

2007

## Guest Editor

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### Augustana Digital Commons Citation

Forell Marshall, Madeleine (2007) "Guest Editor," *Intersections*: Vol. 2007: No. 25, Article 6.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/intersections/vol2007/iss25/6>

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## Guest Editor | MADELEINE FORELL MARSHALL

FOUR PAPERS COLLECTED in this issue of *Intersections* represent the 70th annual meeting of the venerable Association of Lutheran College Faculties (ALCF) held at California Lutheran University in October 2006.

The topic of the meeting at CLU was intentionally and provocatively vague: *Identity and Diversity in the Lutheran College*. What identity? What diversity? What college? In fact, as the papers came in, Lutheran identity tended to be as much conceptual and pedagogical as historical. Differences among the colleges emerged in both the presentations and in the accompanying discussions.

These essays are observed from markedly distinct disciplinary and personal vantage points as well. Randall Balmer, the distinguished scholar of American evangelicalism and our keynote speaker, recalls his own experience as an undergraduate at a conservative evangelical college and considers that formation in light of his subsequent achievements and study of evangelical culture. His perspective from outside Lutheran higher education balances the insiders' perspectives and may remind the reader that Lutherans are not the only purveyors of Christian liberal arts, and also that the wide world of evangelical religion is not quite as hostile as we might suppose.

Storm Bailey, our representative philosopher and a professor at Luther College, reflects on specifically Lutheran identity as contributing to notions of academic integrity, with particular attention to our understanding of academic freedom. Reporting on fruitful "Faith and Learning" discussions at Luther, he writes of the usefulness of faculty from different disciplines and diverse religious backgrounds addressing "Lutheran questions."

In his essay, José Marichal, a CLU political scientist, observes the odd mutual failure of campus diversity initiatives to collaborate or even meaningfully to connect with those promoting service learning or other sorts of educational civic engagement. He maintains that a better understanding of both democracy and the Lutheran call into the world can and should draw these initiatives together, enhancing the education we offer our students.

Pamela Brubaker, who teaches ethics at CLU, projects our understanding of diversity onto a global screen, where the economics of globalization challenge and compromise universal human rights. As we seek to educate students for critical citizenship—a particularly Lutheran project—she maintains

we can and must help them to understand and value the social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights of people.

From a California perspective (which the venue encouraged), I find it very interesting that, of the four talks collected here, the two delivered by scholar-teachers living and working "back East" seem most anxious about the academic standing of Christian liberal arts education. Professors Balmer and Bailey, while valiantly and persuasively championing the cause, assume a measure of suspicion and even antagonism toward Lutheran higher education. In contrast, Professors Marichal and Brubaker, our representative Westerners, assume Lutheran identity as a critical advantage, take diversity as a Lutheran given and proceed to define and elaborate some of the challenges. Perhaps the fact that we inhabit a region where white is a minority and monolithic Lutheran identity only a memory explains the difference. Certainly such geographical difference, if it is significant, supports the usefulness of ongoing national conversations made possible by the ALCF and by this journal. Indeed, the long series of conference topics and venues, available on the ALCF website reads like something of a cultural history of Lutheran higher education: <http://www.lutherancolleges.org/alcf/history/about.htm>.

A number of items that played an important part in this conference are lamentably missing from this collection, a reminder how ephemeral some of our most interesting projects and discussions often are. Four professors from Wartburg College [Cynthia Bane (Psychology), Kit Kleinhans (Religion), Penni Pier (Communication Arts) and Fred Waldstein (Political Science)] reported on a cross-curricular faculty and staff development seminar on the "Lutheran Heritage." Then there was a dramatic dialogue written, performed and directed by their colleague Kathleen Book. Guy Erwin performed the role of Philip Melanchthon in "No Child Left Behind' Meets Philip Melanchthon." A concluding discussion encouraged classroom applications of the many ideas that we had entertained.

The 2007 annual meeting of the Association of Lutheran College Faculties will be held October 5-7, 2007 at Newberry College. This year's theme is "Beyond 'Whatever': Values Based Learning in Lutheran Higher Education." For further information about the conference, please contact Professor Wayne Kannaday (Wayne.Kannaday@newberry.edu).