding error in terms of the Internet capacity it will consume. (John Chambers, Cisco)<sup>23</sup>

We are on the verge of a major sea change in learning. Internet technologies have fundamentally altered the technological and economic landscapes so radically that it is now possible to make quantum leaps in the use of technology for learning. (Marc J. Rosenberg)<sup>24</sup>

The option of selective forays into e-learning may be the most predictable direction for budget-conscious ministry schools to entertain, but it may not be the wisest.<sup>25</sup> Many examples in parallel situations reveal the danger in tepid reactions to change. Polaroid once controlled the instant camera market, even conquering the giant Kodak in a 1986 patent dispute (forcing the company to discontinue “instant” cameras). Ironically, when the digital camera revolution emerged in the mid-1990s, Polaroid chose to dabble rather than dive into the new market waters. On October 11, 2001 Polaroid filed for protective bankruptcy and now exists as a distant shell of its former self.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., xi.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., xvi.

<sup>25</sup> To return to the “water and land” metaphor of Dr. Leonard Sweet, it is infinitely wiser to venture into the ocean for occasional demonstration of cultural relevance than to never learn to swim and eventually drown in the rising tide. Unfortunately, the former may only prolong death, not prevent it. Learning institutions who pursue electronic learning from a survivalist motive (“If we cannot swim, we will drown”) throwing off economic and institutional traditions in order to build an e-learning boat (whether a raft or cruise liner) are better positioned for the future than those who entertain e-learning for financial, enrollment or faddish motives and find themselves, one day, growing irrelevant and unable to attract students.

<sup>26</sup> *Wikipedia*, “Polaroid Corporation.” Internet online. Available from <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polaroid\\_Corporation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polaroid_Corporation)> [28 December 2006].



Like Polaroid, adopting this alternative option might create irrevocable consequences for learning institutions—especially those in ministry training—who choose an assumed cautious path.

### *The Rise of Local Church Leadership Training*

A recent trend, especially among megachurches,<sup>27</sup> is to train their own professional ministry staff rather than hire qualified individuals from outside the organization. This approach ensures fidelity to the local context as “home-grown” leaders already understand the community environment, values and traditions—both within and without the church.<sup>28</sup> This option, which currently involves limited e-learning interplay, is a clear disconnect between the larger church and the schools that train ministry students. Nevertheless, a few select churches—such as Central Christian Church in Henderson, NV—exhibit an entrepreneurial spirit in distance education.<sup>29</sup>

Many Bible colleges and ministry training schools build their required courses around biblical hermeneutics, systematic theology, ministry programming and

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<sup>27</sup> “Megachurch” is defined here as attracting one thousand or more individuals to weekly services.

<sup>28</sup> This strategy of hiring inside, however, also creates a myopic and limited view of ministry for a congregation as dysfunctional traits are replicated rather than expunged. Staff that is hired from outside a congregation or organization may take some time to adjust and acclimate, but their experiences in other settings also bring fresh perspectives.

<sup>29</sup> Central Christian Church in Henderson, NV, has created “Central Christian College” and linked to Lincoln Christian College and Seminary in Lincoln, IL. Church members participate in courses at the Las Vegas church extension campus for personal growth, a church leadership development certificate or an accredited college degree through Lincoln Christian College. Central Christian Church also underwrites 58% of the tuition costs, permitting church members to attend college coursework for only \$100 a credit hour or \$300 a course. Central Christian Church, *Central Christian College*. Internet online. Available from <<http://www.centralchristian.com/henderson/insidecentral/cccollege.asp>> [December 29, 2006].

communication (teaching and preaching) and, consequently, graduate individuals who are gifted expositors and communicators, but lacking in leadership understanding and skill. In fact, Andy Stanley and Erwin McManis--two prominent young mega-church leaders who have written extensively on leadership development—rarely, if ever, mention the value of an accredited ministry training school.<sup>30</sup> The megachurch inherently demands leadership as a core skill, yet overlooks the seminary as a viable source for hiring. If there is a notable exception, it is internships.<sup>31</sup>

The problem is many seminary-trained individuals lack leadership skill and development. George Barna's research indicates local church pastors overestimate their leadership prowess when, in reality, a significant number are poor to average leaders. He further argues that local congregations possess lofty expectations of their pastors,

Unfortunately, churches have created a ministry model that expects the pastor to be gifted and skilled in an unrealistically diverse and large number of areas. I have not said that many of today's pastors should not be in ministry, but simply that we have set them up for failure by expecting them to be something that God Himself hasn't called them to be. Ideally, pastors who are not called to be habitual leaders can be released from the responsibilities of leadership

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<sup>30</sup> In fact, in both of these authors' books it is implied that seminary training may be a disadvantage in that real education is more rooted in experience than traditional book and lecture-driven models.

<sup>31</sup> Many megachurches routinely sift ministry schools for highly qualified interns. Internships in the megachurch, however, tend to be year-long while many ministry schools require a much more limited experience to qualify for credit (a three-month or summer is normal). Consequently, students who secure year-long internships, prior to actual graduation, can jeopardize their on-time graduation schedules. At Kentucky Christian University, the youth ministry interns can earn as much as fifteen hours in credit for a year-long internship and may, if the church permits, to enroll in additional distance learning courses while in the experience to avoid too much of a setback in scheduled graduation. The students, who engage in extended internships, prior to graduation, often return to class more motivated and engaged as learners. Therefore such experiences should be encouraged. Internships in larger churches also add credential to a student's future resume and many are further rewarded with a full-time position after graduation.

and instead focus on what they are gifted at and have been called to, partnering with people whose ministry is primarily that of leadership.<sup>32</sup>

An educational trending towards more personal experience in career training, including longer internships, suggests potential ministry schooling may move out of the seminary all together and into the local church.<sup>33</sup> In some denominational pockets, smaller ministry training schools are purely locked within a local church context.<sup>34</sup>

Overall, the possibility of future ministry training moving wholesale beneath local church oversight remains valid, although it is more novelty than reality at this juncture<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> George Barna, "New Book and Diagnostic Resource Strive to Clear Up Widespread Confusion Regarding Leadership," *Barna Update* (August 5, 2002). Internet online. Available from <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=118> [28 December 2006].

<sup>33</sup> In 2006, Kentucky Christian University's Sack School of Bible and Ministry engaged the Southland Christian Church in Lexington, KY regarding a potential move of the school into that local church. Many Bible colleges in the independent Christian church originated within local churches and, consequently, there is interest in returning specialized ministry training back under the local church. The advantages in re-locating within a church to equip ministry leaders include direct experiences to learn leadership, connection to relevant resources and additional faculty (via the church staff).

<sup>34</sup> Local church ministry training schools are largely a novelty. Most, if not all, of these "schools" are entirely unaccredited institutions with faculty roles supplanted by the ministerial staff. For the sake of this study, such institutions have been discounted as relevant.

<sup>35</sup> Many notable exceptions do exist, including Portland (OR) Bible College, a local-church-based unaccredited, undergraduate ministry training school.

## SECTION FOUR

### THE THESIS

#### Introduction

Electronic learning is the future. And as Gene I. Maeroff astutely notes, it is the “traditional educational institution” that possesses the advantage because it already holds “the infrastructure and reputations” to deliver a product for which it is already known.<sup>1</sup> Maeroff identifies the three primary patterns for online education in the future:

- Virtual schools and colleges that exist wholly online, operating without campuses;
- Brick-and-mortar educational institutions that offer a growing number of courses entirely online but at which most classes continue to meet in person;
- Brick-and-mortar educational institutions that offer few courses entirely online but with web-based features in an increasing number of campus-based courses.<sup>2</sup>

When pure distance learning<sup>3</sup> is explored, there are also several options, as outlined by Jason D. Baker in his *Guide to Christian Distance Education*:

- Viewing course material online and then interacting with classmates on a Web-based discussion forum,
- Reading a required collection of articles and then participating in an online chat session with the instructor,
- Listening to lectures on audiotape and corresponding with the instructor via e-mail,

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<sup>1</sup> Maeroff, *Classroom of One*, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>3</sup> For this work, “distance learning” is defined as any type of learning that happens “from a distance.” Some forms of electronic learning, for example in graduate education, incorporate face-to-face time through retreats, advances or special conferences. It is also noteworthy that a few of Baker’s options are more rooted within a traditional, modern (seat-based, time-based) approach. Consequently, some of these examples may eventually prove obsolete as real-time, synchronous, visual technology improves and renders older formats inferior.

- Watching lectures on videotape and chatting with classmate via a telephone conference call, or
- Visiting a special conference room and participating in a full-motion videoconference class.<sup>4</sup>

Currently, there exists a myriad of possible delivery systems for course content in the current electronic culture. It is the contention of this study and the central thesis for this project that in the future, most likely nearer than imagined, the electronic learning option (online delivery of all coursework) will be the predominant form of training individuals for career paths, especially among digital generations.<sup>5</sup> The brick-and-mortar school will co-exist, possibly for decades, with virtual education but it will not last indefinitely.<sup>6</sup> Marc J. Rosenberg notes, “The question is no longer *whether* organizations will implement online learning, but whether they will do it *well*.”<sup>7</sup>

The support for this thesis has largely already been stated in the introductory material. Modern education is classically and inherently rooted to sequence, space and time. In a “post-modern” cyber-culture none of these foundations have merit. The Internet has flattened structural systems and, as clearly revealed through

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<sup>4</sup> Jason D. Baker, *Baker's Guide to Christian Distance Education: Online Learning for All Ages* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2000), 27.

<sup>5</sup> Currently the true digital natives are still in their youth (born since 1990), but as they emerge as adult generations, their natural inclination towards wireless, web technologies for gathering information will, undoubtedly, create a new consumer base. At the moment, the adult learner (over 25 years of age) finds electronic learning attractive. However, they have less native skills in pure technology as the junior generations. Furthermore, many learning institutions (faculty, staff, administration) are guided by individuals less comfortable with “high tech” and, therefore, may tend to avoid or dismiss opportunity to move towards more electronic options.

<sup>6</sup> If it persists as a tool for ministry training, it may likely operate with remarkably smaller enrollments, staff and faculties, year-round and highly-experiential (probably within a local church) curriculum and learning.

<sup>7</sup> Rosenberg, *E-Learning*, xvii.

countless examples in commerce and entertainment, is slowly impacting all social institutions. It is entirely plausible to suggest the final remnants of modernity in the future may be the lingering and long-suffering educational and ecclesiastical forms. The church and school, historically, tend to employ and enjoy tradition while being demonstrably resistant to change.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, the change has occurred.

### Defining Learning, Knowledge, Training and Instruction

For most individuals, learning is a multitude of ideas, concepts and practices. Educational critic Alfie Kohn argues for several “insufficient” or “unnecessary” definitions of learning, including: seat time, job skills, test scores and the “memorization of a bunch ‘o facts.”<sup>9</sup> The notable modern education pioneer John Dewey suggests the result of education produces an individual who has “gained the power of reflective attention, the power to hold problems, questions, before the mind.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> A third institution could be American politics. The Internet is widely impacting elections, political favor and public opinion. While constitutional frames may remain, how individuals are elected is not permanently set in stone. Is it possible to imagine a new day when Americans will elect a president or congressman in the same fashion as they decide on who’s the next *American Idol*? The traditional voting process is ripe with fraud and failure. The Internet, plus new technologies in bio-identity confirmation (iris, fingerprint) suggest the potential for individual voting, via the Internet, using a secure system that allows only one vote per fingerprint. Furthermore, the traditional voting day may be expanded to multiple days and possibly weeks to allow every person who wants to vote to have opportunity. Finally, with extended voting days, it is also plausible to imagine a person could change a previously cast vote in the event they learn new information about a candidate. A model for this idea is fantasy football where players can be changed continuously up until game time. This political possibility may seem far-fetched but it is not unreasonable given the “natives” affection for choice and change.

<sup>9</sup> Alfie Kohn, *What Does It Mean To Be Well Educated?* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2004), 4-5.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 6.

Learning is also commonly associated with a teacher or professor who shares their expertise and then evaluates retention of material. But these traditional perspectives of learning tend to be biased by an individual's own educational experience. In other words, real learning may be something entirely different.

### *Defining Learning*

Mark J. Rosenberg suggests learning is “the process by which people acquire new skills or knowledge for the purpose of enhancing their performance.”<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, the affective domain is surprisingly absent from his definition.

Traditionally, educational theorists have identified three domains in learning:

cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude) and psychomotor (skill). Each domain also has a delineated taxonomy with key words and concepts.

**Table 3. Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Learning Domains**

Primary Domain	Taxonomy	Key Words
COGNITIVE Benjamin Bloom (1956) <sup>12</sup>	Knowledge	<i>Defines, describes, identifies, outlines</i>
	Comprehension	<i>Defends, converts, explains</i>
	Application	<i>Changes, computes, constructs, produces</i>
	Analysis	<i>Compares, deconstructs, discriminates, infers</i>
	Synthesis	<i>Categorizes, compiles, organizes</i>
	Evaluation	<i>Appraises, defends, justifies</i>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>12</sup> The Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives is credited to Benjamin Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain* (New York: David McKay Co Inc., 1956). Internet Online. Available from <<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html>> [29 December 2006].

AFFECTIVE R.D. Kratwohl (1973) <sup>13</sup>	Receiving	<i>Asks, chooses, follows</i>
	Responding	<i>Answers, complies, helps</i>
	Valuing	<i>Completes, demonstrates, invites, joins</i>
	Organization	<i>Adheres, alters, defends</i>
	Internalizes Values	<i>Acts, influences, practices</i>
PSYCHOMOTOR E.J. Simpson (1972) <sup>14</sup>	Perception	<i>Chooses, detects, selects</i>
	Set	<i>Begins, moves, proceeds</i>
	Guided Response	<i>Copies, traces, follows</i>
	Mechanism	<i>Assembles, constructs, measures, organizes</i>
	Complex Overt Response	<i>(skillful) assembles, constructs, measures, organizes</i>
	Adaptation	<i>Adapts, alters, changes</i>
	Origination	<i>Innovates, creates, composes, originates</i>

Learning is the combination of new understanding, blossoming attitude and procurement of new skill sets. Depending on the course content, understanding and skill may be imbalanced.<sup>15</sup> For a ministry student to “learn ministry” it will demand absorption of new information, with a view towards application.<sup>16</sup> Emotional or

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<sup>13</sup> The Taxonomy of Affective Objectives is credited to R.D. Krathwohl, Benjamin Bloom and B.M. Bertram, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, the Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook II: Affective Domain* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc, 1973). Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> The Taxonomy of Psychomotor Objectives is credited to E.J. Simpson, *The Classification of Educational Objectives in the Psychomotor Domain* (Washington, DC: Gryphon House, 1972). Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> For example, in learning about history the development of skill sets is less important than the retention of new knowledge concerning history. Conversely, learning to play the guitar will focus more upon skill than understanding of musical theory. Naturally, to grow in one area demands the other, but at least in primitive learning of course content this ideal is natural.

<sup>16</sup> Benjamin Bloom recognized the importance of application in the retention of knowledge, placing “application” as the third rung in his taxonomy. Essentially, knowledge that is comprehended but not made “useful” will eventually be forgotten. As the educational maxim warrants, a student must “use it or lose it.”



attitudinal responses are inherently valuable in learning, as the affective (desire) can motivate a student when mind and body are exhausted.<sup>17</sup>

The rise of new technology has also reshaped learning. Most educational theorists now note there's "a whole new mind" emerging, as author Daniel H. Pink writes:

There is a seismic—though as yet undetected—shift now underway in much of the advanced world. We are moving from an economy and a society built on the logical, linear, computer-like capabilities of the Information Age to an economy and a society built on the inventive, empathic, big-picture capabilities of what's rising in its place, the Conceptual Age.<sup>18</sup>

### *Defining Training, Information and Knowledge*

Many view "training" as equipping students with a new skill set. Consequently, there has been a misfortunate divorce between "learning" and "training." Learning is what happens in a classroom, under a teacher. Training is on-the-job experience. Learning transfers knowledge. Training manufactures new skill sets. Further muddying the issue is how on-the-job training has devolved in recent years into "information download." Many workers wade through hours of extended training sessions that routinely focus on cognitive transmissions and knowledge "dumps."

As a result, for this study, the concepts of "training" and "learning" are synonymous terms that involve cognitive (information transmission), affective

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<sup>17</sup> A perfect example is the writing of a dissertation paper. After days and hours of writing, the author is physically exhausted and mentally weary. Nevertheless, the desire and determination to complete the work drives the author forward. Far too many educators discount the power of the affective in learning. Students who value the knowledge being disseminated, the instructor's leadership and the classroom environment will naturally work harder and longer.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel H. Pink, "A Whole New Mind," *Shift: At The Frontiers of Consciousness*, No.8 (September-November 2005): 31.

(attitudinal enhancement) and psychomotor (skill development) domains. “The real challenge for learning,” concludes Mark J. Rosenberg, “is the ability to distinguish the need for information (knowledge management) vs. the need for instruction (online training), and to understand how they work in tandem.”<sup>19</sup>

Rosenberg offers the following chart to differentiate “instruction” and “information”:<sup>20</sup>

**Table 4. The Difference between Instruction and Information**

Instruction	Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on a specific learning outcome</li> <li>• Purpose defined by instructional designers, instructors, etc.</li> <li>• Based on a strong diagnosis of user characteristics and needs, and targeted to meet those specific needs.</li> <li>• Sequenced for optimum memory retention.</li> <li>• Contains presentation, practice, feedback, and assessment components.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on a specific organization of content</li> <li>• Purpose defined primarily by users</li> <li>• Based on the characteristics of the particular knowledge discipline and targeted users.</li> <li>• Sequenced for optimum reference.</li> <li>• Primarily centered on effective presentation.</li> </ul>

Essentially, in order to equip a student for a career (i.e., professional ministry), the student requires more than just “information.” Rather, a student demands “instruction” (learning, training) that positions him for competent leadership

<sup>19</sup> Rosenberg, *E-Learning*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

of ministry programming.<sup>21</sup> Once thoroughly instructed (graduated), then additional “information” is disseminated to aid, improve and further develop the person.

The advent of web technology allowed “instruction” and “information” to become intricately linked. Electronic learning or “e-learning” creates a scenario where effective learning and training of students can equip them for skillful occupations. The traditional “correspondence” education (paper-driven, lecture-based instruction) will face increasing irrelevance against a digital “native” weaned on virtual reality, interactive and experiential games, social networking and hyper-animated visuals.

Rosenberg defines e-learning as based upon “three fundamental criteria”:

1. E-learning is networked, which makes it capable of instant updating, storage/retrieval, distribution and sharing of instruction or information.
2. It is delivered to the end-user via a computer using standard Internet technology.
3. It focuses on the broadest view of learning—learning solutions that go beyond the traditional paradigms of training.<sup>22</sup>

This definition is infinitely valuable because while all electronic learning is distance education, not all distance education *is* e-learning. Distance education is a broad category that “includes correspondence courses, one-way television courses” and other strategies that fail the cited above criteria.<sup>23</sup> Electronic learning, via web

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<sup>21</sup> Laurence Prusak of IBM states, “The only thing that gives an organization a competitive edge...is what it knows, how it uses what it knows, and how fast it can know something new.” As quoted by Rosenberg in *E-Learning*, 9.

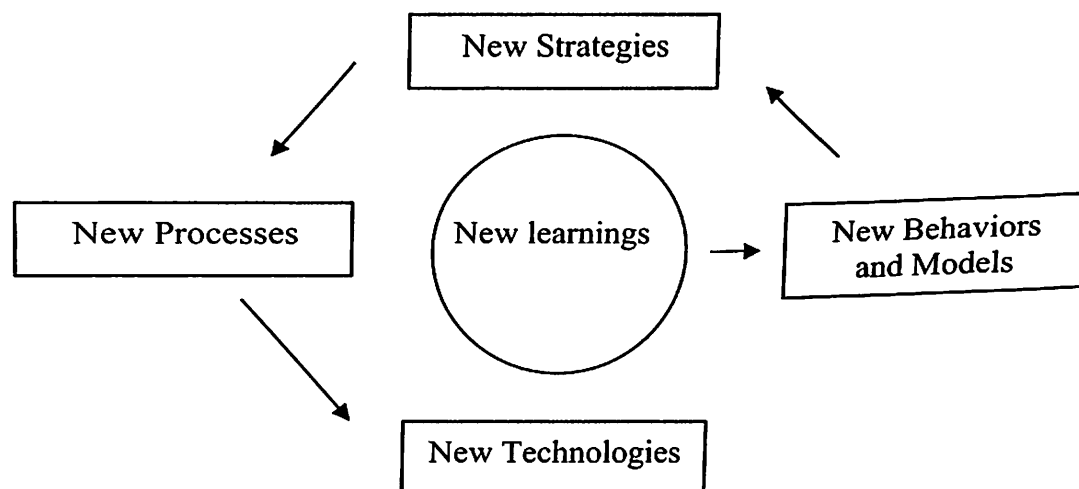
<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 28-29.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 29.

portals, will undoubtedly be the predominant channel, if it is not already, for instructional transmission from a distance.

Walter P. Wilson, in *The Internet Church*, suggests emerging technologies have a tremendous impact upon learning and learning organizations.<sup>24</sup>

**Figure 1. New Learnings and New Technologies**



Wilson's chart documents the importance of avoiding, even eschewing, myopic and dogmatic educational perspectives. The growth of "new learnings" in the past quarter century is equal to the explosion of new technologies.<sup>25</sup> Learning institutions must be cautious in relying too heavily upon "learnings" (and technology) that were true even a decade ago.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Walter P. Wilson, *The Internet Church* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 2000), 38.

<sup>25</sup> The advancements in brain research, multiple intelligences and cognitive dysfunctions are only a few notable examples.

<sup>26</sup> An interesting consequence of the cell phone and "text messaging" has been the emergence of a new conversational (shortened) art. Instant messaging is also re-arranging conversation as students must first read and then respond. The ability to "think on one's feet" and impromptu dialogue (as was common in phone calls) has been significant among the younger generation. The question is whether this is a mere technological fad that will pass as better communicative technology arises? For example, what if it is possible for a cell phone or computer to read the mind? Conversations would

The meteoric rise of electronic learning in the past five years, coupled with new technologies and cultural phenomena (iPods, global positioning systems, TiVo, YouTube, MySpace) suggest the changes to learning organizations are imminent and potentially life-changing. No one could have imagined in 1990 how much change would happen in less than two decades.<sup>27</sup> Is it therefore presumptuous to suggest the unimaginable innovations a mere five years into the future poses? Is it possible to envision the technologies that could surface to simplify and improve learning through an electronic format?

### The Emerging E-Learning Path

While such questions are difficult to answer, there is clear evidence of an emerging electronic learning path for which “post-modern” education might flow. It is crucial to refer to this as a “path” and not a “frame.” Modern education was framed but post-modern pedagogy will be fluid. The path ahead may have countless diversions and dams to change *how* learning happens. Nevertheless, there are several clear markers of an emerging path in post-modern education. This study will make specific implications of these markers towards the training of youth and family ministry students for professional work in the church.

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evolve again beneath such technology. Olivia Barker, “Technology Leaves Teens Speechless,” *USA Today* (May 30, 2006): D1.

<sup>27</sup> In 1990, there were no cellular phones, Internet, e-mail, digital cameras, memory sticks, Palm Pilots, MP3 players, satellite television or computer viruses. DVD was a luxury and VHS format ruled. Cassettes and vinyl were still printed. Distance learning was paper, pen and “snail mail” driven. Experiential education was a novelty. Group projects were the exception. The lecture and occasional discussion were the primary modes for information delivery in the college classroom.

### *From Word to Image*

Western culture in particular, and civilized societies as a whole—with broad access to television technology—have evolved to prefer visual communication. Television is the major medium for news and entertainment and operates globally around the clock. In fact, television has single-handedly morphed modern print culture into a postmodern visual community.

Television news coverage of live historical events transformed culture and evolved into the source for national news events. The television has spawned further innovations that impact culture, both sociologically and historically. It adopted wireless technology through the remote control. It expanded viewer choice from network offerings through subscriber services and cable television.<sup>28</sup> Television introduced sibling technologies like the video-cassette player/recorder, DVD, TiVo (which allows viewers to time shift “live” programming)<sup>29</sup> and satellite broadcasting (DirectTV, Dish Network). Television has morphed from analog to digital, from

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<sup>28</sup> According to Detweiler and Taylor in *Matrix of Meanings*: “Three networks, CBS, NBC, and ABC, ruled television from 1945-1975. When cable television arrived, network proliferation soon followed. ESPN debuted in 1979, CNN in 1980, MTV in 1981, and the Home Shopping Network in 1982.” Craig Detweiler and Barry Taylor, *A Matrix of Meanings: Finding God in Pop Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 188.

<sup>29</sup> In March 2005, investors in TiVo stock soared behind the news that it had struck a deal with cable giant Comcast—which boasts 324,000 customers and adding over 20,000 weekly. TiVo (and other DVR technology) is changing how people watch television. Video recording allowed for television broadcasts to be time-shifted, but only after the program was complete. TiVo allows viewers to watch live television by tape delay of any amount. It permits viewers to create “wish lists” where TiVo will automatically record all programming on that list on all stations available. It will create “season passes” and automatically record all similar shows. The recently-released “TiVoToGo” technology allows television content to be downloaded to a laptop for later viewing. In other words, content is not only time-shifted but also place-shifted. Viewers can watch their favorite shows anywhere at anytime. “TiVo Investors Give Standing Ovation to DVR Agreement with Comcast,” *USA Today*, March 16, 2005: 3B.

tube to plasma, from round to flat screen. It is now moving toward alternative media formats, most notably cellphones, iPods and computers.

The significance of television upon postmodern culture is undeniable. Arthur C. Clarke, the author of *2001: A Space Odyssey* stated that “television is not a luxury” but “a necessity.”<sup>30</sup> Sporting events like the Super Bowl, *Monday Night Football* and NCAA basketball tournaments create instant community gatherings. *Survivor* and *Desperate Housewives* parties are common cultural events. Music Television™ (MTV) launched August 1, 1981 with the prophetic “Video Killed The Radio Star” and soon left a lasting tattoo on global pop culture (in 2001 it was piped to 340 million homes in more than 140 countries).<sup>31</sup> The cable music channel innovated “advertainment” and reality television (“The Real World” [1992]).<sup>32</sup> In a May 1999 *Entertainment Weekly* special edition of the “100 Greatest Moments in Rock,” the birth of MTV was the thirteenth most significant moment. The Beatles performance on Ed Sullivan in 1964 was number one.<sup>33</sup>

Many educators claim television has significantly impacted the brain and, in particular, shortened attention spans.<sup>34</sup> The thirteen minute content window on

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>31</sup> “Forever Young: After Two Decades, MTV remains Pop Music’s Strongest Voice,” *People Weekly Extra*, Summer 2001: 12.

<sup>32</sup> According to a *People* magazine Extra celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MTV, Live Aid (1985), Michael Jackson’s mini-movie-music video for “Thriller” (1983) and Nirvana’s 1992 grunge “Smells Like Teen Spirit” video are the top 3 most memorable moments for the channel. Ibid., 20-23.

<sup>33</sup> *Entertainment Weekly*: The 100 Greatest Moments in Rock, Issue 487, May 28, 1999: 92. Of more important note, 29 of these 100 moments were directly related to live television and nearly all, except the earliest moments in the 1950s were captured by video for later broadcast.

<sup>34</sup> “Your Child’s Brain Wasn’t Built For All That TV.” Internet Online. Available from <<http://www.limitv.org/kids.htm>> [25 November 2005].

television (interrupted by commercials and public service announcements) may have single-handedly influenced the overall contraction of the cultural attention span (ten to twelve minutes). Additionally, the thirty second commercial is expanding and shrinking, some into lengthier versions (up to 120 seconds) and others into nugget-size micro-advertisements (five to fifteen seconds).<sup>35</sup>

Ultimately, the advent of television technology has created the fresh postmodern cultural language of *image*. Emergent societies are influenced and communicate through visual arts, icons, film, and moving images. Aristotle once stated, “The soul never thinks without a picture.”<sup>36</sup> The new twist in postmodern culture is the *mind* does not either. Our culture thinks in image. That which was once an affective matter of the heart has become equally cognitive. The “mind’s eye” is real.

The impact of television and her offspring (video gaming, video recorders, TiVo, remote control, satellite, cable) forms a reasonable apologetic for this shifting. Our culture has been forever changed by the use of visual images. In fact, it is clearly become the dominant language for the postmodern participant.

The outcome for educational institutions and ministry training schools is full recognition of the power of the image, especially fluid visuals. Robert Webber rightly criticized the evangelical “seeker sensitive” 1980s movement when it attempted to “neutralize space to make the seeker more comfortable.”<sup>37</sup> Dan Kimball

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<sup>35</sup> “TV Commercials Adjust to a Shorter Attention Span.” Internet Online. Available from <[http://www.cocojambo.com/branded\\_entertainment/weblog/2005/04/tv-commercials-adjust-to-shorter.html](http://www.cocojambo.com/branded_entertainment/weblog/2005/04/tv-commercials-adjust-to-shorter.html)> [25 November 2005].

<sup>36</sup> Andy Stanley, *Visioneering*, (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1999): 17.

<sup>37</sup> Robert Webber, *Ancient Future Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999): 108.



contends that “modern churches have woefully neglected thoughtful architectural beauty” in their facilities.<sup>38</sup> Many distance learning teachers and professors also cleanse their web portals and e-classrooms of image. The average educational website is an eyesore. It is popular for professors to use PowerPoint™ as an online teaching tool, but mistakenly load the slides with words, not images. If images are included, they are small, fuzzy or animated cartoons. Such tactics seem beneficial to the learning environment and even technologically edgy but, in fact, are counter-productive and to the visually-driven student an insult.

Electronic learning must also invite a visual connection and communication. Course platforms must be visually attractive and, whenever possible, iconic. Assignments that connect students to visuals should be encouraged (viewing television and watching movies as course material supplements). Video lectures, if developed, must incorporate fluid moving images as opposed to static photographs.

Communicators also need to re-evaluate their technique to younger generations, leaning heavily toward metaphor, analogy and story methods. Adoption of web discussion boards and blogging assignments permit postmodern generations to live their stories. Furthermore, the incorporation of video clip (“postmodern parables”), visual experiences and even object lessons to enhance core content would prove valuable. The release of *Narnia: The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe* is a

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<sup>38</sup> In a world that “values art,” Kimball argues that stained glass windows are effective tools for communicating the story of faith, even if it uses modern technology like video projectors or PowerPoint to transfer the images. Dan Kimball, *Emerging Church: Vintage Christianity for New Generations*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 148.

notable example for creating visual bridges through analogy and story.<sup>39</sup> Ultimately, it might prove more effective in evangelism than *The Passion of the Christ* due to its subtle, yet powerful, storyline.

Tony Jones outlines a strong apologetic for the western church to re-embrace icons. He argues that icons have always been highly valued “in the imagination and faith of Eastern Christians.”<sup>40</sup> He also encourages youth leaders to consider how image-driven younger generations need to be “challenged to think about what ‘icons’ guide their lives, and how those symbols tempt them to idolatry.”<sup>41</sup> This sentiment is echoed by Richard A. Jensen, in *Envisioning the Word: The Use of Visual Images in Preaching*: “Words need images to prevent an idolatry of words. Images need words to prevent an idolatry of pictures. Preachers in today’s world must be both wordsmiths and image-smiths.”<sup>42</sup>

Essentially, educators involved in electronic learning must incorporate “eye-deas” to translate their message to postmodern culture.

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<sup>39</sup> Ironically, C.S. Lewis was “absolutely opposed” to a film version of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, according to a 1959 letter he wrote to BBC producer Lance Sieveking. Lewis approved of radio transcripts but felt that “anthropomorphic animals, when taken out of narrative into actual visibility, always turn into buffoonery or nightmare.” However, Lewis penned these words in a primitive visual media culture and most critics agree that “advances in computer imaging over the past two or three years made it possible for Aslan to be Aslan” (meaning Lewis would probably support the project today). Erik Brady, “Is That Lion the King of Kings?” *USA Today*, December 2, 2005: 2A.

<sup>40</sup> Tony Jones, *Soul Shaper: Exploring Spirituality and Contemplative Practices in Youth Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003): 111.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>42</sup> Richard A. Jensen, *Envisioning the Word: The Use of Visual Images in Preaching* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2005): 9.

*From Audiovisual to Multi-Sensory Experiential*

The innovation of television indelibly manifested a visual cultural language, but it also initiated another major cultural language: *experiential*.<sup>43</sup> In a modern culture, the eyes and ears ruled (reading, monologue), but in post-modern culture all the senses became active (sight, sound, smell, taste and touch).

The greatest evidence for this thesis is *reality* television. While radio technology invited imagination to new worlds, television has created the portal for investigation into variant cultures and contexts. Even the photograph, with its omnipotence to suggest alternative frames or depict static reality, lacks the libido to immerse viewers into the moment like television.<sup>44</sup> Photographs, no matter how recent, are innately *past* history. Conversely, television, even if it is reporting a past event, by its fluid, visual nature, suggests aliveness, freshness and relevancy.

Reality television's genesis, in the 1950's, was game and variety shows or hidden camera programming, such as *Truth or Consequences* (1950) or Allen Funt's *Candid Camera* (which debuted in 1953 as an evolution of his radio show *Candid Microphone*).<sup>45</sup> Live variety shows, such as *The Ed Sullivan Show* (1948-1971), are normally not considered "reality" fare, but in fact helped to spawn an experiential culture. Such programs introduced pop cultural icons (such as Elvis Presley [September 9, 1956] and the Beatles [February 9, 1964]), "live" to national

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<sup>43</sup> This is exemplified in the 2005 Nero Digital advertisement of a man watching television with the subtitle: "*Watch. Listen. Experience.*"

<sup>44</sup> The power of an image to evoke emotion cannot be understated. How often does a book cause a tear? An aptly spoken word, usually connected to metaphor, story or image can create an emotional connection.

<sup>45</sup> *Wikipedia*: "Reality Television." Internet online. Available from <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reality\\_television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reality_television)> [8 May, 2006].

audiences.<sup>46</sup> As a result, people could “experience” cultural happenings regardless of their physical proximity to the actual event.<sup>47</sup>

The assassination of John F. Kennedy, including the live announcement by a teary-eyed Walter Cronkite and the murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, catapulted “reality news” into a fresh territory.<sup>48</sup> Later national and international news events—captured live—would define generations and mark cultural contexts (from Vietnam to man walking on the moon to 9-11-01). Ironically, most post-modern “natives” (born since 1961) cannot recall the Kennedy tragedy and the demise of this politico-socio “Camelot.”<sup>49</sup>

Culturally speaking, television introduced a “live” look and experience opportunity through a variety of portals, including reality game shows (*Survivor*, *The Amazing Race*, *The Apprentice*), relationship shows (*Big Brother*, *The Real World*, *Bachelor*), and family improvement shows (*Nanny 911*, *Wife Swap*),

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<sup>46</sup> *The Museum of Broadcast Communications: Ed Sullivan Show*. Internet online. Available from <<http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/E/htmlE/edsullivans/edsullivans.htm>> [8 May, 2006].

<sup>47</sup> In 2007, *The Today Show* is celebrating fifty-five years of morning news and talk. The impact of this program is significant as it had many televised “firsts,” including: the first two-hour morning news program (January 14, 1952), the first time “live” television cameras were allowed on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (December 29, 1954), the first daily television show to be transmitted directly from New York to Los Angeles (April 30, 1956), the first network program to televise from Europe entirely via videotape (April 28 – May 1, 1959), and the first “live” television broadcast from Japan to the United States (March 25, 1964). The show also led the way in civil rights of African-Americans (regularly featuring blacks on the program) and women’s rights (being the first to hire a woman to co-host the news [Barbara Walters]). “Today Celebrates 55 Years.” Internet online. Available from <<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16515920/>> [8 January 2007].

<sup>48</sup> *CBS News: Cronkite Remembers JFK*. Internet online. Available from <<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/11/20/earlyshow/main584646.shtml>> [8 May, 2006].

<sup>49</sup> Craig Detweiler comments that “a potentially dangerous by-product of television is national amnesia. With TV as our primary source for education and information, events that happened B.T. (before television) will rarely be rehearsed. Music history starts with Elvis on *The Ed Sullivan Show*; presidential history begins with the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debates.” Detweiler and Taylor, *Matrix of Meanings*, 210.

The launch of *COPS* (1989) initially introduced raw reality and allowed America to essentially experience life as it was lived or as the Fox Reality Network bills itself “Life Unscripted.” From home makeovers (*Trading Spaces*, *Extreme Home Makeover*) to creative building (*American Hot Rod*, *American Choppers*) to lifestyle changes (*Wife Swap*, *The Biggest Loser*) to “celebreality” shows (*The Osbournes*, *The Simple Life*, *Newlyweds*), raw reality has become a family hour fixture.

NBC President Jeff Zucker, under criticism for his network’s reality programming, stated the obvious (alluding to the famed O.J. Simpson “white bronco chase” and subsequent trial):

We still stand for quality. But c’mon—we’re broadcasters. If we’re going to survive, we have to attract a younger audience. The success of *Fear Factor* demonstrates a generational shift in television. People under age 35 grew with O.J. as entertainment.<sup>50</sup>

Reality television is not a trend or fad, but rather a clear shifting in our culture.

Because television is a medium that must remain socially relevant it must continue to create programming that speaks the language of “authentic experience.”

Consequently, electronic learning will naturally be fueled by experiential learning. The most obvious solution is actual experiences with the course content, under a guided field supervisor.<sup>51</sup> However, other possibilities do exist, including solitary experiential learning<sup>52</sup> or assigned personal field trips.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>51</sup> For example, in a youth ministry course, a traditional assignment would be for students to create a notebook of ideas (games, Bible studies, publicity and programming). The student would submit the notebook as evidence for connecting with relevant course materials and satisfy most professors’ objectives. In electronic learning this is “busy work” with little point. A more improved assignment would assign the student to complete “idea projects” (games, Bible study, design a piece of

### *From Passive to Participatory*

The experiential culture sparks a participatory dialect. Prior to reality television and the rise of the World Wide Web, clear demarcations existed between the producer and consumer, the programmer and the viewer, the boss and the employee and the “haves” and the “have nots.” Steven D. Levitt, in *Freakonomics* observed that “information is the currency of the Internet. As a medium, the Internet is brilliantly efficient at shifting information from the hands of those who have it into the hands of those who do not.”<sup>54</sup>

Essentially, in a “flattened” world, everyone is a Gutenberg.<sup>55</sup> The field is level as Thomas Friedman comments in *The World Is Flat*:

The point I take from all this is that when the world goes flat, hierarchies are not being leveled just by little people being able to act big. They are also

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publicity, develop a program) and, under a field mentor, actually experience their idea (and witness the consequences of their imagination, ideas or resources).

<sup>52</sup> For example, in a video lecture, the professor can create a personal experience that the student does while watching the video. In a Creative Bible Teaching course (online video), the professor helps students understand the importance of intentional and designed course objectives by having the learners make two “snowballs” from paper and then inviting them to participate in two different activities: the first to throw a snowball anywhere desired and then to toss the second snowball (intentionally) into a garbage can. The professor then helps the student understand the difference between teaching a class with no objectives (tossing course content anywhere) and teaching with objectives (aiming the material for learning).

<sup>53</sup> Students can be assigned a myriad of personal field trips to accomplish course objectives. Choice is the key here since not every student would have the same opportunity. To help youth ministry students interact with teen culture, the learner could be assigned a trip to the local mall on a Friday night where they interview teens, peruse stores for what adolescents are buying or simply “draw near” to kids and listen in on their conversations. Personal field trips are an excellent assignment within an e-learning course.

<sup>54</sup> Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* (New York, NY: Harper-Collins, 2005), 68.

<sup>55</sup> Thomas Friedman relates the story of his interview with General Colin Powell and his one-word answer to when the commander knew the “world had gone flat.” Powell answered: “Google.” Whereas when he became secretary of state in 2001 and relied upon aides to furnish him with information, speech texts and other trivia, Powell now easily does the research himself. Friedman, *The World Is Flat*, 212-213.

being leveled by big people being able to act really small—in the sense that they are enable to do more things on their own...this is what happens when you move from a vertical (command and control) world to a much more horizontal (connect and collaborate) flat world. Your boss can do his job *and your job*.<sup>56</sup>

The implications of Friedman's insight upon learning institutions and her faculties are profound. Modern education has ruled with "command and control" iron fist for centuries, but unlike any other time in history the World Wide Web has single-handedly demolished vertical, mechanistic frames of authority for collaborative, connective horizontal fluidity. For learning institutions to assume the "traditional" school will remain is naïve and potentially irresponsible.

A collaborative learning system will create a multi-institution faculty and formula. Professors will enjoy the opportunity for multiple employment zones, teaching in a variety of schools via the Internet. Students will undoubtedly pursue collegiate credits via numerous institutions (similar to how they download digital music from a variety of sources). Coursework and degrees will, consequently, become hyper-fluid and abandon the uniform standards of institutional tradition. Each school will be competitively unique to their context.

The greatest barrier, at this moment, to a collaborative educational community is accreditation agencies whose "command and control" tradition is omnipotent. However, demand will force accrediting bodies to change.<sup>57</sup> Electronic learning also will create new accrediting bodies and conventional "brick and mortar" schools may

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>57</sup> There is limited evidence that accreditation agencies have recognized changes are necessary to retain member schools. The long-standing Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC) changed its moniker to the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). This move was, in part, to re-attract Christian colleges who discontinued accreditation due to a more liberal arts (and less "Bible college") focus.

discover these agencies are more relaxed and fluid, permitting better institutional maneuvering.<sup>58</sup>

Academic standards will still exist but, too, will become equally soluble. An example of standard relaxation was the 2004 decision by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (formerly the Accrediting Association for Bible Colleges) to adopt “programmatic accreditation” which permits the Bible and Ministry departments in a Christian liberal arts school to apply for membership.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, most regional accreditation bodies view electronic learning with muted enthusiasm and suspect integrity.

Digital uploads (YouTube) and downloads, particularly of videos and music, also reflects this participatory dialect. Yahoo! Music records over 24 million visitors a month who view over 350 million clips in that time.<sup>60</sup> On Christmas day 2006,

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<sup>58</sup> Accreditation bodies will no doubt face the similar fate of educational lending institutions who, according to federal law, can no longer force students to remain locked into the lender from which they originally borrowed funds. This allows students to be consumers and shop for the best interest rates for loan consolidation. Sandra Block, “End of ‘Single Holder Rule’ Lets Student Loan Consolidators Shop Around,” *USA Today* (June 20, 2006): 3B.

<sup>59</sup> The Association for Biblical Higher Education offers the following statement at its website: “... until recently the Association for Biblical Higher Education accredited only undergraduate institutions and not specific programs. However, the membership of the Association recently approved (February 20, 2004) standards for programmatic accreditation. Programmatic accreditation has been designed for colleges and universities that seek accreditation for particular programs rather than for entire institutions. Institutions that pursue programmatic accreditation will be required to subscribe to the Association’s tenets of faith, provide evidence of institutional accreditation by a recognized agency, document appropriate state or provincial approvals to offer eligible programs, and furnish a mission statement that encompasses programs of preparation for church or parachurch vocations. Furthermore, the programs submitted for accreditation will need to comply with the Association’s curricular standards (relative to Bible/theology and general studies) and specific student ministry/ministry formation requirements.” The Association for Biblical Higher Education. Internet online. Available from <<http://abhe.gospelcom.net/faqs.htm#7>> [30 December 2006].

<sup>60</sup> Edna Gunderson, “Music Video Changing Places,” *USA Today*, August 26, 2005: 2E.



iTunes web traffic exploded 110% over 2005 numbers, including 413% more hits.<sup>61</sup> Many bands now record their own low-budget videos and post them on websites for free download.<sup>62</sup> The CEO of the popular social networking site MySpace™, Chris DeWolfe, notes:

This generation of 16-to-34-year-olds has grown up with choice. They program their own iPods...If people watching videos in a social environment see something they like, they tell their friends, and it spreads virally. Word-of-mouth is much more valuable than advertising.<sup>63</sup>

One of the most fascinating examples of a participatory dialect in cyberspace is *Wikipedia*, a collaborative encyclopedia that allows registered users to alter, add or create entries. Since its inception in 2001, *Wikipedia* now boasts 250 different languages (triple the number a year ago) and more than 1.5 million English submissions alone.<sup>64</sup> The problem is the misinformation and error can easily creep in. In fact, there are instances of vandals posting intentional lies. *Wikipedia* founder Jimmy Wales argues the validity of an open-source collaborative encyclopedia:

The idea is to create a resource that's given to the world. Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge. That's what we're doing. Any place where the general

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<sup>61</sup> *MacNN*, "iTunes Visits Caren 413% on Christmas Day." Internet online. Available from <<http://www.macnn.com/articles/06/12/27/iTunes.visits.on.christmas/>> [30 December 2006].

<sup>62</sup> "A band with no history can get 40,000 people looking at its video just by getting on the site [MySpace] and doing some work," claims Tom Anderson, president of MySpace.com, "It's a strong incentive. The technology has changed so much in the past six or seven years. You can make a video cheaply. The quality may be lacking, but I think fans get excited when they discover a band that's made its own record or video. They're the first to see them underground." Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> An independent band known as The Sun's created a DVD of music videos rather than the more conventional CD recording of their music. They also included WAV files of each song that can be transferred to iPod or other MP3 players. On making low-budget music videos, Sam Brown (drummer) rightly noted: "Anybody with an idea, a camera and a computer can make a music video." Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> *Wikipedia*, "Welcome to Wikipedia." Internet online. Available from <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page)> [30 December 2006].

public is allowed to freely express their opinion without having any sort of prior approval from authority—it is dangerous. Free speech is dangerous. But it's also incredibly powerful and useful.<sup>65</sup>

Blogging is yet another example of participatory. Glenn Reynolds, in *An Army of Davids: How Markets and Technology Empower Ordinary People to Beat Big Media, Big Government and Other Goliaths*, observed blogs are not replacing traditional media, only changing it:

Nonetheless, weblogs are not likely to mark the end of traditional media, any more than Martin Luther marked the end of the popes. Yet the Protestant Reformation did mark an end to the notion of unchallenged papal authority, and it seems likely the blog phenomenon marks the beginning of the end to the tremendous power wielded by Big Media in recent years.<sup>66</sup>

Comparing blogs to popes is probably erroneous. User-generated posted commentary indicates a fresh wind is blowing in academia. Professors will face open challenge and debate online. Electronic learning should incorporate blogging as an inter-disciplinary tool. Students can synthesize learning on a variety of topics and subject matter into digital postings of personal opinion, insight and idea. Imagine if a college borrowed a *Wikipedia* page and encouraged students to post their research papers under topics and allowed others to freely edit? What if learners could upload personal videos of themselves (for example, in youth ministry, teaching and preaching) in a YouTube fashion? What if students were encouraged to use Google as their library?

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<sup>65</sup> Janet Komblum, "It's Online, But Is It True?" *USA Today*, December 7, 2005: 7D.

<sup>66</sup> Glenn Reynolds, *An Army of Davids: How Markets and Technology Empower Ordinary People to Beat Big Media, Big Government and Other Goliaths*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 92.

Higher education is wholly unprepared for the towering tide of user-generated material and most faculties would consider *Wikipedian* learning methods to encourage sloppy research, faulty conclusions and questionable study. But it is this absolutism that modern education cannot shake. Many argue the best place for research is *Wikipedia* because it forces interactive dialogue and perspectives. The mechanistic model is dying.

One final consideration, particular to youth worker training, is that most youth ministry students grow up in a teacher-centered youth group that rarely exercises collaborative learning. The youth minister, who serves as a role model for how youth work is done, is the “command and control” of the entire ministry. Chris Folmsbee, in *A New Kind of Youth Ministry*, suggests the need for a more “learner-centered” and connective learning approach:

Collaborative learning environments are healthy for all students. While some of your youth may not desire to study or uncover important truths alongside others, your teaching them how to work together is critical to their personal faith as well as our faith globally. A new kind of youth ministry is strategic about creating collaborative learning environments.<sup>67</sup>

#### *Information Dispenser to Information Manager*

Alvin Toffler, author of *FutureShock*, once penned, “The illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.”<sup>68</sup> Tom Petzinger adds, “Nobody is as smart as everybody.”<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Chris Folmsbee, *A New Kind Of Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 124.

<sup>68</sup> Rosenberg, *E-Learning*, 3

<sup>69</sup> As quoted by Rosenberg in *E-Learning*, Ibid., 63.

The phenomena of YouTube, with over 35,000 video uploads daily, is a cultural earthquake.<sup>70</sup> The power is within the people, leading futurist Paul Saffo to label this period “the beginning of the age of personal media.”<sup>71</sup> He says, “The shift from mass to personal inevitably translates into big changes in market structures.”<sup>72</sup>

Google’s announcement to digitize the complete library holdings of Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan, Oxford and the New York Public Library (for public search and consumption) could signal the slow death of libraries overall.<sup>73</sup> Information once bound to paper, shelf and building will be freely available to anyone with a modem.

The implications of YouTube, Wikipedia and Google are momentous and potentially damaging to traditional university library systems. For digital natives “going to the library” may become as rare as mailing a first-class letter.<sup>74</sup> It will be possible to access the greatest historical works with simply a mouse click.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Co-founders Chad Hurley and Steve Chen “back in May, turned on technology that makes it easier to send video from cellphones directly to the site. Such capability created instant news as politicians were tagged for *macaca* statements and comedians tagged for racial slurs. Kevin Maney, “Evolution of YouTube Could Mark the Age of Personal Media,” *USA Today*, June 14, 2006: 3B.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> “Even before we started Google, we dreamed of making the incredible breadth of information that librarians so lovingly organize searchable online,” said Larry Page, Google co-founder and president of Products in a December 14, 2004 press release. “Today we’re pleased to announce this program to digitize the collections of these amazing libraries so that every Google user can search them instantly.” Mary Sue Coleman, President of the University of Michigan, added, “We believe passionately that such universal access to the world’s printed treasures is mission-critical for today’s great public university,” Google Press Center, “Google Checks Out Library Books.” Internet online. Available from <[http://www.google.com/press/pressrel/print\\_library.html](http://www.google.com/press/pressrel/print_library.html)> [30 December 2006].

<sup>74</sup> In April of 2001, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported that local postal service was considering stopping Saturday deliveries and even abandoning some area offices. The reason? The emergence of e-mail was causing the first-class stamp to take a beating. Shortfalls were predicted to be over \$17 billion annually, mostly due to new innovations (at that time) of electronic bill payments and tax filing. Harry Levens, “E-Mail Explosion Poses Growing Threat To Post Office,” *The St. Louis*

Consequently, the Academy will have to reinvent itself from “knowledge dispensers” into “knowledge managers.” Mark J. Rosenberg writes, “Knowledge management supports the creation, archiving, and sharing of valued information, expertise, and insight within and across communities of people and organizations with similar interests and needs.”<sup>76</sup>

Rosenberg is quick to suggest that this will not be a “warehousing strategy” but a collection of knowledge that is “flexible and dynamic, easy to understand and manage, valued by people and supportive of a broad-based learning culture.”<sup>77</sup>

Rosenberg identifies four types of knowledge: explicit,<sup>78</sup> tacit,<sup>79</sup> individual<sup>80</sup> and organizational.<sup>81</sup> He then suggests six benefits of Knowledge Management or “the virtual corporate brain”:

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*Post-Dispatch*, April 7, 2001: 12. Of course, the digital natives rarely write a letter and “snail mail” it today and as this generation emerges those remnants of print culture will most certainly be greatly impacted.

<sup>75</sup> And not just libraries are in trouble, but music and video, too. *Wired* magazine announced in an April 2005 article that “Discs Are So Dead” in light of two new technologies that digital natives were sure to welcome: Blu-Ray and HD-DVD. But aren’t these also discs? Yes, but that is *Wired*’s point. The excitement over these new technologies will fade as “online distribution, bolstered by increasing bandwidth and more efficient data compression” means the future is the Internet. Robert Capps, “Discs Are So Dead: Two New Formats Aim To Bury The DVD, But Web Distribution Will Kill Them All,” *Wired* (April 2005): 23.

<sup>76</sup> Rosenberg, *E-Learning*, 66.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Explicit knowledge is “easily described and specific enough to be codified in documents, practices, and training.” Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Tacit knowledge is more difficult to “record” or “document” or even “teach to others.” It’s “embedded in people’s experiences and life’s work,” and proves to “elusive and most valuable.” Ibid., 67.

<sup>80</sup> Individual knowledge is both tacit and explicit, and interactive with each other. Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Organizational is a collective body of individuals’ knowledge that is both tacit and explicit. Ibid.

1. Learning: users can access just the information they need, just when they need it.
2. Vision and Action: the ability to “push” the most important information to users who need it keeps employees current and aware of what is going on.
3. Memory: instantaneous access to information, experience and expertise.
4. Toolbox: the ability to manage and quickly distribute knowledge and productivity tools.
5. Creativity: collaboration and community involvement allows new ideas and insights to be shared in a more open environment.
6. Integration: knowledge assets are more systematically leveraged across a wider range of users/communities and uses.<sup>82</sup>

The advantages, particularly for smaller Christian colleges and ministry training schools are notable. First and foremost, it is far less expensive to create digital storage than erect physical space. Second, the content is fluid and continues to expand. A ministry student could continue to contribute long after graduation.<sup>83</sup> Students could be trained to view the school web page as a daily resource for news, interactions, recently-added material and even purchases (through an online store).

Currently the greatest flaw in YouTube is it lacks discrimination. Any type and quality of video can be uploaded by registered users. Organization of the videos is loose and sifting countless films to find the highlight is tedious work. Digital school libraries will focus on managing knowledge for effective discovery, use and recovery.

Finally, faculty and instructors will need to change. The “sage from the stage” mentality will become the “guide from the side.” Pedagogy in the twenty-first

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 68-70.

<sup>83</sup> Access to alumni knowledge and experience would be a privilege not a right. Schools could choose “territorial” strategies in managing its greatest wealth: the knowledge of students, faculty and alumni. Access to this vault would only be given to select people. It would not be public domain.

century will reinvent the lecture into a participatory method. For those who gather in classrooms (which may still be possible), wireless technology will permit student and teacher alike to manage, rather than dictate, knowledge.<sup>84</sup> Professors would no longer issue textbooks, but rather relevant readings from multiple web venues or from a special collection of readings at the course website. Students would create personal websites from the beginning of their academic career and continually update these sites to reflect new learnings. Faculty and other students would visit these sites and tag them with honors. Highly-decorated websites would mean a link is added to the school website upon a student's graduation.

Ultimately, the age of protective knowledge is over. E-learning will be learner-based, rooted by flattening where each student may learn independently, contextually and collaborately. Institutions that fail to reinvent will be viewed as archaic, absolutist and even arrogant (which, to a digital native and postmodern pilgrim, is the kiss of death).

### *Analog/Paper to Digital*

A new digital universe has been emerging for a decade. As computer digitization of multimedia (image, sound, film) blossomed, older media forms faded. Photograph, analog sound, video formats surrendered to JPEG, MP3 and MPEG,

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<sup>84</sup> Imagine this scenario: a dozen students and their professors discuss the topic of "creative retreats" in youth ministry class. Instead of a lecture on the subject, the professor encourages students to travel to various websites that feature creative retreats. Students may IM with the youth pastor, save the material to a Word document or google "creative retreats" and share new discoveries. The time of learning may only be ten to fifteen minutes (when the professor leaves the group) or it may continue as students collaborate and connect to various resources. The professor might leave an assignment with a one-week deadline for students to organize three websites and/or ideas to post at the class website. The ideas most valuable (as voted on by the students) would be moved to a special vault of creative programming ideas that's only available to alumni and current students. Access would be by fingerprint analysis.

respectfully. Since 1994, when the Netscape browser initiated better ease and opportunity to enjoy the Internet, digital formats and non-traditional media have gained ground.

Television is surprisingly the final bastion for analog, as many American television sets remain connected to this format. However, the Federal Communications Commission continues to push for a complete conversion to digital television and many states are working to digitize all television signals by 2010.<sup>85</sup>

America Online moved in 2005 to digitize the telephone and offer a web-based phone service.<sup>86</sup> The radio industry, impacted by Internet radio formats, is also going digital.<sup>87</sup> Many stations are evolving, moving from “terrestrial” stations to satellite.<sup>88</sup> *Wired* magazine boldly announced in a March 2005 cover article “the end

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<sup>85</sup> In 2003, New Mexico boasted its first fully digital television station (KNME-TV) and plans to have all state television stations in digital format by 2010, when it's expected that 85% of the state's population will own digital television sets. “State Public Television Stations Meet Digitization Deadline.” Internet online. Available from < <http://www.unm.edu/news/03-05-12/tv.htm> > [26 November 2005].

<sup>86</sup> “This is the core part of our future,” states Jim Tobin, an AOL executive, “we don't think we ought to do this; we think we must do this.” The phone service will allow users to make calls through their computer for a monthly fee. “Despite Kinks, AOL's New Internet Phone Service Worth A Try,” *USA Today*, April 7, 2005: 8B.

<sup>87</sup> One radio analyst confides that “without (digital), the radio industry signs its death warrant.” Digital radio will mean “crackling” AM stations improves to FM analog sounds while FM improves to CD quality. Digitization also allows a compressed signal, meaning stations can actually broadcast one to two more channels at the same frequency. To hear digital radio, users must purchase digital receivers, however and therein lies the rub: most consumers aren't aware of digital radio. Satellite radio (Sirius) is not digital radio. Currently, there are only 410 FM stations and 90 AM stations in the United States broadcast in digital. “Multi-casting” on the same frequency is what excites radio programmers, but it also might end “free” radio broadcasts. By 2010, high definition radio (which includes a monthly fee to receive) will result in six to ten percent of a station's total revenue. HD-Radio would be essentially commercial free and allow users to receive on-demand traffic reports and even pause and rewind song selections. “Radio Ready To Join Digital Revolution,” *USA Today*, August 24, 2005: 1B.

<sup>88</sup> Traditional radio continues to face severe decline. Since 1998, the average weekly listening time has fallen 9%--largely due to Internet, podcasting and satellite radio (which is commercial free). “Radio Changes Its Tune to Recapture Listeners,” *USA Today*, May 12, 2005: 1D.



of radio (as we know it).”<sup>89</sup> It is probably right. TiVo, as already discussed, is changing television programming formats.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, the video iPod is reinventing broadcasts.<sup>91</sup>

Most significant is how many digital formats are merging into single technological players, most notably cell phones. The current generation of cell phones has multiple identities: music and video players, personal computers, camera (still and video), personal digital assistants and even television.<sup>92</sup>

The Internet will probably (and eventually) signal the end of mass manufacturing. Many predict a future where albums and films will no longer be released on CD or DVD format. Rather, interested individuals will be able to download the song or video for a fee (and with limited usage).<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> The issue contained several articles outlining the rise in podcasting, satellite radio, radio TiVo and the high-definition revolution. *Wired*, March 2005.

<sup>90</sup> TiVo is altering how viewers watch television. Michael Powell, the outgoing chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, referred to it as “God’s machine.” Digitized recording means no more tapes or discs and exudes simplicity. The first DVR was introduced in 1999 by TiVo and in February 2005, the company boasted over three million subscribers. The Yankee Group, a communications research firm, foresees homes that have DVR will rise from seven million (2004) to 33.8 million by 2008. And while that’s significant, it’s still only a small slice of the 100 million homes with a VCR. Forrester Research Group discovered most primetime television viewing is cut in half by those who own a DVR. In fact, sixty percent of the DVR owners, ages 18-44, did not watch television in real time. “TiVo’s Ripple Effect: Water-Cooler Chill,” *USA Today*, March 24, 2005: 1D.

<sup>91</sup> As of December 2005, Apple has sold more than one million video downloads. The San Diego-based Veoh announced on November 30, 2005, plans to release more than three thousand video programs, including *The Three Stooges* and *Superman* cartoon. Veoh CEO Dmitry Shapiro believes the future is bright for video iPodcasting: “This is going to be a giant space...over the next five years, most consumer will have some sort of portable device. And they’ll be taking their video with them.” Jefferson Graham, “Websites Dive into Video iPod Revolution,” *USA Today*, November 30, 2005: 1B.

<sup>92</sup> Future generations of cell phones will allow users to move files (music, video, photo) to larger display formats, such as computer, television or stereo music player. The greatest issue at the moment is standardization, since different companies can operate within varying formats. However, in the future, even this technological wrinkle is predictably solved. “Digital Gizmos’ Abilities Erupting,” *USA Today*, May 16, 2005: 1B.

<sup>93</sup> For example, Wal-Mart sells audio downloads for thousands of songs at only .88 (most other web-based music services either sell monthly subscriptions or charge .99 or more per song).

The publishing world is also converting to digital. Between 2003 and 2004, there were forty four million *less* books sold and some view this as the beginning of the end.<sup>94</sup> Many obscure authors have even decided to release their books solely online and some published authors are opting for dual media release. Cory Doctorow published his work *Someone Comes To Town, Someone Leaves Town* and made it available for free download online the *same* day his publisher released the work to distributors. At his website, Doctorow wrote: “When you download my book, please: Do weird and cool stuff with it. Imagine new things that books are for. Then tell me about it...so I can be the first writer to figure out what the next writerly business model is.”<sup>95</sup>

Tech consumer *USA Today* writer Kevin Maney referred to this as “decoupling content” and comments:

In music, that kind of decoupling hasn’t resulted in people listening to the old concept of “albums” on iPods or laptops. Instead, people have been doing new things—buying individual songs, making mixes, sharing playlists online, creating podcasts, dumping music into cellphones to use as ring tones. We are generally doing absolutely nothing that the music industry might’ve predicted a decade ago. The technology isn’t here yet to make that possible with books.<sup>96</sup>

Ironically, Doctorow argues that free electronic downloads of works actually boost hard copy sales. He contends the more people hear of a work or an author, the

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Wal-Mart, however, allows only five recordings of the song (onto a CD-R for play in normal format) and all downloads can only play in MP3 compatible equipment, such as a computer or individual player. Future generations of cell phones will not only download videos (and television content) but incorporate micro-projectors to allow users to watch the films on a larger screen (such as the back of an airline seat).

<sup>94</sup> Kevin Maney, “Books Might Have To Start New Chapter To Avoid Extinction,” *USA Today*, July 20, 2005: 3B.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

more they will purchase the book outright. “The biggest threat we face isn’t piracy,” he says, “its obscurity.”<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, other voices suggest digital formats will not supplant older forms altogether. Tom Standage, technology editor for *The Economist*, states that “communications media are very rarely displaced by newer technologies. [Television] did not kill radio, movies did not kill theater, videos did not kill movies.”<sup>98</sup> This argument seems convincing but there is a major difference: these older formats were analog in nature and simply an evolution within the species.

Digital formats are a whole new animal and Darwinian “survival of the fittest” theory suggests a dinosaurian demise to analog media.<sup>99</sup> Digitized media unleashes choice to the consumer (such as pausing and rewinding live television or radio). It permits time- and space-shifting of content. It allows for creative re-mixes and personalization. Video did not end radio, but it did “kill the radio star” (as the Buggles penned). It signaled a new horizon within the format. Digitization is creating all new formats and that is significant.

The dialect of digital erupts within the language of image because digitization occurred first within image formats, namely the JPEG (later bitmap and .gif files emerged). Digital photography was the “Adam” in the newly-created digital

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Excellent evidence for this demise is the once popular *TV Guide* weekly magazine. The subscriber base continues to shrink (from over 20 million in the 1970s to 9 million today) while the average age of subscribers rose with each passing year. In the last two years alone, *TV Guide* newsstand sales fell 47%. Television listings and the *TV Guide* channel signaled the end for the current digest-sized magazine format. In July 2005, *TV Guide* announced a complete makeover, leaving behind a 52-year-old legacy of local television listings and 140 different market editions. Now, *TV Guide* will have simply a “west” and “east” coast edition with feature articles and limited listings and hopes to target a young female demographic. Nevertheless, many predict the newer version, which hotels will no longer carry, will not attract enough interest to regain the significant ground lost. “TV Guide Unveils New Format,” *USA Today*, July 2005: 1B, 2B.

universe. All other formats—MP3 to MPEG to PDF—are offspring to the computer image. Former president of NBC News Lawrence Grossman rightly argued that “Printing made us all readers. Xeroxing made us all publishers. Television made us all viewers. Digitization makes us all broadcasters.”<sup>100</sup>

The digitization of content will soon separate learning institutions. Digital natives want access to digital information. They prefer to research digital archives.<sup>101</sup> Many Christian institutions failed to convert older media when it was possible and, consequently, much historical information has been lost, including sermons, instructional videos, classic books, special archived material, school publications and student records. Those who attempt to digitize content find it time-consuming and never-ending.

E-learning will rely heavily upon digitized content. Students will seek to download video learning sessions, syllabi, course content and miscellaneous study helps.<sup>102</sup> Learners will also upload their own digital content. Consequently, effective and sturdy learning platforms—like Moodle™, BlackBoard™ and WebCT™—will need continual development and maintenance.

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<sup>100</sup> As quoted by Detweiler and Taylor, *Matrix of Meanings*, 186.

<sup>101</sup> The author’s twelve year-old son is currently working on a paper about Mayan culture. He has surfed the net for obscure facts and insights on the Mayans. He currently has digital notes of over 100 pages.

<sup>102</sup> The popular iPod is changing campus learning. Architecture professor Dan Schmit (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) “recorded a ‘sound-seeing’ tour of campus buildings” where “students use their iPods to walk around campus and listen to the professors’ remarks at their leisure.” Medical and paramedic students at the University of Iowa watch iPod videos for medical procedures. Georgia College, considered a “pioneer in iPod classroom use” helps students who are studying in foreign countries by uploading “music, books and other materials related to their host countries.” Drexel University (Philadelphia) distribute free iPods to education majors while a chemistry professor “lectures as podcasts and uses lecture times for workshops.” Ken Fuson, “iPods Now Double As Study Aids,” *USA Today* (March 15, 2006): 4D.

The previously-mentioned Polaroid's bankruptcy is a reminder that to ignore digital formats is foolish. The iPod revolution demonstrates the future is digital. Therefore, it is only a matter of time before educational institutions discover their inability to convert material into digital formats was a marker point for their growing obsolescence.

### *Systematic Theology to Relational Theology*

A 2005 FedEx advertisement reads: "*My life coach says I should ignore money and focus on hugs.*" In a single statement, the rising cultural value on relationships is communicated. The modern valued systems and structure. Systematic theology reduces scriptures to hermeneutical containers where labels are attached and distinctives are honored. Systematic theology explains the root of modern denominational doctrinal variances.

But as modernity drowns, so will its systems. The youth ministry student in the twenty-first century church will likely be instructed in "relational" theology rather than systematic theology because of growing natural cultural sensitivity and value upon relationships.<sup>103</sup>

The fact that a human being has always been a relational creature is without argument. Nevertheless, in a post-modern culture there is a *hyper-relational* component that is unique from modernity and previous periods of time. The reason for this hyper-relational change is technology.

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<sup>103</sup> What this "relational" theology will necessary look like is unknown. As Luther and Calvin reformed the Church into theology systems so will the twenty-first century no doubt offer "relational theologians" who will spin a "post-modern" Reformation into existence.

John Naisbitt, in the early 1980s, postulated that the advancement of high technology in our culture would create a deeper longing for connection and community.<sup>104</sup> He labeled this trend “high tech, high touch” and later penned an entire volume devoted to our “technologically intoxicated zone” or culture. Naisbitt notes how society “grants technology a special status” despite its empty promises, seductions and unpredictable nature. Ultimately, technology produces a culture that “is spiritually empty, dissatisfying and dangerous, and impossible to climb out of *unless* we recognize that we’re in it.”<sup>105</sup>

Consequently, a technological culture answers the “spiritual emptiness” with “relational wholeness.” Technology is plastic, silicon and wire. The biblical record is one of connection, communion and relationship. This creates a natural hermeneutical conflict for the post-modern. When biblical doctrine is systemized, it loses its potency and personality. Theology is naturally “messy.” Modernity’s rationalism when applied to biblical narrative invokes a variety of problems. This

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<sup>104</sup> Since 1985, physical social networks have been shrinking. According to one study, one in four Americans (24.6%) admit they have “no close friends” as compared to only 10% in 1985. Researchers suggest this indicates Americans are “living lonelier, more isolated lives than in the past” but this conclusion could be a false one. The busy-ness of society has forced many to abandon “clubs and neighbors” and rely more heavily upon family for social support. It also notes “research has linked isolation and loneliness to mental and physical illness.” Janet Kornblum, “Study: 25% of Americans Have No One To Confide In,” *USA Today* (June 23-25, 2006): 1A. The report fails to mention the transience of American culture (it is difficult to have “close friends” when major moves occur) nor how the Internet has reinvented relationships through cyber culture (MySpace, fantasy sports, eBay, e-mail). Gene I. Maeroff argues another point: “Considerable criticism was directed at the Internet during the 1990s as being a cause of isolation and depression. Then, in 2001, came new evidence—from the same researcher who had earlier blamed the Internet for isolating users—showing that symptoms of depression had declined and that loneliness no longer significantly associated with Internet use.” Maeroff, *A Classroom of One*, 41. Of course, few heard his recantation and continue to promote false conclusions.

<sup>105</sup> John Naisbitt, *High Tech, High Touch: Technology and Our Search for Meaning* (New York: Broadway Books, 1999): 3.

explains why modernity's affinity for structure and scheme can lend itself to dangerous directions, as Carl Raschke proposes in *The Next Protestant Reformation*:

The curious notion that the truths of the Christian faith can, and should, be argued in much the same way as one would prove a mathematical theorem—a notion that has gained momentum in evangelical circles in recent decades—reeks of Gnosticism.<sup>106</sup>

The problem with much of the Church's theology, Raschke asserts, is due to an “arrogant and exclusive attitude” that is inherent to those more “enlightened” (like the Gnostics) on the subject. “Systemizing” God or the study of God<sup>107</sup> (theology) lends itself to exclusivity and pride.<sup>108</sup> Raschke even argues Nietzsche's infamous “God is dead” statement is not so much an affirmation of nihilism as it is condemning modern rationalism for infecting church theology:

When Nietzsche declared that “all of us” are God's murderers [in his parable of a madman], he was professing his own culpability as a modern person. The personal presence of God had become the Christian-moral view of the world. Modern moral rationalism has domesticated God to the point that the awesomeness of an infinite God become fully human—an illogicality that Kantian thought cannot countenance—is no longer comprehended.<sup>109</sup>

Ultimately, rationalism is as empty as “techno-lust” in contemporary culture. In both, the individual is vaulted to divine status. After all, rationalism, at its heart, is merely deifying the mind to frame the Unframe-able. Similarly technology, as well

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<sup>106</sup> Carl Raschke, *The Next Reformation: Why Evangelicals Must Embrace Postmodernity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004): 19.

<sup>107</sup> Ironically, the Greek word for “theology” is a combination of two words: “theos” (God) and “logos” (word). In a pure sense, theology is an individual's “word about God.” It is a person's understanding of God and, ultimately, the “box” from which God lives for the person.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 44-45.

observed, is equally a cultural god. So neither rationalism nor technological affection answers humanity's deepest questions.

At the core of Naisbitt's megatrend, whether implied or not, is that technological advancements—especially those which create virtual realities or blur the distinction between human and machine (ala “The Matrix” trilogy)—actually have caused a cultural, relationally-driven language to emerge. As technology becomes more plastic, our humanity hungers for deeper authenticity. Ultimately, the technological advancements of the past twenty years will pale in comparison to what lies ahead.<sup>110</sup>

A growing “creative class” is also transforming business, entertainment, community and lifestyles, says Richard Florida, a professor and business expert. Creativity is “the ultimate economic resource” and young “purveyors of creativity” are moving to U.S. cities that welcome their giftedness, interests and values.<sup>111</sup> Cities such as Seattle, Austin, Minneapolis and San Francisco are drawing individuals who seek an inviting locale, cutting edge technology, creative capital and tolerance.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> The foundational law of the computer revolution is “Moore’s Law” which states computer technology (namely chips) double in power every eighteen months while conserving the same price. In 1971, that meant “Intel could fit 2,300 transistors on a silicon chip...[but] later this years will unveil a chip with 1.7 billion transistors.” The law immortalizes Gordon Moore who professed in 1965 that computer power would double annually. He later retracted that prognostication for every two years (1975). Moore admitted in a 1997 interview that he “never said 18 months” despite how the law is propagated. Nevertheless, Moore’s calculations have been amazingly accurate and suggest a future technological world beyond imagination. Kevin Maney, “Moore’s Law Began as Guess That Grew in Power Over Time,” *USA Today*, 13 April 2005: 3B.

<sup>111</sup> According to Florida, scientists, engineers, architects, designers, writers, artists and musicians are considered “creative class” (as well as those who use creativity within their work in business, education, health care, law or other careers). Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (New York, NY: Perseus books, 2002), xxvii.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, xix.



The advent of wireless technology is re-imagining the Internet and recreating how culture thinks about community. Philadelphia and Minneapolis are experimenting with whole-city Wi-Fi access.<sup>113</sup> Net technology has realigned civilized cultures (and many uncivilized ones, too). A McDonald's advertisement (March 2002) shows two elderly males enjoying conversation and coffee, with the caption: "*The Internet is not the only place bringing people together.*" Blogging, online communities and personal websites are growing.<sup>114</sup> The auction house *eBay* bills itself as an "auction community" via the slogan "the power of all of us." Meanwhile fantasy sports draw millions of players into miniature cyber-neighborhoods.

Ray Oldenberg, in his book *A Great Good Place*, reports the value attached to "third places" by our culture. "Third places" are beyond work and home and are "venues like coffee shops, bookstores and cafes in which we find less formal acquaintances."<sup>115</sup> Richard Florida identifies the "quality of place" as a signature value for his "creative class" who pose three questions before moving to a community: What's there? Who's there? What's going on?<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> The top 10 "unwired" cities, according to *Wired* magazine are San Francisco, New York, Seattle, Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Dallas, Washington, DC, Minneapolis-St. Paul and San Jose. Wi-Fi has blossomed globally with "hot spots" (wireless access points) increasing ten times in 2004 alone (over 12,000 points). *Unwired*, an undated supplement to *Wired* magazine, 2004.

<sup>114</sup> Yahoo! and MSN will soon offer free "personal spaces" for individuals to create on-line communities that allow selected visitors to view blogs, photos and other personal content. "Friends, Photos and Blogs All In One Place" by Edward C. Baig, *USA Today*, April 14, 2005: 10B.

<sup>115</sup> Richard Florida, *Creative Class*, 225-226.

<sup>116</sup> Many "creatives" also seek a personal opportunity to shape "the quality of their community" as well. *Ibid.*, 232.

These questions also seem to guide the countless spontaneous and temporary communities that blossom annually through festivals, fairs and other special events around the United States. For example, every August, hundreds gather in the remote Nevada desert for “Burning Man”—a spontaneous community of bohemians, spiritual seekers and artists.<sup>117</sup> Motorcycle rallies in Sturgis, Daytona and Hollister draw thousands while those unable to attend discover alternative connections via web cam and other digital technology.

“Generation X” churches and youth ministries are also communicating within a relational dialect. The names of emergent congregations invite connection and participation.<sup>118</sup> Randy Frazee argues for a reinvention of community, noting that George Gallup’s continual reference to “American isolationism” and a study that cited seventy percent of Americans “do not know their neighbors.”<sup>119</sup> Frazee concludes,

The church of the twenty-first century must do more than add words to an already booked society; it must design new structures that help people simplify their lives and develop more meaning, depth, purpose, and community.<sup>120</sup>

Doug Pagitt, the emergent pastor of Solomon’s Porch, contends for a more Socratic strategy in creating connection through dialogue and spiritual conversation:

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<sup>117</sup> The “Burning Man” website promotes the communal aspect of its event: “You belong here and you participate. You’re not the weirdest kid in the classroom — there’s always somebody there who’s thought up something you never even considered. You’re there to breathe art. Imagine an ice sculpture emitting glacial music — in the desert. Imagine the man, greeting you, neon and benevolence, watching over the community. You’re here to build a community that needs you and relies on you. “Burning Man.” Internet online. Available from <<http://www.burningman.com>> [8 February 2005].

<sup>118</sup> Church and ministry names include: 24-7, Oasis, LifeBridge, Mosaic and Connexxion.

<sup>119</sup> Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001): 33.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

The Bible discussion group differs from a traditional Bible study. We aren't just getting together to read and extract from the Bible and deepen our own understanding. Rather, this group is like a microcosm of our community, standing in for others as we enter into the passage. In many ways this group sets the form and feel and content for what will happen on Sunday nights during our worship gathering. Together we explore the questions and issues so that when the same passage is presented to the larger group, it will be clear that it has been wrestled with not just by the theologian who gives the sermon (me) but by "regular" people as well.<sup>121</sup>

It is Pagitt's dialogue pedagogy that will likely surface a "relational theology."

In the modern world, theology was a top-down matter. Theologians were well-educated to present new theological nuances or understandings. In the post-modern culture, the power is in the people who nurse and manufacture a "relational theology" as result of personal growth and group work.<sup>122</sup>

One of the new directions in training youth ministers to think theologically and to create their own biblical worldview is through mentoring and life-on-life discipleship. Students will develop theological understandings via small groups that may exist for years. Similar to a cohort model, this would create relational connections from the beginning and encourage thoughtful submissions. These cohorts for biblical study might never see each other face-to-face and yet would hammer out their theology in a relational drum of dialogue, debate and

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<sup>121</sup> Doug Pagitt, *Reimagining Spiritual Formation: A Week in the Life of an Experimental Church* (El Cajon: emergentYS books, 2003): 87.

<sup>122</sup> In many ways, a "relational theology" already exists through small groups and Sunday School classes. These programs have a natural theological view, as dictated by the local church, but these groups are also ripe for the introduction of variant thoughts, insights, interpretations and beliefs. Consequently, faith and doctrine are not so much told as "sold." Doctrine is fluid and only finds patterns within the group. Which explains why two adult Sunday School classes can be so different.

discernment.<sup>123</sup> Professors would serve as “guides from the sides” and only intervene when a conversation went off topic or in an unacceptable direction.

Additionally, faculty should consider embracing social networking sites like MySpace<sup>124</sup> and Facebook. In fact, a recent trend has been for individual schools to create their own social networking site that feature faculty, student and staff “profiles, bulletin boards and information areas.”<sup>125</sup> “In a year or two virtually every college will have something like this,” argues Steve Jones, professor of communications at the University of Illinois-Chicago, “it’s basically meeting [students] on their own turf.”<sup>126</sup>

Regardless, as cultural languages reflect a hyper-relational perspective (fueled by high-tech), it will invoke dialects of community, connective and tolerance. These are the seeds of a budding relational theology (which is yet to fully materialize).

### *From Time-based to Time-less*

The most significant change in the Academy will involve time. Modern educational institutions—including ministry training schools—are inherently time-based. The classes operate on a fixed time format on certain fixed days in the week. These classes meet on a fixed weekly schedule for a fixed amount of time, between

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<sup>123</sup> An interesting insight that this author experienced through the George Fox Seminary doctoral cohort was an expansion of his theological mindset and a confirmation of previously-held belief. Doctrine and faith issues were routinely discuss in the cohort and this “relational” theology was beneficial and helpful.

<sup>124</sup> One teenager boasts over five thousand “friends” on MySpace and adds nearly ten more every day. Ironically, most are from total strangers. This phenomena is known as “friending” and its wildly popular for people to “collect friends” on the Internet. It is a great opportunity for professors and instructors to connect with their students.

<sup>125</sup> Janet Kornblum, “Campuses Connect Online,” *USA Today* (August 16, 2006): 5D.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

thirteen and seventeen weeks. Depending on the school, there are fixed breaks for Christmas, spring and summer.<sup>127</sup> Each course is rooted with a syllabus and outline of learning sessions. The learning on any given subject is reduced to “bits and bites” or moments in time where a student learns something.

But in a cyber-culture where knowledge is rampant and time is without limitation, the suggestion of time-based educational strategies producing learning is as odd as forcing a dog to eat at the top of every hour. In reality, electronic learning invites a time-less educational situation. Despite some forms of distance learning, true e-learning does not force synchronized learning. Rather it is *asynchronized* and fluid to the learner’s schedule.

Metaphors for a timeless platform are abundant in web culture. What if learning looked more like digital downloads from iTunes rather than purchasing a compact disc through a local music store? What if learning resembled a digital newspaper (delivered by e-mail whenever news broke) rather than a print version delivered daily? What if downloadable course content imitated online shopping in multiple stores (24 hours a day) rather than purchasing goods at a store only when sales, day of the week or time dictated?

Can youth ministry training, once accreditation and financial aid standards relax, be delivered that requires no fixed meeting times, no set course dates (beginning and ending) and can be accessed 24/7/365? The instruction and

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<sup>127</sup> The “summer break” (late May through early August) is a leftover cultural appendage from an agricultural-based society. Schools naturally did not operate in the summer, from the beginning, because the children were needed by their families in the fields to harvest crops. As an industrial culture replaced the agricultural world, the summer break became useful for short-term employment, family vacations and other outdoor activities (like church camps) because of the better weather conditions. Despite some recent trends toward year-round schooling, the summer vacation “tradition” remains firm and fast.

development of twenty-first century youth workers, via an e-learning plan, will focus, as Marc J. Rosenberg argues, upon “access.”<sup>128</sup>

Naturally, this innately implies a “flattening” of current educational paradigms, particularly in the elusive ideal of what “learning in class” truly entails. For example, most professors would cite the ideal class session features an engaging, insightful lecture followed by substantive dialogue between student and professor. But this is largely fantasy. “The reason that students can remember the few ‘teachers who changed their lives’ is because genuine interactions between teachers and students are so rare,” says Rory McGreal, an e-learning expert.<sup>129</sup>

A time-less learning frame opens up dialogue. Students naturally reticent to converse in class (in front of peers) feel less fear to type their comments on a discussion board at midnight. Furthermore, a time-less learning frame rewards those who desire expedience and seek to complete the course on their own schedule.

Even still, critics of e-learning often point to the perceived lack of dialogue in a web-based learning environment. But such criticism misses the point. Many professors prefer lecture to discussion as a method anyway. As Maeroff notes,

Some teachers simply do not like students to interrupt their lectures to ask questions. Others manage classroom discussion poorly, lacking the skills to make these interchanges as worthwhile as they might be. Still other teachers focus on just a few members of the class, responding mainly to their questions, largely ignoring others students.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> “The second transformation is about access...Employees who are busier than ever are calling for delivery solutions that meet their needs and time frames. Learning must be available on a 24/7 clock, with delivery to the office, home, and hotel room. Time is emerging as the critical factor in learning. Employees want and need to learn according to their schedule, not the schedule of the training organization. They also want to learn as fast as possible.” Rosenberg, *E-Learning*, 7.

<sup>129</sup> As quoted by Maeroff, *Classroom of One*, 25.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

Another development in higher education, known as “swirling”—where college students complete their coursework at multiple institutions—is creating problems, especially in interactions and bonding with faculty.<sup>131</sup> Almost half of all seniors “swirl” and they “tend to be less engaged in their education compared with peers who have spent their college years at one school.”<sup>132</sup> George Kuh, Indiana University professor and director for the National Survey of Student Engagement, ultimately questions the value of “swirling” and adds, “The more swirling, the less the public really knows about the quality of the educational experience.”<sup>133</sup>

The digital native lives in a choice culture. “Swirling” reflects this priority and the emerging educational environment of “multiple” schools and courses. It is entirely possible that the traditional classroom space so cherished in the hallowed halls of academia may one day be as extinct as *Tyrannosaurus Rex*. Prior to the mechanized clock and modern educational frames, learning was also time-less. The difference was it was intrinsically connected to daylight hours. Learning was natural and within the rhythms of the day. It was also more communal or connective, whether in a synagogue or a crowded hillside.<sup>134</sup> Education did not happen at a particular hour. Rather it was fluid to the need of the student and the direction of the teacher, especially in early Greek and Roman education.

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<sup>131</sup> Mary Beth Marklein, “College ‘Swirling’ Muddies Quality,” *USA Today* (November 7, 2005): 6D.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Even the focus of education among the great cultures of the Greek, Hebrew and Roman was far different than modern learning frames. For the Greek, education was for the purpose of gaining wisdom. For the Hebrew, education served to develop righteousness. And for the Roman, education served to develop good citizens. Greek education, rooted in the Socratic Method, was hardly lecture-based or content-driven. The modern frame of classroom-based, lecture-rooted learning frames—still popular in higher education circles—is a unique slice in educational history.

In many ways, electronic learning returns education to a more time-less fashion, except it will now be around the clock. As a concession, it is noted these arguments are primarily sociological, historical and cultural in nature and intent. However, theological training and leadership development within the Church has historically operated in a parallel universe to secular educational theories and praxis.



## SECTION FIVE

### THE PROJECT

#### “Children’s Ministry” E-Learning Video Course

The conversation in regards to electronic learning is ripe with suggestions, proposals, ideas and dreams. Depending on the producer, it can operate under many different masks, shapes and designs.

In the field of youth and family ministry, one of the greatest teaching needs is in “children’s ministry.” This field has few earned doctorates to instruct and lead a program. Many institutions seek qualified instruction on this area, in order to fully-equip students for youth ministry.

The Consortium of Christian Colleges in Distance Learning (Joplin, MO) is an organization that has been producing video-driven courses to colleges and universities in the independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ for nearly a decade. Each course is thirteen weeks long and is taught by a highly-qualified professor in the field. Each video lesson is between thirty and sixty minutes and, depending on the professor, will have various types of engaging additional content, including PowerPoint™ shows, questions, live links and resources. Some courses will also be linked to a web portal, such as WebCT™, Moodle™ or BlackBoard™.

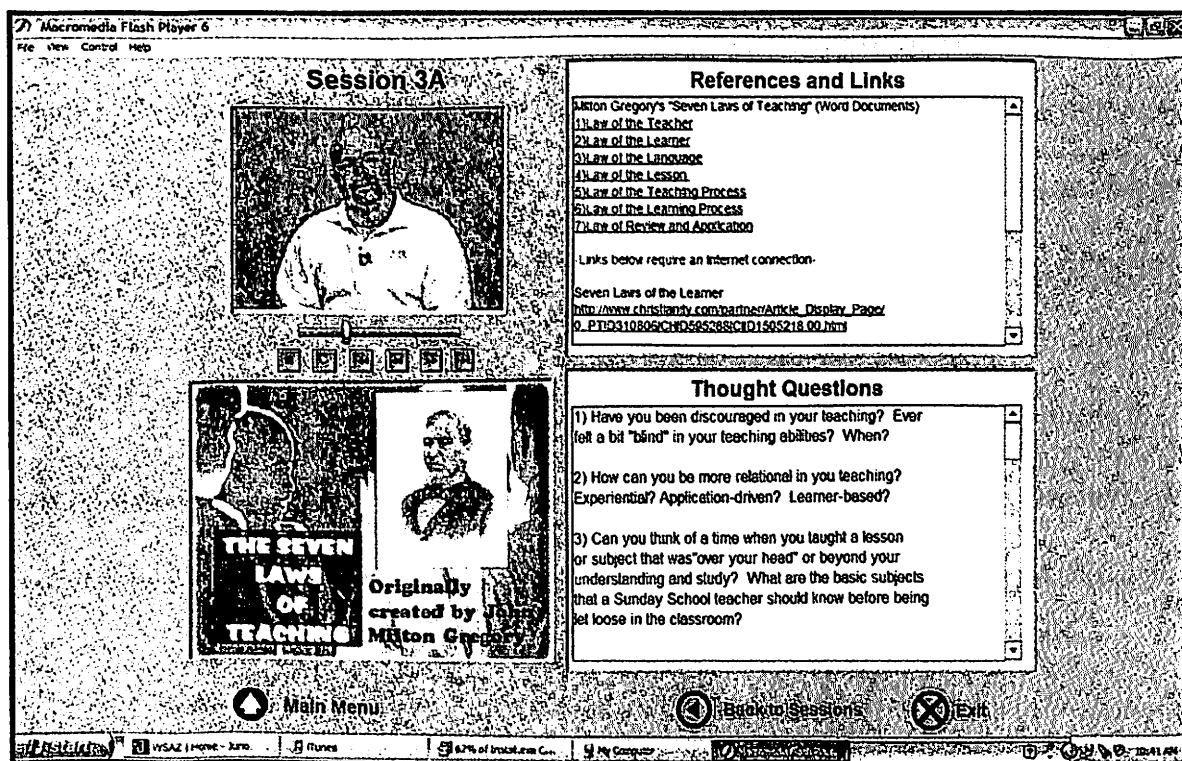
The courses are uniquely designed by the professor and, consequently, vary according to personal style. A few courses (Restoration History, Church History, Islam) are strict lecture formats, with papers and additional reading. Other courses

include projects, discussion boards, web searches and a variety of other learning activities.

The nature of the video instructional materials has resulted in mixed feedback. Some students enjoy the deep lecture format, however most view these courses with some disdain, especially the courses that were recorded early in the project (pre-2003) and feature the professor speaking (head to toe). Since the technology at that time also demanded shrinking the image, many of the lectures can be unbearable to view.

In 2003, this author created a course for the Consortium titled “Creative Bible Teaching.” When the course was viewed on a standard computer screen, the outlay of the content was divided into quads, featuring a live video screen, PowerPoint™ show (that corresponded to the video), live “references and links” that allowed a student to seek additional information on web while viewing class session and “thought questions” to engage the learner as the class progressed:

Figure 2. Sample View of the “Creative Bible Teaching” Course



This course was also project-based from the beginning and featured no exam. The focus was upon learning to improve teaching skills by actual teaching experience. Cincinnati Christian University has graciously allowed the course to dwell within their satellite of e-courses on BlackBoard™. The response to the course has been very positive (approximately one hundred students have taken the course) and each semester the evaluations serve to improve projects and other fluid course materials. One session that had been marked with less stellar marks (for its datedness) was recently re-filmed.

The opportunity to develop a second course for the Consortium in “Children’s Ministry” was highly welcomed and the video component for the course was filmed in August 2006 by Good News Productions in Joplin, MO. The primary difference in this video course is the addition of several dozen video clips to the project. In the past, the video window featured a single “talking head” but Children’s Ministry includes special clips on loan (with permission) from Gospel Light and Group Publishing. Furthermore, there are video clips from assorted movies that are artfully incorporated to confirm a point.

The syllabus for Children’s Ministry is project-oriented. Like “Creative Bible Teaching,” the course will also reside at the Moodle™ site, hosted by Cincinnati Christian University.<sup>1</sup> At this point, due to inability to create an amicable financial arrangement between the Consortium and Kentucky Christian University, neither course is currently offered through the author’s institution. However, the following schools regularly participate: Ozark Christian College (Joplin, MO), Johnson Bible

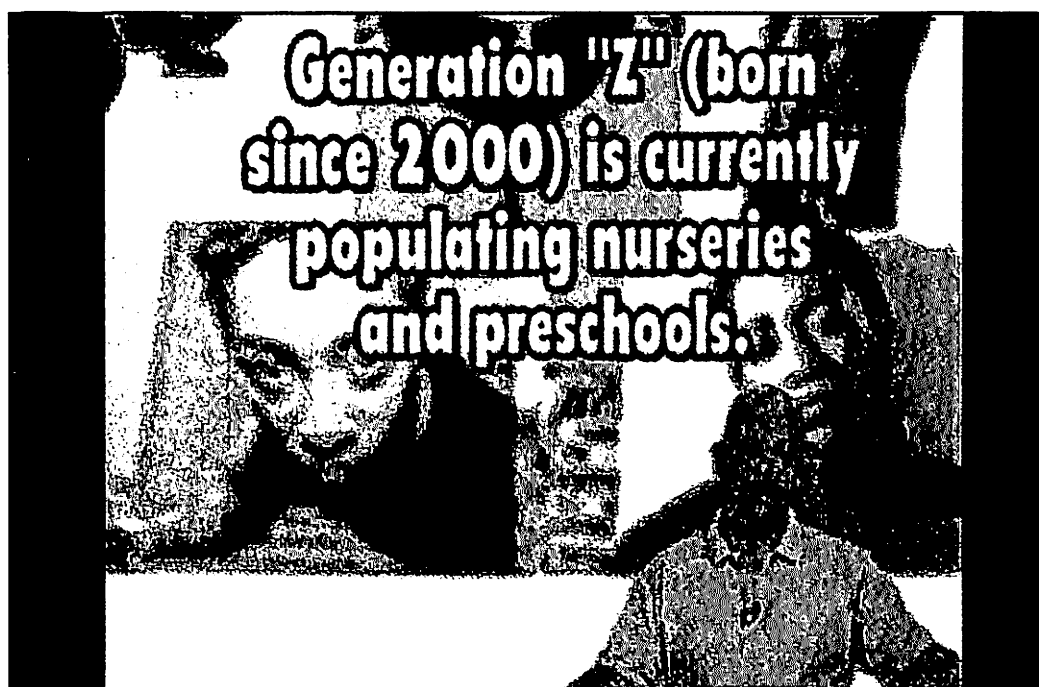
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<sup>1</sup> Availability to the “Creative Bible Teaching” website can be secured for interested parties. Both of these course sites require a special “key” for entrance.

College (Knoxville, TN), Nebraska Christian College (Norfolk, NE), Great Lakes Christian College (Lansing, MI), Roanoke Bible College (Elizabethtown, NC), and Saint Louis Christian College (Florissant, MO).

Due to a production error, the disks were not finished in time for a spring 2007 start of Children's Ministry. When this news was confirmed, the author created his own video sessions (DVD) as part of this project, which looked remarkably different from previous courses, featuring a full-screen shot, moving backgrounds and transitions of words and slides.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 3. Screenshot of New "Children's Ministry" Course**




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<sup>2</sup> At the January 2007 meeting of the instructors and board members of the Christian College Consortium on Distance Learning, the new video format was publicly viewed and critically-analyzed. After much discussion it was agreed the backgrounds should receive more prominence and, consequently, these videos will be edited once again (during the Spring of 2007) by the author and feature a "teaching box" for the professor that will reside in one corner of the screen while the background takes a fuller stage. It was also recommended by Anna Kautzman, and the author agreed, to re-deploy these videos (which run from 30-45 minutes) each into smaller five (or less) videos (of two to three minutes each) and upload to the course website. The advantage would be selected content could be downloaded by the student for podcast purposes. The larger, more complete, video is also being targeted for release to the general public. However, copyright protections afforded under educational law might make this cost-prohibitive.

Nevertheless, the course will be published and formally released for the fall semester. Creative Bible Teaching is still taught, as it runs year-round.

A sample of the Consortium's "Creative Bible Teaching" will be submitted for this project along with a revised DVD featuring a "Children's Ministry" learning session on "*Can You Hear Me Now? Speaking the Cultural Languages of Today's Children*" (which borrowed heavily upon the research and essays for this doctoral program).

### E-TRAIN™

Recently, Kentucky Christian University hired a coordinator of distance education named Anna Kautzman. Ms. Kautzman, who came to the institution from Jones University (a fully accredited online school) has significant experience and creativity in electronic learning.

After discussions with her over the nature of e-learning in the future, it was decided that a video component class may not be the best approach to cyber-learning. Video quickly dates itself. Video is also difficult to produce in an attractive fashion. Finally, video can be difficult to manage online or through CD/DVD. The files are large and bulky (for superior viewing) or small and fuzzy (when down-sized to publish on a website or CD-R).<sup>3</sup>

Anna also challenged the time-based nature of Consortium courses (which currently run within the semester frame of the schools it services). She also expressed some disagreement with cohort models for e-learning, especially with

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<sup>3</sup> The video component of the new "Children's Ministry" course has been enthusiastically received. Consequently, there is evidence that students welcome the visual touch, if produced well, and it might prove beneficial to include video in select courses (especially content with historical content that can stand for several years before revision).

undergraduates.<sup>4</sup> Kautzman challenged this author to create true e-learning courses that are time-less in structure, fluid and flexible (meaning a student could start and finish at any time, anywhere).

This challenge is what produced E-TRAIN™--a course of study that is timeless, relevant, academic, Internet-based and features networking with mentors and field supervisors. The overall mission of E-TRAIN™ is to educate and equip students to lead and serve the local and global church through youth ministry. The courses feature flexible learning projects, reading, website development, mentoring, research and writing.

E-TRAIN™ is rooted in a thorough understanding of the post-modern technological revolution, which is marked by several distinct characteristics:

### *Digital Formats*

The iPod revolution has revealed how education will probably evolve from paper, lecture and professor to MPEG, MP3 and JPEG. The ministry student of tomorrow will have access to a growing body of digital information. The major issue for training institutes will be to develop critical thinkers, not necessarily those who can recite cherished truths of their celebrated professors. Students will also need to learn crucial skills in web development and digital creation and reproduction. In fact, the classroom of tomorrow will more likely be a web site than a classroom. Schools will become information managers, not information dispensers.

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<sup>4</sup> The author has mild disagreement with Ms. Kautzman on cohorts and undergraduate learning. The reason for perceived failure at this point is more due to its novelty use among undergraduates (who are traditionally-wired for a more direct in-classroom experience). As time passes and the cohort model becomes more common, it is the author's opinion that this strategy will rise in prominence and positive perception.

### *Multiple Mentors*

The professor as the “sage from the stage” will continue to lose value, especially in an age where information is widely disseminated and hierarchical authoritative structures are collapsing. The ministry student of tomorrow will learn under multiple mentors, some within a local context while others will serve as academic guides. The advent of social networking sites like Facebook™ and MySpace™ signal this shift as students will engage respected authorities in their learning domain. Contextualized ministry mentoring will serve to evaluate student’s performance and work.

### *Time-less Education*

The seat-based, time-rooted “lecture period” is losing relevance in a world where everything happens at all hours (day or night). The ministry student of tomorrow will be able to earn a degree in Moscow (Russia) or Moscow (Idaho). He or she will complete their studies at their convenience, on their time schedule. There will no longer be semesters or quarters or course schedules. There will only be courses of study.

### *Fluid Courses and Degrees*

The Industrial Revolution created an assembly line strategy within educational paradigms. But as these frames flatten and become fluid, the coursework of tomorrow will look quite different. Instead of professor-based (tied to lectures), the course will melt into project-based learning. Outcome- and performance-based education will emerge. Students may complete these projects at their leisure.

Consequently, once the projects are finished, the credit is earned (whether it takes three weeks or three years).<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, degrees will become fluid, too. As with other industries, the future of learning institutions will be either to create large super-merger schools or unique, narrow-focused smaller institutions that freely borrow and share with each other. The age of a student attending a single institution (in a particular geographical context) throughout his academic career may be ending. Consequently, schools of ministry will have to become less territorial. It is no longer “me” but “we” (which is “me” upsides down).

E-learning creates a dynamic relationship between the student and professor/institution that continues beyond the class. It is further marked by several format elements:

### *Experiential Learning*

Students learn not from a book, but from actual life experiences (forged through projects) in the subject matter. Course projects would require involvement of the student (under supervision) in the learning objectives. Consequently, learning would become performance-based in context, not cognitive-based (meaning there would be no need for tests to evaluate). Students remember more of what they do so, consequently, retention and understanding will rise exponentially.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Some may question the “relational” context of a fluid frame since learners will enter and exit at various times. But this is also a relational strength in that students will, within whatever context of their course, learn from new incoming students (who bring fresh perspectives) and develop relational connections with students that can extend beyond the course. To use a metaphor: current educational practice resembles a bucket of water. Students are poured into a frame for a semester. But imagine a bucket under a running stream of water that continually adds freshness to the bucket. While a different approach, it may actually be a stronger strategy for dynamic learning.

<sup>6</sup> The classic work of Edgar Dale in the 1950s suggested a “cone of learning” where selected content was taught using a variety of teaching methods. Students were then tested for retention and



### *Interactive Learning*

Students, in every course, would have several relationships. One relationship would be with a *primary professor* who guides the whole class experience during that semester. This professor would be a recognized expert in the field of the course and would set up chat room discussions, interact on the discussion board, approve Learning Plans, evaluate submitted projects and issue the final course grade. Each student would also have a *ministry mentor* of their choosing. This individual would interact weekly with a student to complete the tasks and course projects. A third individual will serve as a *fieldwork supervisor* to evaluate on-the-field work and communicate with the primary professor concerns, completion of tasks and/or comments. Finally, students through chats, discussion boards and the meetings at the *National Youth Workers Convention* would learn from each other and with each other.

### *Resource Learning*

In a digital age, the critical issue is not to control information dispensation (lectures, classroom situations) but rather how to critically think about the information available. Higher order thinking skills (analysis, synthesis and evaluation) are of more importance than cognitive recall, understanding and application. E-learning creates a resource depository for the student. Each student, from their first course, would develop a personal website that uploads information on youth and family ministry (links, blogs, resources). This would be an ongoing project throughout the degree program and each course would require additional uploads.

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Dale discovered more experiential methods, especially first-hand, produces learning recollection up to ninety percent.

Personal websites that show exceptional value, upon graduation, would be linked to an institution's website and recommended to others. Students would also build a personal library in youth and family ministry.

Each course would have a two book requirement (primary professor lists these) and an additional 500 pages of reading in other books related to the course content (student-selected). Students would interact on the course discussion board to the primary reading assignments and on their personal websites write a brief reaction to the other works (500 pages) they read in that course.

### *Mentored Learning*

E-learning works best through mentored relationships. Mentoring is personal and purposeful. The primary professor guides the whole class. The ministry mentor is a student-selected resource (that is currently in the field of ministry) for interaction.<sup>7</sup> A student may select *any* ministry mentor who agrees to serve as their course mentor. They may never meet personally in the course and can be purely available through an "e-relationship" (e-mail, phone). The "field supervisor" (who may not serve as the ministry mentor) is the only one who observes the student on the field.

Evaluations of the student will come from all three (primary professor, ministry mentor and field supervisor). One key would be a "pass/fail" nature to the course. Each professor would evaluate the student's work in a particular area:

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<sup>7</sup> Neither the ministry mentor nor the field supervisor, unlike the primary professor, will be paid for their oversight. These individuals serve only to evaluate and consult the student when necessary. The field supervisor will probably already be a paid staff individual at the local church where the service is rendered. This model is currently employed in the Kentucky Christian University Youth and Family Ministry as students regularly seek out local church ministry service opportunities, under a field supervisor who evaluates their skills and attitudes.

Primary Professor (submitted projects--quality of B-level or better), chat/discussion board involvement, personal website development, reading), Ministry Mentor (interaction and awareness of the student with the subject matter) and Field Work Supervisor (ability to complete on-the-field course projects).

Each professor/instructor/supervisor would grant a “thumbs up/thumbs down” for the work of the student that semester. A passing evaluation (B/90 or better) means the student continues on. A failing evaluation means the student must re-engage in the course for another semester, perhaps with the need to repeat certain course projects.

### *Continual Learning*

E-learning does not end when the class does (as with the traditional model of correspondence courses). Rather the older students become guides for the younger ones. Each week students may gather for a chat room dialogue (1 hour) with other students in the program. Chats (depending on the Primary Professor) may be scheduled for up to three times a week and announced at the course website. Students will be expected to make a chat at least once a month to discuss course material. Chats may also include notable guests and ministry experts.

### *Self-Styled Learning*

While the primary professor will guide the learning and course overall, each student will write a “learning plan” (to be submitted to the primary professor) within the first two weeks of entering a course (which lasts until the student completes the projects). This learning plan will detail what the student intends to do to engage in

the learning of the course objectives, including intended projects, additional reading and personal website development. The primary professor will read and affirm these learning plans or suggest further development and improvements. All students will post their learning plans at the discussion board by the end of the first month.

At the end of the course, each student will also write a 1000 word document that outlines their reaction to their learning plan and any personal insights and applications. This document will also be evaluated by the primary professor and posted at the website.

Currently, there are three courses developed in the E-TRAIN™: Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry and Spiritual Development. These courses will, for the present moment, be taught by this author and are available for any Christian school or Bible college who seeks to become a partner. These courses are in a "self-study" frame that are easy to access and accredit. The courses may be infused into a school's current curriculum plan or a full two-year E-TRAIN™ Associate of Science degree may be offered. Schools will retain fifty-percent of the tuition dollar for participation. Essentially, this author will become an adjunct professor at multiple institutions and, hopefully will, in time, begin to create an entire E-TRAIN™ universe of qualified professors in a number of disciplines.

An E-TRAIN™ syllabus (Spiritual Development) will be submitted, plus a publicity brochure

## SECTION SIX

### PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

#### Children's Ministry Consortium Course

The video course in Children's Ministry was filmed in early August 2005 and is currently in production stage. The course outline was designed in August, which included a full syllabus. The course outline notes the learning topic (13 sessions), plus the supplemental videos (beyond the "head shot" video of the instructor), Adobe PDF handouts for the student and "live links" for further study. This outline was developed specifically for the course designer who handles conversion to CD-R format. The outline is as follows:

**Table 5. Course Outline for "Children's Ministry" Videos**

	<b>Learning Topics:</b>	<b>Videos (in order of appearance)</b>	<b>Handouts for CDR in PDF</b>	<b>Live Links</b>
Session #1	<i>Course Introduction/ What is Children's Ministry?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What Is CM" Intro</li> <li>• "I'm Alright"</li> <li>• "The Kid"</li> <li>• "Kids Talk About What They Like"</li> <li>• "Leave It To Beaver"</li> <li>• "Eternal Benefits"</li> <li>• "Use Me"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Is Children's Ministry (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Eternal Benefits" (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632</a></li> <li>• Children's Ministry: No Higher Calling (Gospel Light video) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003595">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003595</a></li> </ul>

Session #2	<i>Why Children's Ministry Is Important</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Why CM is Important" Intro</li> <li>• "Youthworkers Talk About Kids"</li> <li>• "Kid Talks About Youthworker"</li> <li>• "Sssh Teacher" Video</li> <li>• "School of Rock Nine is a Music Number"</li> <li>• "Pop Culture and God"</li> <li>• "Dennis Lee"</li> <li>• "Judy Comstock"</li> <li>• "Michelle Asous"</li> <li>• "Roots and Wings"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let The Children Come</li> <li>• Why Children's Ministry Is Important (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Roots and Wings" (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632</a></li> </ul>
Session #3	<i>How Children Grow (Developmental Context)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "How Children Grow" course intro</li> <li>• "We're All About Kids"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A-B-Cs of Spiritual Growth (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> <li>• Infant Development</li> <li>• Toddler Development</li> <li>• Preschooler Development</li> <li>• Grades 1-2 Development</li> <li>• Grades 3-4 Development</li> <li>• Grades 5-6 Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jean Piaget: <a href="http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/piaget.html">http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/piaget.html</a></li> <li>• Erik Erikson: <a href="http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/Erikson.htm">http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/Erikson.htm</a></li> <li>• Lawrence Kohlberg: <a href="http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/Kohlberg.htm">http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/Kohlberg.htm</a></li> <li>• Fowler: <a href="http://faculty.plts.edu/gpence/html/fowler.htm">http://faculty.plts.edu/gpence/html/fowler.htm</a></li> </ul>
Session #4	<i>Reaching Generation Y and Z (Generational Context)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Reaching Gens Y and Z" Course Intro</li> <li>• "Spy Kids: Family Worth Fighting For"</li> <li>• "School of Rock: Worried Sick"</li> <li>• "The Rookie: I'm The New Pitcher"</li> <li>• "Silent Treatment"</li> <li>• "What Breaks Your Heart?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future of CM: 6 Trends</li> <li>• Millennials</li> <li>• Reaching Gen Y and Z (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Millennials/Gen Y: <a href="http://www.millennialsrising.com/">http://www.millennialsrising.com/</a></li> <li>• Generations: <a href="http://www.timepage.org/time.html">http://www.timepage.org/time.html</a></li> <li>• William Strauss: <a href="http://www.lifecourse.com/about/williamstrauss.html">http://www.lifecourse.com/about/williamstrauss.html</a></li> <li>• Neil Howe: <a href="http://www.lifecourse.com/about/neilhowe.html">http://www.lifecourse.com/about/neilhowe.html</a></li> </ul>

Session #5	<i>Can You Hear Me Now? (Speaking the Cultural Languages of Children)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Can You Hear Me Now" Course Intro</li> <li>• "Jungle to Jungle"</li> <li>• "Talking Klingon"</li> <li>• "Kids Culture Relationships"</li> <li>• "Kids Culture Experiences"</li> <li>• "Kids Culture Images"</li> <li>• "Tarzan Who Am I"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can You Hear Me Now</li> <li>• The Changing Church</li> <li>• World Is Flat and Fat</li> <li>• Mixed Messages</li> <li>• Can You Hear Me Now: Children's Ministry (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ooze: <a href="http://www.theooze.com/main.cfm">http://www.theooze.com/main.cfm</a></li> <li>• Dan Kimball: <a href="http://www.vintagefaith.com/">http://www.vintagefaith.com/</a></li> <li>• Emergent Village: <a href="http://www.emergentvillage.com">www.emergentvillage.com</a></li> </ul>
Session #6	<i>Principles of Children's Ministry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Principles of CM" course intro</li> <li>• "Deuteronomy 6"</li> <li>• "Finding Daycare"</li> <li>• "Philosophy of Seedlings"</li> <li>• "Marketing Veggie-Os"</li> <li>• "Dad Finally Connects With Son"</li> <li>• "The Focus Group"</li> <li>• "Mission Statement"</li> <li>• "Ballroom Blitz Daddy Daycare Takes Off"</li> <li>• "Sugar Snack High"</li> <li>• "Don't Treat Kids Like Adults"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RX for Toxic Children's Ministry</li> <li>• Dog Eat Cat World</li> <li>• Can The Candy</li> <li>• Trouble With Tryouts</li> <li>• Principles for Children's Ministry (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Ministry Magazine: <a href="http://www.cmmag.com">www.cmmag.com</a></li> <li>• Gospel Light: <a href="http://www.gospellight.com">www.gospellight.com</a></li> <li>• Group Publishing: <a href="http://www.group.com">www.group.com</a></li> <li>• Kidology: <a href="http://www.kidology.org">www.kidology.org</a></li> <li>• Children's Ministry: <a href="http://www.childrensministry.net">www.childrensministry.net</a></li> </ul>
Session #7	<i>Nursery Ministry: Babies and Toddlers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Nursery Ministry: Course Intro"</li> <li>• "Little Blessings"</li> <li>• "Nursery Tour"</li> <li>• "Baby Church"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursery Ministry (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Baby Church" <a href="http://www.revgeneration.com">www.revgeneration.com</a></li> <li>• "Little Blessings" video: <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632</a></li> <li>• Little Blessings: Nursery Smart Pages: <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.19067">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.19067</a></li> <li>• "Age-Level Insights: 0-2" (Children's Ministry Magazine) <a href="http://www.childrensministry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=213">http://www.childrensministry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=213</a></li> <li>• Children's Ministry Magazine: <a href="http://www.cmmag.com">www.cmmag.com</a></li> </ul>

Session #8	<i>Preschool Ministry: Ages 3-6</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Preschool Ministry” course intro</li> <li>• “Little Ones”</li> <li>• “Preschool Class Observation”</li> <li>• “Teaching Preschoolers”</li> <li>• “Daddy Daycare: Registering the Children”</li> <li>• “Daddy Daycare: Sugar Snack High”</li> <li>• “Follow The Leader”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry To Preschoolers (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Age-Level Insights: Preschoolers” (CM) <a href="http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=214">http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=214</a></li> <li>• “Little Ones” and “Follow The Leader” (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632</a></li> <li>• How To Talk To A Young Child (Gospel Light video) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=85116.00523">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=85116.00523</a></li> <li>• Early Childhood Smart Pages (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.29321">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.29321</a></li> <li>• Children’s Ministry Magazine: <a href="http://www.cmmag.com">www.cmmag.com</a></li> </ul>
Session #9	<i>Young Child Ministry: Ages 7-9</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Grades 1-3 Ministry” Course Intro</li> <li>• “Growing Stronger”</li> <li>• “Teaching 1-2 Graders”</li> <li>• “Hands On Learning”</li> <li>• “Primary Class Observation”</li> <li>• “Prescription for Life”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry to 1-3 Graders (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Age-Level Insights: Ages 6-9” (CM) <a href="http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=215">http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=215</a></li> <li>• “Growing Stronger” (Gospel Light): <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632</a></li> <li>• Hands On Curriculum: <a href="http://www.handsonbible.com">www.handsonbible.com</a></li> <li>• Children’s Ministry Magazine: <a href="http://www.cmmag.com">www.cmmag.com</a></li> <li>• “Jabber Mat”: <a href="http://www.group.com/jabbermat/">http://www.group.com/jabbermat/</a></li> </ul>



Session #10	<i>Pre-Teen Ministry: Ages 10-12</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Preteen Ministry” course intro</li> <li>• “Moving Through”</li> <li>• “Teaching 5-6 Grade”</li> <li>• “Sixth Graders Talks About Learning”</li> <li>• “Junior Class Observation”</li> <li>• “School of Rock: Stick it to the Man”</li> <li>• “The Devil Went Down To Jordan”</li> <li>• “Joshua and Calebs Excellent Adventure”</li> <li>• “Baptism”</li> <li>• “A Changed Life”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dear Donna</li> <li>• Ministry to 5-6 Grades (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Age-Level Insights: Ages 10-12” (CM) <a href="http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=216">http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/subcat.asp?catid=212&amp;subcatid=216</a></li> <li>• “Moving Through” (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003632</a></li> <li>• 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Smart Pages (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.18052">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.18052</a></li> <li>• Apologetix: <a href="http://www.apologetix.com">www.apologetix.com</a></li> <li>• Inter’linc: <a href="http://www.interlinc-online.com">www.interlinc-online.com</a></li> </ul>
Session #11	<i>Why Kids Misbehave (Discipline Issues)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Why Kids Misbehave” course intro</li> <li>• “Discipline Ducks”</li> <li>• “Teachers Talk Discipline”</li> <li>• “Discipline Ducks” (Replay)</li> <li>• “Gabriel Discipline”</li> <li>• “Rodney Discipline”</li> <li>• “Power Play Discipline”</li> <li>• “Teacher Talks Discipline”</li> <li>• “Teacher Talks Discipline2”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why Kids Misbehave (CM)</li> <li>• Why Kids Misbehave (PDF of PowerPoint Show)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline Help (Group) <a href="http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/cat.asp?catid=223">http://www.childrensmi-nistry.com/cat.asp?catid=223</a></li> <li>• Discipline: Guidance That Makes a Difference (Gospel Light video): <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003618">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=607135.003618</a></li> <li>• Discipline Guide for Children’s Ministry (Group) <a href="http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?item=2865">http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?item=2865</a></li> </ul>

Session #12	<i>Kids and Worship</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Kids and Worship” course intro</li> <li>• “Music Man”</li> <li>• “Hosanna”</li> <li>• “Jump Shout Sing”</li> <li>• “Color Song”</li> <li>• “Heart of Worship”</li> <li>• “Everyone Worships Differently”</li> <li>• “Prayer Works”</li> <li>• “The Good Armor”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kidz Worship (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KIDS Church (Gospel Light) <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/children/kids_jrkids_Church.html">http://www.gospellight.com/children/kids_jrkids_Church.html</a></li> <li>• Kids Own Worship (Group) <a href="http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpItnDspRte.jsp?item=45738">http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpItnDspRte.jsp?item=45738</a></li> <li>• Worship Resources (Group) <a href="http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpSctDspRte.jsp?section=10667">http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpSctDspRte.jsp?section=10667</a></li> <li>• Verse Bursts (Church Artworks) <a href="http://www.churchartworks.com/church_presentation_backgrounds/verse_bursts.html">http://www.churchartworks.com/church_presentation_backgrounds/verse_bursts.html</a></li> <li>• Jana Alayra <a href="http://www.janaalayra.com">www.janaalayra.com</a></li> <li>• Mary Rice Hopkins <a href="http://www.maryricehopkins.com">www.maryricehopkins.com</a></li> </ul>
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Session #13	<i>Special Programming, Publicity and Resources: Vacation Bible School, Conferences, Events</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Kids Stuff"</li> <li>• "Jerusalem Marketplace"</li> <li>• "CPC Memory Video"</li> <li>• "Thank You"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How To Build A Children's Ministry</li> <li>• I Was Burned At Church</li> <li>• VBS Success</li> <li>• Special Programming and Resources (PDF of PowerPoint)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT: Innovative Tools for Children's Ministry (Group) <a href="http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtplunDspRte.jsp?item=44825">http://store.grouppublishing.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtplunDspRte.jsp?item=44825</a></li> <li>• VBS Smart Pages (Gospel Light): <a href="http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.16718">http://www.gospellight.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&amp;Store_Code=GL&amp;Product_Code=08307.16718</a></li> <li>• Group VBS: <a href="http://www.groupvbs.com">www.groupvbs.com</a></li> <li>• Gospel Light VBS: <a href="http://www.gospellightvbs.com">www.gospellightvbs.com</a></li> <li>• Standard VBS: <a href="http://www.standardpub.com/VBS/">http://www.standardpub.com/VBS/</a></li> <li>• David C Cook VBS: <a href="http://www.cookministries.com/nexgen/vbs/">http://www.cookministries.com/nexgen/vbs/</a></li> <li>• Children's Pastor Conference/International Network of Children's Ministry <a href="http://www.incm.org">http://www.incm.org</a></li> <li>• Children's Ministry Magazine Live <a href="http://www.group.com/cmml/">http://www.group.com/cmml/</a></li> <li>• Promiseland Conference (Willowcreek) <a href="http://www.promiselandonline.com">http://www.promiselandonline.com</a></li> <li>• Northpoint "Kids Stuff" <a href="http://www.kidstuf.com/alpharetta.html">http://www.kidstuf.com/alpharetta.html</a></li> <li>• Kidstuf Backstage (DVD) <a href="http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?pid=209">http://resources.northpoint.org/store/shop.do?pid=209</a></li> </ul>
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At the time of filming for “Children’s Ministry,” three additional sessions were also recorded, one a revision for the author’s “Creative Bible Teaching” course (“Learning Styles”) and the other two were new sessions for a completely revised (filmed) course on “Youth Ministry Dynamics” (under the leadership of Dr. Gary Zustiak of Ozark Christian College, Joplin, MO).<sup>1</sup>

### E-TRAIN™

The project specifications for this particular venture are limited, but no less exciting.

At this point, three full E-TRAIN™ degrees have been designed: Associate of Science (Youth Ministry), Associate of Science (Children’s Ministry) and Master of Arts (Youth Ministry). Institutions may buy wholesale into the degree (which at this point, only contains the 28 hours of Church Ministry core) and students who earn these credits plus the necessary general education and Bible/Theology core may graduate from the institution. Institutions may also choose to simply transfer in various E-TRAIN™ courses into their school. Consequently, their original degree programs are retained and E-TRAIN™ courses are simply one more option within the educational course constellation.

Students may take an E-TRAIN™ course simply by registering with their respected school. They may not take more than twelve hours (12) of E-TRAIN™ courses at any one time. The Primary Professor (at this point, only this author) will essentially serve as an “adjunct” professor for the institution and provide schools with

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<sup>1</sup> The author filmed two 50-minute sessions for this course: “Small Church Youth Ministry in a Post-Modern World” and “Teaching Teens With Creativity.”

a full transcript of education, plus any other pertinent documents necessary for accreditation purposes.

A student is considered officially enrolled when they register and, consequently, make payment to E-TRAIN™ (due within 30 days of registration). All students, once registered, will contact the Primary Professor for a current syllabus and a course website “key” will be distributed. A student is “official” once they enter the website and submit their Learning Plan (within two weeks of registration) to the Primary Professor. Institutions that do not pay on time will be assessed a five percent late fee per month. The final grade will not be issued for the student until payment is made.

Institutions wishing to contract with E-TRAIN™ and this author may enter into an agreement at any time (with expectation and recommendation that it is widely advertised to students that E-TRAIN™ courses are not limited by semester registration time frames but rather can be entered at any time the student wishes).

E-TRAIN™ will retain half (50%) of the current institution’s tuition dollar for each student enrolled in an E-TRAIN™ course, while the institution will retain half (50%) as educational profit. In the event a student must seek a continuance of a course (after one year), they must pay an additional \$250 continuance fee to the institution and supply the Primary Professor with an update of their progress. This fee will be split 50/50 between the Primary Professor and the Institution. No final grade will be issued if this fee is not paid.

## SECTION SEVEN

### POSTSCRIPT

The process of innovative thinking that shatters previous paradigms is both exhausting and exhilarating. It is this author's firm conviction that technological advances—many which are still in the future—will continue to shape and re-arrange the Academy into an electronic learning frame that no longer is dictated by time and space. Consequently, the potential for E-TRAIN™ is ripe and, with additional funding (for website development) or creative connections, anything is possible.

In November 2006, this author also made contact with Chris Renzelman, the Northwest regional director with the *National Network of Youth Ministries*. For the past several years, he has been designing a program for training youth workers but was lacking an academic component (necessary to earn institutional loyalty to the plan). A chance meeting and spontaneous conversation at the *National Youth Workers Convention* in Anaheim led to a later breakfast and an extended dialogue about how E-TRAIN™ and the Renzelman plan might cooperate.

Renzelman has deep connections for grants and other significant funding. Furthermore his connection to the *National Network of Youth Ministries* provides a convenient and confident alliance for creating a far-reaching and significant impact in the future of youth ministry education.

At this point, Renzelman is devoting the next year to fund-raising and if insipid plans prevail a new adventure is in view.

The Consortium for Christian Colleges and Distance Learning is also working towards significant change. In January 2007, the directors and instructors met in Joplin, MO for a two-day meeting featuring Dr. Leonard Sweet. The topics focused on the future of distance learning and, in particular, the rise of e-learning. Anna Kautzman, the director of distance education at Kentucky Christian University, spoke on innovative e-learning strategies as did this author on the topic of “cultural languages,” technology and how modern institutions must reinvent towards e-learning opportunities.

There was limited discussion with the Consortium (and other individual colleges represented) about E-TRAIN™ and it is possible these courses may be adopted into the current scope of classes.

Overall, this study and investigation into how technology has reinvented cultural language has been rich and rewarding. It is highly possible that one (or more) future books may also be released that arise from this research. Consequently, the long nights and hard days (not to mention countless clippings and highlighted books) will not be for naught.

As mentioned, there is little doubt in this author’s mind that electronic and digital learning will be the predominant form of education in the future. How soon this “tipping point” will happen remains to be seen, but institutions—especially those who train professional ministers—would be wise to consider the possibility.

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## APPENDIX

## Associate of Science: Youth Ministry (64 hours)

### General Studies Core (15 hours):

English Composition (3 hours)  
 Science Elective/Biology Preferred (3 hours)  
 History Elective/World History Preferred (3 hours)  
 Psychology (3 hours)  
 General Study Elective (3 hours)

### Bible/Theology Core (21 hours):

Church History OR Restoration History (3 hours)  
 Acts & NT Survey (3 hours)  
 O.T. Survey (3 hours)  
 Gospel Elective (3 hours)  
 Old Testament Elective (3 hours)  
 Pauline Elective (3 hours)  
 Theology Elective (3 hours)

### Church Ministry Core (28 hours):

Spiritual Development (3 hours)  
 Christian Education Administration (3 hours)  
 Personal Evangelism (3 hours)  
 Survey of Christian Education (3 hours)  
 Creative Bible Teaching (3 hours)

### Youth Ministry Emphasis (13 hours):

Youth Ministry (3 hours)  
 Family Life Ministry (3 hours)  
 Youth Issues/Research (2 hours)  
 Conventions/Conferences (2 @ 2 hour credit/each) (4 hours)  
 Youth Specialties "The Core" (1 hour)  
 Group Magazine Live (1 hour)  
 Youth and Family Ministry Fieldwork (1 hour)\*

**\*\*A student who would like to earn ADDITIONAL 15-hours of course credit in youth and family ministry (allowing them to finish a BS program) could do so with a full-year internship under a youth minister.**

Student will attend 2 youth/family ministry conventions of choice and at their expense. May attend the same convention twice (but in different years). All conventions/conferences must be pre-approved, except:

- ☐ National Youth Workers Convention (Youth Specialties)
- ☐ Group Summit Experiences (Group Publishing)
- ☐ Group Youth Ministry National Conference

Student will need to complete the following youth ministry tasks as part of the course "Fieldwork" (1 hour). Student is charged the credit hour in first semester of enrollment, but no credit is given until all tasks are successfully completed.

- ☐ Lead and attend with a youth group a week-long youth ministry event (SITS, CIY)
- ☐ Attend and serve at one full week of summer church camp (with or without your church's teenagers)
- ☐ Preach a message to students (video-taped with personal analysis)
- ☐ Lead a 3-10 day service or mission project with teens
- ☐ Create a bibliography of 100 books, websites and periodicals for youth and family ministry
- ☐ Teach a minimum 13-week (consecutive) study for teens
- ☐ Create and lead a 30-minute worship experience for teens (video-taped with personal analysis)
- ☐ Create a whole family event (at least 4 hours in length), with publicity.
- ☐ Develop a personal website that includes links, writings, resources and information related to youth & family ministry.

### YOUTH ISSUE RESEARCH:

This special self-study course will evaluate the student's ability to investigate an issue in youth ministry, interact with current and relevant research and write a paper that is properly formatted, grammatically-correct and insightful. Minimum paper length will be 40 pages with no less than 50 sources cited within the paper. Research paper completed after all other courses have been done.



## Associate of Science: Children's Ministry (64 hours)

### General Studies Core (15 hours):

English Composition (3 hours)  
 Science Elective/Biology Preferred (3 hours)  
 History Elective/World History Preferred (3 hours)  
 Psychology (3 hours)  
 General Study Elective (3 hours)

### Bible/Theology Core (21 hours):

Church History OR Restoration History (3 hours)  
 Acts & NT Survey (3 hours)  
 O.T. Survey (3 hours)  
 Gospel Elective (3 hours)  
 Old Testament Elective (3 hours)  
 Pauline Elective (3 hours)  
 Theology Elective (3 hours)

### Church Ministry Core (28 hours):

Spiritual Development (3 hours)  
 Christian Education Administration (3 hours)  
 Personal Evangelism (3 hours)  
 Survey of Christian Education (3 hours)  
 Creative Bible Teaching (3 hours)

### Children's Ministry Emphasis (13 hours):

Children's Ministry (3 hours)  
 Family Life Ministry (3 hours)  
 Youth Issues/Research (2 hours)  
 Conventions/Conferences (2 @ 2 hour credit/each) (4 hours)  
 Children's Ministry Magazine Live (1 hour)  
 INCM Workshop (1 hour)  
 Children's Ministry Fieldwork (1 hour)\*

\*\*A student who would like to earn ADDITIONAL 15-hours of course credit in children's ministry (allowing them to finish a BS program) could do so with a full-year internship under a children's minister.

Student will attend 2 youth/family ministry conventions of choice and at their expense. May attend the same convention twice (but in different years). All conventions/conferences must be pre-approved, except:

- ☐ Children's Pastor Conference (Int'l Network of Children's Ministries)
- ☐ Children's Ministry Magazine Live
- ☐ Willowcreek Children's Ministry Conference

Student will need to complete the following youth ministry tasks as part of the course "Fieldwork" (1 hour). Student is charged the credit hour in first semester of enrollment, but no credit is given until all tasks are successfully completed.

- ☐ Lead a week-long Vacation Bible School for a local church
- ☐ Attend and serve at one full week of summer church camp (with or without your church's children)
- ☐ Lead a day-long service project with children
- ☐ Create a bibliography of 100 books, websites and periodicals for children and family ministry
- ☐ Teach a minimum 13-week (consecutive) study for children
- ☐ Create and lead a 45-minute children's worship experience (video-taped with personal analysis)
- ☐ Create a whole family Halloween or New Year's Eve event (at least 4 hours in length), with publicity.
- ☐ Develop a personal website that includes links, writings, resources and information related children's ministry.

### CHILDREN'S ISSUE RESEARCH:

This special self-study course will evaluate the student's ability to investigate an issue in children's ministry, interact with current and relevant research and write a paper that is properly formatted, grammatically-correct and insightful. Minimum paper length will be 40 pages with no less than 50 sources cited within the paper. Research paper completed after all other courses have been done.

## Master of Arts: Youth Ministry (64 hours)

### General Studies Core (15 hours):

Website Design and Development (3 hours)  
 Research and Writing (3)  
 Church History Elective (3)  
 Course TBD  
 Course TBD

### Bible/Theology Core (21 hours):

New Testament Elective (3)  
 New Testament Elective (3)  
 Greek I or Additional Language Study (3)  
 Old Testament Elective (3)  
 Theology Elective (3)  
 Theology Elective (3)  
 Theology Elective (3)

### Leadership/Ministry Core (28 hours):

Leadership in the Emerging Culture (3 hours)  
 Advanced Communication Techniques (3 hours)  
 Curriculum Development (3 hours)  
 History and Philosophy of Youth Ministry (3 hours)

### Youth Ministry Emphasis (16 hours):

Emergent Youth Ministry (3 hours)  
 Contextualizing Youth Ministry (3 hours)  
 Leadership Management (3 hours)  
 Adolescent Counseling (3 hours)  
 Youth Ministry Thesis OR Project (3 hours)  
 National Youth Workers Convention (.5 hour)  
 National Youth Workers Convention (.5 hour)

Students will attend 2 National Youth Workers Conventions of choice and at their expense. They will also serve as mentors for undergraduate students who attend the same convention.

### MASTER THESIS/PROJECT:

Each student will propose, research, develop and deliver either a written thesis on some issue/problem related to youth ministry or they will create a project that inherently carries a spirit of research. The student who creates the best project for that graduating year will receive a special award.

# THE E-TRAIN PHILOSOPHY:

Timeless  
Relevant  
Academic  
Internet-based  
Networking

Reading  
Research and Writing  
Mentoring  
Projects  
Discussion Boards

A course is project-based in nature and time-less in structure. A student will pay the tuition for the course and begins the class at that moment. Students may enter no more than four courses at a single time (12 hours) but may complete any course within their own time frame (although it will be fairly difficult to complete any course in less than a month). Students will pay a continuation fee of \$250 per class per year (if projects remain uncompleted and student desires to remain in the program).

## PRIMARY PROFESSOR

- Accredited, qualified and experienced professor in the field
- Oversees the Ministry Mentor, Fieldwork Supervisor and Student
- Monitors Discussions and chats
- Gathers evaluations and submits final (pass/fail) grade
- Attends NYWC with student

## MINISTRY MENTOR

- Qualified and experienced leader in the field (selected by student)
- Oversees the student and provides resources, affirmation and insight
- Completes an assessment of the student when all course projects have been completed

## FIELD WORK SUPERVISOR

- Local church leader (selected by student) who directly works with the student to observe all work and ministry tasks
- Gathers digital evidence (documents, forms, PDFs) completed by the student during course and submits to Primary Professor
- Submits final "pass/fail" evaluation of the student to Primary Professor

Professor will be paid according to the following scale, per student enrolled:

Primary: 30% of tuition  
Travel Fund\*: 10% of tuition

School retains 60% of all tuition monies collected.  
Primary and School split continuation fee 50/50.

Payment occurs when student completes course.

\*Travel fund covers all expenses for Primary Professor to attend the National Youth Worker Convention in order to meet with students.

*The mission of E-TRAIN is to educate and equip students to lead and serve the local and global Church through youth ministry.*

# E-TRAIN COURSE FRAME:

## READING:

Each course will feature two works (250 pages minimum) that match the course objectives and are relevant and timely. The Primary Professor will choose these two books.

The student will read an additional 500 pages of articles and books (self-selected) that match the course objectives and are approved by the Primary Professor. Student will list suggested works to read in the course Learning Plan. At least 100 pages must be from periodicals (*Group*, *Youthworker*, *Discipleship Journal*, etc.).

The student will submit an annotation (3-5 sentence description) for each article and book that's read, plus all bibliographic information, at their personal website.

## PROJECTS:

Each course will feature several projects that relate to the course objectives and engage the student in learning skills related to the material. The student will choose four (4) of the projects. When the student has completed the course projects to the satisfaction of the field supervisor and primary professor, a pass/fail grade is issued.

The student will also develop, at the commencement of their program, a personal website that includes a personal blog (on youth ministry), resources and web links. This site will grow as the student works through the program and serve as the final product of the student's work while in the degree.

The student will also attend FOUR (4) hours of Convention/Conferences while in the program, preferably the National Youth Workers Convention (2 hours).

## RESEARCH:

Most courses will feature a research component where the student studies a particular area that relates to the overall course objectives. The student will write a formal paper (10 pages minimum).

The student proposes the research topic to the Primary Professor who will evaluate the final paper. If the paper does not exceed a "B" (90), it will be returned for further revision.

All research papers will be posted on the course website plus the student's personal website.

## DISCUSSIONS:

Each course will feature a central website where students will connect with other students currently in the course (if there are students) and upload questions and comments about the course material.

Additionally, each month the Primary Professor may engage the class in a live chat experience (with special guests possible). Otherwise, students will be encouraged to contact and engage the Primary Professor through e-mail.

Each student will receive a personal evaluation by the Primary Professor regarding their participation, depth of contribution at the Discussion Board.

# E-TRAIN University

## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*Three Credit Hours*

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *The mission of E-TRAIN is to educate and equip students to lead and serve the local and global Church through youth ministry.*

Timeless  
Relevant  
Academic  
Internet-based  
Networking

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course reinforces the value and importance of the spiritual life in the Christian leader. The student will participate in various spiritual disciplines, including fasting, Bible study, solitude and silence, service and self-sacrifice.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon conclusion of this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Recognize their personal spiritual strengths and weaknesses,
2. Appreciate spiritual disciplines in the Christian life,,
3. Develop a personal strategy for practicing Christian spirituality,
4. Create a plan for leading a church toward greater spiritual growth.

**PRIMARY PROFESSOR: RICK CHROMEY**

**MINISTRY MENTOR:**

**FIELD WORK SUPERVISOR:**

Within two weeks of starting this course (payment made), you will need to submit a Learning Plan to the **Primary Professor** (listed above) that identifies your selections for a “**Ministry Mentor**” (an individual with at least 5 years of experience in youth ministry and not a family relation) and a “**Field Work Supervisor**” (an individual who can observe your ministry tasks, gather various documents created and evaluate your progress [cannot be a family relation or the same person as the “Ministry Mentor”]). The Primary Professor will evaluate all work submitted by the Field Work Supervisor, gather evaluations from the Ministry Mentor and Supervisor and issue a final pass/fail (B/90 or above) grade.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

### **1. LEARNING PLAN**

- Submit a 500-1000 word learning plan that contains the following components:
  - Name of the course, student name, date of entry
  - Identification of Ministry Mentor and Field Work Supervisor (with titles, churches of service, phone numbers, website, e-mail address)
  - Description of proposed research paper/project and the four (4) projects the student has selected in order to complete the course. Notify the Primary Professor if any of the projects also fulfill “Fieldwork” tasks (you may receive credit for both a “Fieldwork” task and course “project” if they match).
  - Advise the Primary Professor of any changes since the last Learning Plan to your personal program website. Each student must develop a personal website that will be a repository for all course work, blogs and web links. If the student doesn’t wish to purchase a domain, they may use any number of “free” web sites available, such as [www.mysite.com](http://www.mysite.com)
  - Bibliography (author, full title, publisher, date of publication, pages) of 500 pages of additional reading (at least 100 pages from periodicals).
  - Personal website link and e-mail address.

- Learning Plan must be submitted within two (2) weeks of course entry. The Primary Professor reserves the right to suggest, guide and alter the Learning Plan, if necessary, to meet the course objectives and minimal standards for academic credit.
- In the event, the course is not completed within twelve (12) months, an additional \$250 continuation fee must be paid and a "Request for Continuation" proposal that states the nature of delay and what remains for the student to complete. A course has an indefinite time frame as long as the annual continuation fee and "Request for Continuation" is completed by midnight of annual anniversary.

## **2. COURSE PROJECTS (choose four to accomplish)**

### **○ Three-Day Food Fast.**

- For a period of three days (totaling 72 hours), participate in a fasting from all food. Water and fruit juice only may be consumed (no other liquids). The 72-hour long fast must be successfully completed before credit is extended. Failure to complete in part is failure in the whole.
- Prior to engaging in the fast, it's strongly recommended the student read the chapter on fasting in Celebration of Discipline (Foster) and follow appropriate guidelines. If you have a health issue, then this project should not be selected. Only students in good to great health overall should engage in a fast of this length. It's also recommended the student engage in a few 24-36 hour fasts prior to engaging in this one.
- During meal times, the student must engage in prayer and/or Bible study (as opposed to meaningless activity or entertainment).
- Keep an hourly journal of your experience, noting personal feelings, growth and how God is speaking to you. A 4-5 page reaction to the fast must also be completed. The reaction must note personal growth in this fast, what you learned and how you intend to live differently, spiritually. Submit the reaction and the hourly journal as a Word file under the document name:  
studentname.72hourfast.spiritualdevelopment.doc.

○ **All-Night Prayer Vigil.**

- From 10 p.m. until 7 a.m., participate in an all-night prayer vigil. You may not sleep during this time and should engage in actual pray at least 30 minutes every hour (the remaining time may be spent in Bible study, listening to spiritual music, viewing spiritual images, creating a memorial of the vigil, etc. Students are encouraged to be creative in their prayer time, enjoying not just “closet” prayer but also prayer walks (outside), singing, writing of prayers and labyrinth-worship experiences. This all-night prayer vigil must be completed as a whole for credit. Failure to complete in part is failure in the whole.
- Prior to engaging in this prayer vigil, it's strongly recommended the student read the chapter on prayer in Celebration of Discipline (Foster) and follow appropriate guidelines. It's highly recommended that you not engage in this prayer vigil alone, but rather invite two to three others to join for accountability sake (plus its easier to stay awake).
- Keep an hourly journal of your experience, noting personal feelings, growth and how God is speaking to you. A 4-5 page reaction to the prayer vigil must also be completed. The reaction must note personal growth in this prayer activity, what you learned and how you intend to live differently, spiritually. Submit the reaction and the hourly journal as a Word file under the document name: studentname.prayervigil.spiritualdevelopment.doc.

○ **Thirty-Day Activity Fast.**

- For a period of thirty days (totaling a month), participate in a fasting from an activity that has become “very important” to your life. This 30-day long fast must be successfully completed before credit is extended. Failure to complete in part is failure in the whole.
- The secret to this fast is to engage something that is difficult for you to live without. Examples include: watching television, playing on the computer, listening to music, video games, body building, etc. It should be something that you engage in EVERY day and would be difficult for you to give up (for married students, it may even include sexual activity). The Primary Professor reserves the right to deny any activity that is deemed of moderate difficulty or less.
- You are strongly encouraged to develop new habits in Bible study and prayer during this month of activity fasting. You may engage in other spiritual course projects during this period, in addition.
- Keep a daily journal of your experience, noting personal feelings, growth and how God is speaking to you. A 4-5 page reaction to the activity fast must also be completed. The reaction must note personal growth in this fast, what you learned and how you intend to live differently, spiritually. Submit the reaction and the daily journal as a Word file under the document name: studentname.30dayfast.spiritualdevelopment.doc.



○ **24-Hour Vow of Silence.**

- For a period of one day (totaling 24 hours), participate in a period of complete silence (no talking whatsoever and for any reason). The 24-hour long period of silence must be successfully completed before credit is extended. Failure to complete in part is failure in the whole.
- Prior to engaging in this period of silence, it's strongly recommended the student read the chapter on silence in Celebration of Discipline (Foster) and follow appropriate guidelines. It's important that a time is carved out where speaking is not necessary and possible. This exercise may be included as part of another course project and works well within activities like fasting and solitude. It's highly recommended you do this activity in complete seclusion from other people, preferably within a personal retreat.
- Keep an hourly journal of your experience, noting personal feelings, growth and how God is speaking to you. A 4-5 page reaction to the vow of silence must also be completed. The reaction must note personal growth in this fast, what you learned and how you intend to live differently, spiritually. Submit the reaction and the hourly journal as a Word file under the document name:  
studentname.24hoursilence.spiritualdevelopment.doc.

○ **Forty-Eight (48) Hour Personal Retreat.**

- For a period of two days (totaling 48 hours), participate in a period of personal retreat at a place of seclusion (hotel, retreat center, church camp)
- The personal retreat should be a time of study, reflection and prayer. You need to spend time reading only the Bible, devotional helps and books that enrich spirituality (e.g., books on prayer, disciplines, etc.). You may participate in other disciplines (e.g., 24 hour vow of silence, all-night prayer vigil, 3-day food fast) as part of this retreat.
- The student must propose to the Primary Professor a complete schedule for this retreat PRIOR to participation. The proposal should include where you will go to retreat, what you will do and what you hope to accomplish (spiritually) as a result of your time of retreat. Include this proposal in your Learning Plan.
- Keep an hourly journal of your experience, noting personal feelings, growth and how God is speaking to you. A 4-5 page reaction to the retreat must also be completed. The reaction must note personal growth in this retreat, what you learned and how you intend to live differently, spiritually. Submit the reaction and the hourly journal as a Word file under the document name:  
studentname.48hourretreat.spiritualdevelopment.doc.

○ **Bible Study.**

- Enter into a study of a scriptural problem or topic. Investigate every passage related to the topic and create a study log of your experience. Topics may be any matter of personal interest (e.g., spiritual gifts, eschatology, death, prayer, baptism, etc.). This study must be a fresh study (one that you've not done before) and include both biblical passages as well as commentary and other study aids.
- Prior to engaging in this period of study, it's strongly recommended the student read the chapter on study in Celebration of Discipline (Foster) and follow appropriate guidelines. This exercise may be included as part of another course project and works well within activities like a personal retreat.
- Keep a record of your study and create a basic accounting of your conclusions. Submit a 4-5 page reaction about your study and note personal growth in this study, what you learned and how your investigation impacted your personal life. Submit the reaction and the study account as a Word file under the document name: studentname.biblestudy.spiritualdevelopment.doc.

### **3. CONGREGATIONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

- Create an event, activity or publication that you could use within a local church to encourage its spiritual development. Start by asking yourself this question: What could we do, as a community of believers, to increase our faith experience? Design an event or activity that answers this question. It may help your congregation to improve their prayer lives, their worship expression or their Bible study habits.
- Suggested ideas include a labyrinth or Prayer Path(Group), worship stations, prayer experiences, or even a deeper development of one of your personal projects (for example, an all-night prayer vigil for your congregation).
- When you have decided on what you intend to do, you must get final approval from the Primary Professor. Simply e-mail him or her your intended project (what will happen, when and where and how).
- When the project is complete, write a 5-6 page reaction paper to the project. Submit this reaction and all Word-generated documents related to the project to your Primary Professor under the document name: studentname.finalproject.spiritualdevelopment.doc.

#### 4. TEXTBOOK READING, DISCUSSION BOARD AND CHATS

- Read **Celebration of Discipline** (Richard Foster), and **XXXXXX** (Author Here). Then using the course discussion board, drop your reactions, questions, comments and insights. You are also encouraged to read and respond to what other students (past and present) have written on the Board.
- In addition, you must read an ADDITIONAL 500 pages from books and periodicals related to spirituality, faith development and Christian lifestyle (of your choice). Suggested books can be found at the course website, from your Ministry Mentor, Christian bookstore or Primary Professor. At least 100 pages need to be articles from periodicals, such as *Discipleship Journal*.
- Each student is encouraged to not only submit a certain quantity of comments about the reading but also make comments of “substantial” quality. In order to pass this portion of the course, the student must comment a minimum of twenty (20) times at the Discussion Board about the textbook reading. Each comment must be “substantive” in nature:
  - *A “substantive” comment is one that offers ADDITIONAL thought to a previous comment, introduces a new idea, asks a question or invokes thought within the readers. “Praise” and “affirmative” comments (e.g, “I liked that thought!” or “Good insights”) without further comment will NOT be counted as substantive.*
- Students who do not show evidence of discussion board engagement or are prone to shallow comments will be contacted by the Primary Professor.

#### 5. PERSONAL WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a “Favorites Web Links” page and upload 15 new links that directly relate to personal spiritual development. Five need to be BOOKS. Five need to be SPIRITUAL HELPS. THREE need to be PERIODICALS for improving spirituality. And the remaining two are your choice. Each web link also needs a brief description.
- Add photos and descriptions to projects completed during this course.
- Write three blogs on what you’re learning about personal spirituality.

## COURSE ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION FOR CREDIT

1. When the Primary Professor has received and accepted FOUR projects, a research paper; has approved substantial engagement at the course Discussion Board and has viewed the required changes to the student's website, the course will be over and the student will receive a PASS grade (meaning institutional credit is extended). At this point the student will receive an e-mail stating that the course is complete. Students who show exemplary work in a course of study may be duly recognized in various ways, including highlighting the student's web site, posting of student's work, etc.
2. **Please see each assignment for expectations and criteria on grading.** The Primary Professor will evaluate each work and if it merits a "passing" grade (B/90 or above), the student will be informed by e-mail that it was "accepted." Papers that are exceptional in nature will be marked "with honors." If revisions are necessary, the paper will be returned (with the professor's remarks) and areas noted for improvement. Students will need to revise the paper to acceptable standards. Several revisions may be possible before a paper is deemed "acceptable."
3. **GRADING SCALE:**

Accepted (with Honors):	paper is exemplary in nature (A)
Accepted:	paper is above average (B)
Needs Improvement:	paper is returned for submission (C/D/F)
4. **All written assignments must be typed and in proper form.** Failure to submit in proper form will usually result in the paper returned for revision. A high premium is placed on work that is accurate in grammar, spelling and form (page numbers, proper paragraph lengths). All papers should be double-spaced unless the assignment states otherwise. All papers over one page in length need to have a title page.
5. **The Primary Professor will seek to return all submissions within one week.** Sometimes extenuating circumstances may prevent this objective, however.

*"I believe in you!  
 I trust you!  
 I know you can handle this!  
 You are listened to!  
 You are cared for!  
 You are important to me!"*

6. **E-TRAIN** seeks to encourage three endearing characteristics of all students: *quality* (depth of product), *excellence* (attention to details) and *creativity* (innovation and invention).

## **COURSE STATEMENTS:**

1. **Learning Disability Statement:** *"If you have a diagnosed learning disability, please see the professor privately to discuss assessment measures that would enhance your ability to learn"*
2. **Disclaimer Statement:** *"Please understand that the Primary Professor reserves the right to modify this course plan by changing topics and assignments as long as it does not add to the students' work load."*
3. **Academic Dishonesty Statement:** *All scholastic dishonesty in this class is unacceptable and will be punished by failure of the project. .*

## **PRIMARY PROFESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION**

- **606/474-3230 (office)** or 475-3707 (home).
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