

2016

From the Editor

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Augustana Digital Commons Citation

Mahn, Jason A. (2016) "From the Editor," *Intersections*: Vol. 2016: No. 43, Article 3.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.augustana.edu/intersections/vol2016/iss43/3>

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From the Editor

A year from now, Lutherans around the world will commemorate the 500 year anniversary of the birth of the Reformation, marked by Martin Luther's 95 Theses in 1517. But today, faculty, staff, and administrators within Lutheran higher education commemorate a lesser-known milestone.

The summer of 2016 marks 20 years since *Intersections* was first printed at Capital University and distributed among the (then) 28 ELCA colleges and universities. As the journal's second editor, Bob Haak, would later say, it was "born in the twinkle of an idea" in the mind of the founding editor, Tom Christenson. Tom would edit the journal for almost a decade; Bob would take over for another half decade before inviting me to carry the work forward.

Intersections, along with the annual Vocation of a Lutheran College conference, was conceived as a way to sustain an open-ended conversation about the nature and mission of Lutheran colleges or universities after they ceased to be a places that (mostly) Lutherans went to be educated by (mostly) Lutherans. Thousands have attended the summer conference, learning about the Lutheran intellectual tradition that undergirds our residential colleges and education for vocation therein. Hundreds have contributed articles, essays, book reviews, reports, poems, and homilies to *Intersections*—sometimes celebrating our work or arguing with one another, often asking deep and important questions about how best to educate students for lives of responsible service, purpose, and meaning.

The first essay of this special anniversary edition comes to terms with the 20 year-old conversation called *Intersections*. It is co-authored by the three editors, past and present, although Tom's name is listed "in spirit." Tom passed away in 2013, but his spirit certainly lives on in this journal. The essay quotes from his editorials frequently and could not have been written without him.

I am delighted that the other authors of this issue agreed to write for this special anniversary issue. Mark Wilhelm has given a version of his essay as the opening address of the Vocation conference in recent years. In it, he explains why and how education for vocation has



emerged as the *sine qua non* of Lutheran higher education. Florence Amamoto contributed to the first issue of *Intersections* in 1996; here she looks back to that essay and the dance between Lutheran identity and racial and religious diversity that she has witnessed (and helped choreograph) at Gustavus and beyond. Kit Kleinhans positions Lutheran conceptions among other recent scholarship on vocation. Her essay suggests that, while teacher-scholars contributing to *Intersections* often debate with one another, their work also helps direct broader conversations about holistic education and service to the common good. Kristen Glass Perez then "moves forward by looking back" as she suggests that the attention given to vocation over the past decades should also be given to interfaith understanding in the decades to come. Finally, Ernie Simmons takes into account a number of initiatives in Lutheran higher education before making one more irreplaceable proposal: We ought to help students become "sustainability leaders" in a world whose climate and environment has been drastically altered by human consumption and waste.

I close by thanking Augustana junior Eileen Ruppel for designing the wonderful cover of this special edition, and Augustana graduate Kaity Lindgren ('16) for her diligence, insightfulness, and care while serving as the editorial assistant. Eileen and Kaity are extremely professional and wise, even though they are hardly older than this journal.

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