

WHERE IS BRINSMEAD?

NEWS • ANALYSIS • OPINION

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**LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY NAVIGATES
ROCKY SPRING QUARTER**

**PROPOSED NAME CHANGE TRIG-
GERS WWC STUDENT SIT-IN**

**SUPREME COURT RULES
IN DENNIS'S FAVOR**

CAMPUS CONFLICT

**Pazter meets
with students**

**Anti name
letters to be**

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Reading Through Adventist Glasses

As a youth I learned to read the Bible through Adventist glasses. The “little horn” in Daniel 7 was the papacy. The “Lord’s Day” of Revelation was Sabbath, not Sunday; the message to the church in Laodicea applied uniquely to my church. Adventism gave me a distinctive interpretation of the final chapters of Ezekiel and a particular view of “Michael the Archangel.” Adventism even influenced my harmonization of the synoptic gospels. When I read about Mary Magdalene I “knew” she was the woman who anointed Jesus at Simon’s feast and that she had been exorcised seven times after getting involved in prostitution with Simon as one of her customers.

In recent years this “Adventist hermeneutic” has come under fire. Many people with deep roots in Adventism report that by laying aside their Adventist glasses they’ve discovered a whole new world in the Bible. These children of Adventism have found that you won’t necessarily find the investigative judgment in the Bible unless you’re reading with Adventist glasses. Rules regarding lifestyle matters—dress codes, dietary rules, Sabbath regulations—are all seen to be at least as much the creation of the Adventist community as they are the dictates of Scripture. (And that’s stating the challenge in the mildest possible language.)

I agree that there is great value in learning to read the Bible through other glasses. However, I emphatically disagree with the notion that we make any significant spiritual advance by discarding the glasses of Adventism.

There is no untinted vision of the Bible. Evangelicalism, Catholicism, liberal Protestantism—each offers a distinctive way of reading the Bible. Each has its own glasses. Scholars in each community are prepared by the convictions and history of their community to see more keenly in some matters and less so in others. None is more objective than Adventism. They are at best merely different.

In spite of our weaknesses and defects, the Adventist “whole Bible” approach has great strengths. While the insights of Ellen White are not infallible, they are hardly negligible. But we deprive ourselves when we limit our reading to Adventist authors and our understanding of the Bible to the “Adventist view.” And we deprive ourselves and our children if we fail to speak clearly about what we see through our Adventist glasses.

What we see includes:

- **Love and justice as hermeneutical principles:** Biblical statements that appear to support outrageous doctrines such as eternal hell and absolute predestination are reinterpreted on the basis of passages more congruent with love and justice.
- **God’s high regard for human bodies:** He delights in human cooperation with his ministry in the world. This truth is expressed in Adventist health care ministries and Adventist rules regarding diet and drugs. One consequence of this perspective is the documented Adventist increased longevity and decreased morbidity.
- **God’s law:** The Adventist appreciation for law brings us the benefit of Sabbath keeping in the face of modern frenzy. It assigns more than psychological meaning to the crucifixion. It argues for the ultimate intelligibility of God’s ways. (God is not arbitrary nor hopelessly inscrutable.)
- **Christian maturity:** Adventism helps me move beyond an obsessive concern with my own escape from damnation to concern for discipleship and the honor of my Savior.
- **Creation:** Because of my Adventist glasses I’ve learned to commune with God through Creation in ways that I do not find supported in most Christian traditions.
- **Judgment:** The Adventist doctrine of the judgment speaks of hope for suicides and for people who have lived beyond the geographic reach of Christian witness.

I treasure the insights I’ve received while reading the Bible through the glasses of Quakers, Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc. They’ve helped me see truths I likely would never have learned in Adventism. In turn, with eager confidence I offer others a look through my Adventist glasses. If they look, they’ll see something good—something too good to miss.

John McLarty, *editor*



FEATURES

- 12 **Where is Robert Brinsmead?** LARRY PAHL
- 15 **Whither, Robert D. Brinsmead?** RAYMOND F. COTTRELL
- 16 **Adventism: Fat Lady or Beautiful Bride?** ERIC BAHME
- 20 **aToday Website: An Interview** JIM WALTERS AND GREG BILLOCK



L. PAHL 12



E. BAHME 16



G. BILLOCK 20



D. FOOTE 22

NEWS AND ANALYSIS

- 7 **Proposed Name Change Triggers WWC Student Sit-In** COLLEEN MOORE TINKER
- 8 **Supreme Court Rules in Dennis's Favor**
- 9 **NAD Considering Changing Higher Education Salaries** LARA BEAVEN
- 24 **La Sierra University Navigates Rocky Spring Quarter** COLLEEN MOORE TINKER

LETTERS

- 4 **The Folkenberg Issue**
- 5 **Publisher's Response**
- 6 **Adventist Ethos**
- 6 **Institutional Memory**
- 6 **"Sligo Church In Turmoil"**
- 6 **Keep the Stories in Print**
- 6 **Problems in Atlanta**
- 6 **Great Interest**

SOUNDINGS

- 22 **A Real Family** DEBRA FOOTE

ABOUT THE COVER:
 Headlines from school papers give a sense of the turmoil that is happening on some Adventist Campuses.
Cover by Richard Tinker



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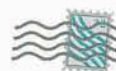
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FIRST CLASS

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Letters to the Editor
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The Folkenberg Issue

The last issue of *Adventist Today* (March-April 1999) might well be called "the Folkenberg issue" due to its preoccupation with the latest GC presidential misconduct. However, from almost all writers, in this and other SDA journals, there has been virtually no comment on the corporate failure of we the church to mind the store and its bosses whom we have allowed. Elected would be the wrong word. We have so little to do with "election." And it is our fault that we have so little to do with it, for the constitutions of our various divisions, conferences, institutions, et al, generally make it fairly clear that ultimate authority is in the hands of the membership, the "constituency."

Why do we not act in a timely manner? For many reasons, most of them without merit. Apathy. Frustration. Low priority in busy lives—"if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Not until crisis, if then, do we inquire about the political and policy health of our church. Our church! God's church of which we, not just "they," are supposed to be the stewards.

A few of us wrote letters and button-holed board and committee members in '91 when the news leaked out that Folkenberg and McClure were surreptitiously...taking money from a private donor to support their Washington life-style....This is, in church politics, a form of political "soft money." The "taking" was predictive of present events.

McLarty has found it hopeful that the "leadership core of the General Conference" confronted one of its own—suggesting to him that "our church may

be healthier than many of us are accustomed to acknowledging." I am not impressed. If they had acted in '91 to confront both Folkenberg and McClure, then I would have been impressed.

As a church we do not believe the Lord Acton axiom...("power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts

carte-blanche to anyone at the central wheels of power. That will also disrupt the administrative hold on ministerial protest. We ought, as a church, to have learned something from the unending series of debacles that started with the Davenport affair. We may have learned. We seem not to care enough to act. Shouldn't we?

FRANK AND JULIE R. LEMON
VIA THE INTERNET

The article is, in my view, unethical, unprofessional, and grossly unfair.

With articles such as this, you might well rename your journal, after the manner of the well-known gossip rag, Adventist Enquirer.

I have been a subscriber to your magazine for some time now and have generally been impressed with the quality of the articles. Until now. I can hardly believe you would let an article like "Folkenberg Business Details Revealed" pass for journalism and be printed. The article is, in my view, unethical, unprofessional, and grossly unfair. With articles such as this, you might well rename your journal, after

the manner of the well-known gossip rag, *Adventist Enquirer*.

I count no less than twenty references to eleven different anonymous sources, all of whom stand as paradigms of courage for their willingness to spread unsubstantiated stories so long as their name is withheld. (Only one of these rumors had a back-up source.) At the very least, good and fair investigative journalism demands that the accused be contacted for comment. No sentence in the article reflects that this most elementary requirement was met.

In Judaism, gossip is one of the very worst sins, with excellent reason. A man's reputation is worth more to him than anything except possibly his life. To murder a man's reputation is very nearly on a par with murdering his body.

absolutely") could possibly apply to our people "in the Lord's work"... We can protect our leaders, and our church, from the disease only by some form of a "two terms and you're out" policy for ministers in administrative leadership and by the use of continual systems of accountability that are "made to work."

What in fact happens to the few prophetic ministers in the system who call leadership to account and to change? More often than not, they are shown the door crudely and abruptly...What this church badly needs is an unvariable accountability of all leaders, at any time, to duly constituted church wide (members and ministers) authority. It could be generally helped, with some inevitable losses for the sake of preserving integrity, by a policy that disrupts the ol' boy club by refusing a lifetime political

My disappointment in *Adventist Today* over this article is deep. I see a real need for members to know of current events in our church, both positive and negative. We clearly need a greater "glasnost" in the higher echelons of our church's power structure. We must work for that. But until it happens, we cannot fill the gap with rumor and hearsay. To do so risks bringing just condemnation upon ourselves for sins far worse than anything the accused may have committed.

JANINE GOFFAR
LOMA LINDA, CALIFORNIA

Here is a brief account of certain matters about RSF which will help to confirm that those you referred to in your RSF article who were fearful of his use of authority, had every right to be fearful.

About a year or so before RSF was elected GC president in 1990, an article which he had authored on church organization and its leadership had been published in *Ministry*....

By purest coincidence I was fortunate to have two good clergy friends of many years, each of whom had served several years under, and with, RSF in the Inter-American division, and who had retired a few years earlier. I telephoned them to renew our acquaintance and to ask them about the article authored by RSF, who was unknown to me at that time. It was with keen disappointment that I learned the following information from my friends in separate telephone calls with each of them.

1. Each of my clergy friends had read RSF's article in *Ministry*, and assured me that he did not practice what he was preaching about church leadership in his article. They described him as a very domineering person who at times could be arrogant with those serving under him.

2. They had become aware from first hand information that RSF was engaged in highly questionable business ventures

outside of his ministerial and division leadership responsibilities that were not in the best interests of his ministry nor the church.

3. RSF was a very vindictive person who retaliated whenever he could against those who had warned him about these questionable activities outside of his ministerial responsibilities.

4. RSF also retaliated against anyone he could who would differ with his plans and policies, even when it was clear that they should have been established by committee decisions rather than by executive fiat...[and] he was more feared than respected...

5. After RSF's election as GC president in 1990, I called each of my two friends again to ask them about their reaction to this development. They were sickened by the event. But what really surprised me was their reluctance to dis-

...it is extremely difficult to provide the evidence that a writer would like to have in support of the actions of RSF described in your article, when all of the eyewitnesses are too fearful to provide their personal testimony of such conduct.

cuss the matter with me because they felt that now he was GC president he might be able to use the power of that office in some way to retaliate against them if he were ever to learn of any negative things they had said about him. My efforts to assure them otherwise were to no avail. However, I did learn from each of them that they felt those in leadership positions in the Inter-American division who were about to retire, or who had recently retired, and who had first hand knowl-

edge of RSF's problems, should have opposed his nomination in the nominating committee....

This reaction by my friends is interesting because despite the fact that they had already been retired for several years, even they did not want to say much because of fears of retaliation by RSF. So how could they have reasonably expected others to speak out against his nomination without fear of retaliation especially since RSF was chairman of the GC nominating committee in 1990?

The point I'm trying to make is that it is extremely difficult to provide the evidence that a writer would like to have in support of the actions of RSF described in your article, when all of the eyewitnesses are too fearful to provide their personal testimony of such conduct. My information, not only from my two retired friends...but others as well, leads me to

believe that those in your article who were fearful of RSF as a GC president, had every reason to fear him... For now I commend you on your article on RSF, which I am sure was difficult to write given the reluctance of eyewitnesses to provide their testimony.

BRANTLEY JOHNSON
VIA THE INTERNET

Publisher's Response

Criticism of our "Folkenberg Business Details Revealed" is understandable because of the high number of unnamed sources used. Knowing our

story harbored this unusual feature, the story included the explanation that in our interviews with many persons who had dealt personally with Robert Folkenberg and James Moore, we "encountered high levels of fear, and most of these sources have asked us not to reveal their names and professions. We believe that the fear and distrust of Folkenberg and Moore we've encountered is a significant element in the overall picture...." We stand by that explanation.

Because of the importance of giving fuller information on the Folkenberg-Moore dealings and related issues, we made the editorial decision to run the story despite the unnamed sources. However, we were convinced that the request for anonymity was reasonable, given the nature of Adventist politics and governance. Further, our sources were persons of high repute, first-hand witnesses, and much of their information was often only corroborative. We remind our readers that the respected *Washington Post* relied primarily on only one unnamed source in its Watergate reporting.

JAMES W. WALTERS,
PUBLISHER

Adventist Ethos

I finished reading the latest issue of AT yesterday and as always found it to be timely and informative. You and your staff are doing excellent work. I read Jim Walters' article on the "Adventist Ethos and Forgiveness" with total interest. The Adventist Ethos in the past has produced a kind of dumb stare in many church leaders when complex financial wrongdoing was exposed. Often, their first reaction was to "cover up" lest the good name of the church be dragged through the mud. Then, when the skeletons wouldn't go back in the closet, the "Ethos" tempted them to believe that forgiving and forgetting are virtues which should be practiced even though undeserved. Untrustworthy men have been dismissed from one denominational position only to turn up employed in another. The dismissal of Elder Folkenberg is a reassurance that our moral and ethical standards are improving.

ELDER ROCKNE W. DAHL
VIA THE INTERNET

Institutional Memory

I feel the article by Michael Scofield, "Institutional Memory and Dissent in

Adventism," (AT March-April 1999) provides important insights, both for our leaders and laymen. Leaders too often tend to gather about them sycophants who tell them what they want to hear, when they really need objective and honest counselors who are given the freedom to tell them the truth in an open Christian environment. Critical, honest, Christian historians and ethicists, for example, could provide invaluable help to a church corporation. If they are not brought into the organization directly, at least they should be consulted on a regu-

Church corporations have the legal status of persons, but they can easily become sociopaths in society without the crucial functions of memory and conscience...

lar basis and their insights and advice given due weight. Critical professional historians have been at the leading edge of progress and renewal in the church during the last few decades, providing us with honest institutional memory and prophetic voices helping us to learn from our past history, if we will. Church corporations have the legal status of persons, but they can easily become sociopaths in society without the crucial functions of memory and conscience, functions with which historians and ethicists can provide valuable assistance, in addition to prayer and Bible study.

ARLIN BALDWIN
VIA THE INTERNET

"Sligo Church In Turmoil"

There is a sentence in the article about WGTS 91.9: "Local radio station WGTS,

which always broadcasts Sligo's services live, ran pre-recorded sermons for a couple of weeks in order to avoid broadcasting a possible disruption." WGTS 91.9 did decide not to air the service March 6 because of several calls about disruptions and the threat against Pastor Osborn. It did air a sermon by Pastor Oxentenko in the place of the live service.

The March 13th live service was not aired by mutual agreement by Sligo Church and WGTS 91.9, not because of disruptions, but rather because the sermon would deal with specific issues that were not relevant to a large non-Adventist listening audience that tunes into Sligo Church.

I have to say you did a great job providing balanced information on the situation, and even the correction above is nothing big.

JOHN KONRAD
WGTS GENERAL MANAGER

Keep the Stories in Print

Please keep the Dennis and Folkenberg stories in print. If you stop we will all just forget and things will go on as they are.

HUEY CAMPBELL
VIA THE INTERNET

Problems in Atlanta

A similar situation as that at Sligo is occurring at the Berean church in Atlanta.

WM. MURRAIN
VIA THE INTERNET

Great Interest

I read the entire issue (Jan.-Feb. 1999) with great interest. I would like for you to send the issue to a special friend.

ESTELLE TACHENKO
FAIRFIELD, NORTH DAKOTA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Proposed Name Change Triggers WWC Student Sit-In

COLLEEN MOORE TINKER

Chronic tension between the North Pacific Union Conference (NPUC) and Walla Walla College (WWC) spilled into the student body this spring and, on May 10, 1999, culminated in a peaceful sit-in reminiscent of the '60s. The event that catalyzed the demonstration was a proposed name change for WWC.

Since Walla Walla College meets the criteria for being considered a university, the board of trustees, chaired by NPUC president Jere Patzer, began a process a few weeks earlier to recommend a name change to the WWC constituency. Final authority in this matter lies with the constituency.

To initiate the naming process the board first voted on whether the new name should include the word "Adventist." A 15-10 vote resulted in favor of including Adventist in the name. This vote, however, did not account for the votes of four people on the board of 29 members.

Next the board discussed whether to recommend the name Walla Walla Adventist University or Northwestern Adventist University. After deciding to retain Walla Walla in the name, the board unanimously voted to recommend the name Walla Walla Adventist University (WWAU) to the constituents for their confirmation.

In its public announcement of the proposed name, the NPUC stated the board had unanimously voted to recommend WWAU as the new name.

Not Unanimous

Ed Schwiso, student editor of the campus newspaper *The Collegian*, ran extensive coverage of the controversy triggered by the NPUC's recommendation. News writer Cory Thomas gave voice to many people's objection to the NPUC's claim of unanimity by pointing out that only 15 of the 29 board members had initially voted to include the word Adventist in the new

name. Only after a close vote in favor of inclusion did the board achieve a unanimous vote, and that vote reflected a desire to retain Walla Walla in the name rather than changing to Northwestern.

The name Walla Walla Adventist University, however, met with strong opposition from faculty, students, and alumni.

On Monday, May 10, Jere Patzer met with a group of more than 300 students on campus for a discussion of their concerns. Prominent in the discussion was the proposed name change, and several students voiced their concern over having the name Adventist on their diplomas. They fear the word may cause graduate schools to consider their degrees to be more parochial than professional.

"Adventist means excellence to the general public," Patzer replied. "Quality goes in the name."

Library Site of Sit-In

About 10:30 that same night nearly 300 students gathered in the Peterson Memorial Library to participate in a peaceful expression of eight grievances ranging from dissatisfaction with library hours to changing the name of the school. College president W.G. Nelson attended, along with John Brunt, vice president for academic administration, Victor Brown, vice president for admissions and marketing, and several faculty members.

For the next three hours the administrators met representative students to discuss their concerns. Six issues received attention. First, administration assured that students involved in the sit-in would not be punished for violating curfew.

Next the students and administrators agreed to a four-week trial of extending the library hours to midnight instead of 11:00 P.M. If the trial proved successful, the new hours would become policy for the 1999-2000 school year.

The third issue addressed the student's desire to have a student representative on the college Board of Trustees. They agreed to draft a proposal of request to the board.

Fourth, students discussed the issue of Internet censorship on campus followed by expressing concern over *Collegian* censorship by an administration-appointed editorial board.

Last the students requested a list of the constituents who would be voting on the proposed name change on May 25. They wished to send them survey results showing that a majority of students, faculty and alumni polled were opposed to the name Walla Walla Adventist University.

When the discussions ended at 1:30 A.M. the administrators, faculty, security personnel and most of the students left the building. When the sit-in officially ended at 5:00 A.M. 30 students were still in the library.

A History of Tensions

Engineering faculty member and WWC alumnus Carlton Cross has given some historical perspective to the emotionally-charged events which transpired in May. The name change, he says, is only a symptom of tension between the college and the NPUC. Subtle hints of distrust between the college and Patzer date back to Patzer's presidency of the Upper Columbia Conference

A pivotal event, Cross says, grew out of the WWC theology faculty's well-received series of seminars in Portland, Oregon, funded by the Institute of Biblical Studies. Sometime after Patzer's election as president of the NPUC, a group formed in Spokane, Washington—the home of the Upper Columbia Conference office—and invited the theology faculty to give a similar seminar there.

In Spokane, however, the theology faculty fell into a trap. Local pastors attending the seminar on October 12, 1996, asked the faculty pointed questions about their supposed lack of adherence to Adventist distinctives. Unprepared for the grilling and unsuspecting of the questioners' motives, the faculty admits they gave weak answers to some of the questions.

School of Theology dean Ernie Bursey is quoted as saying, "It was not our finest hour."

The pastors attending the meeting copied the tape recording they had made, disseminated the tapes, and wrote letters of complaint to Jere Patzer. A flurry of accu-

sations and rumors, some totally absurd, ensued.

The college requested a meeting between the theology faculty and Union officials. The subsequent meeting held in Portland, Oregon on January 27, 1997, apparently failed to mend the misunderstandings between the faculty and the union. Local conference presidents in attendance voiced concerns based on anecdotes and assertions. (See *Adventist Today*, January/February, 1997.)

This meeting led to a specially appointed commission to study the theology faculty. This commission ultimately presented a report which exonerated the faculty of all specific charges and called for reconciliation between the college and the union. It also made recommendations to the religion faculty for hiring more theologically conservative faculty members and for inculcating more traditional Adventist beliefs (see *Adventist Today*, January/February, 1998).

Steve Payne was the chairman of the faculty response committee which wrote the document responding to the commission's report. When the board received the response they praised it and had no criticisms. Steve also submitted a document to the North Pacific Union *Gleaner* which summarized the recent events between WWC and the NPUC and the faculty's response. Steve Vistaunet, assistant for communications to the president at the NPUC, worked closely with Payne to edit the article for publication.

When the article was finally published, according to Cross, it was printed

under the Walla Walla College banner on the page reserved for material from the college. Payne's name did not appear in the byline although Vistaunet's did, and the article had both omissions and additions which were not in the final copy produced by Payne and Vistaunet. No one, according to Cross, will admit responsibility for the changes in the article. One of the most glaring omissions was leaving out the commission's urging of the involved parties to set aside the temptation to tell unsubstantiated stories about each other and to use Matthew 18 to guide them in making peace.

Offensive Student Paper

On April 1, 1999, Cross reported, *The Collegian* staff produced an issue of the paper with a cover mimicking the style of the *National Enquirer* and satirizing traditional church art. The night they finished the cover the advisor had gone home sick, and the staff had not passed the finished art before the advisor before going to press.

Cross acknowledges that he was one of many faculty who found the cover offensive.

When the Board of Trustees came to town a few weeks later they arrived already informed of the offending *Collegian*.

"The first thing they did was to have a punitive tantrum," Cross states.

He admits there was just cause for the board to be upset. But, he says, the newspaper staff are just kids. "They're here to learn, and we share their mistakes."

The board spent its first three hours,

Cross reports, discussing the ill-fated newspaper and calling for the staff to be expelled.

Finally, he said, president Nelson was "pushed into a corner" and said that if the students were to be expelled, the board would have to find someone else to do it.

The next item on the agenda was the school's new name. Patzer introduced the subject, Cross said, with a 20-minute talk advocating the inclusion of the word Adventist in the name of the school.

The faculty had recommended and the board approved that Walla Walla College would become a university. The talks ended with the vote to recommend Walla Walla Adventist University to the constituents for ratification as the school's new name.

Name Rejected

Approval for the new name requires a two-thirds majority vote of the 300-member NPUC constituency.

On May 25, after receiving letters and poll results from WWC student leaders, the constituency failed to ratify the name. Now the name is in limbo. The school is officially a university without a name to reflect that change.

In a posting on the *Adventist Today* web page discussion forum, Jere Patzer wrote that Walla Walla's name is not the mountain on which he wants to die.

"Future steps [regarding the name change], if any, will be discussed at the September board meeting," Patzer told *Adventist Today*.

Reports have circulated recently that Patzer considers the theology faculty to be significant factors in preventing adoption of the new name.

Patzer said, "The opinion of some theology faculty against having the word Adventist in the name is a position they were entitled to have. However, my understanding, according to the chair of the department, is that they had a difference of opinion even within the department. I do not, nor have I ever believed that the theology department played a role in the name change issue."

Meanwhile, Walla Walla College enjoys university status while waiting indefinitely for a new name to reflect its true identity.

Many details of this story came from reports published in the campus newspaper *The Collegian*.

Court of Appeals Rules Against GC

General Conference chief auditor David Dennis was fired in December, 1994, for alleged sexual misconduct. Dennis, in turn, sued the General Conference for wrongful termination, arguing that his firing followed his revelation of several instances of misuse or questionable use of General Conference funds.

After protracted court ordeals in which the General Conference argued first amendment rights, the Maryland Court of Special Appeals ruled strongly on December 17, 1998, in the General Conference's favor.

Early this year, however, Dennis's attorney filed an appeal in the Court of Appeals, Maryland's highest court. In his brief, one argument stated that the court

of special appeals had no jurisdiction over the case because it made its ruling before the lower court had passed its verdict.

The superior court remanded the case back to the lower court in May of this year. Immediately the General Conference attorneys filed a motion with the superior court petitioning that it reconsider. One of the GC's arguments claimed first amendment protection because Dennis is still a member of the church, thus nullifying the right of a civil court to intervene in the internal affairs of a church.

On June 25 the superior court sent its response, "Motion Denied."

Both sides are now preparing anew for trial.

North American Division Considering Changing Higher Education Salaries

LARA BEAVEN

The North American Division is considering a controversial proposal to change the pay scale for college and university faculty in an effort to bring it more nearly in line with Christian, non-Adventist higher education pay scales in North America. The division's Higher Education Cabinet has recommended the proposal, but the suggested system still faces a vote at the division year-end meeting.

The move to reconsider the current remuneration system—in which administration and faculty are on the same scale as pastors—stems from the difficulty that colleges and universities are having in recruiting and retaining faculty, according to college presidents. Additionally, higher education officials say that many Adventist higher education institutions have deviated from the current wage scale in spirit if not in fact.

One of the problems listed in the proposal is that a limited faculty pool—especially in the fields of business, computer science and medical professions—has led to an unhealthy competition or “cannibalism” among colleges and universities as they seek to attract and keep professors. Further, the small spread in the salary scale gives little incentive for a faculty member to stay in an institution very long unless there are other strong factors such as loyalty, positive working conditions and family factors.

“Virtually all [higher education institutions] in the North American Division are having to find creative ways to work with the [current] policy,” said Malcolm Maxwell, president of Pacific Union College and a member of the task force that developed the proposal.

“We could not attract; we could not retain” under the current system, he said. “I think that enough institutions have departed sufficiently from the [current pay scale] that if we don't make a change, it

makes it an almost impossible situation for those that are trying to abide by the pay scale,” said David Smith, president of Union College.

Among the violations in spirit of the current church wage scale are special deals and packages such as non-taxable professional growth allowances and reduced

The remuneration would not be more than the 50th percentile of that at the local Christian colleges.

teaching loads, according to the task force report.

Under the proposed plan, which is based on a 1998 recommendation from the Seventh-day Adventist College/University Business Officers, administrative and faculty remuneration would be based on the pay of similar-sized Christian institutions near the Adventist campuses. The remuneration would not be more than the 50th percentile of that at the local Christian colleges.

“The task force opted going with the [business officers'] recommendation because using the NAD Wage Scale would continue to perpetuate the ‘game playing’ that is currently taking place,” the task force's report to the Higher Education Cabinet said. “The task force recognizes the difficulty in selling a new approach but feels the following recommendations would be more honest and open.”

In addition to tying faculty salaries to regional norms, the proposed plan recommends support staff remuneration and employee benefit plans be in harmony with local parity. Adjustments to remuneration would be based on performance standards and accountability. Funding for such adjustments would be derived from existing revenue sources. And the institutions' boards would receive an annual report of salaries and benefits for each employee.

In the past, pastors and college teachers had similar educations, but that has

changed, Maxwell said. “We're increasingly different,” he said, noting that health care and publishing have created remuneration approaches that differ from the pastor-teachers' wage scale. Medical-oriented colleges and universities like Kettering College of Medical Arts, Florida Hospital and Loma Linda University have already broken from the current higher education scale, he said.

The task force's report notes that pastors generally go to work straight out of college and receive sponsorships for attending the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary. They receive maximum pay very quickly. Professors, on the other hand, may work on doctorates for several years with no financial help, resulting in “large debts running as high as \$150,000 and in fewer years of service due to the length of time required to earn some doctorates,” the report said. “Only about 30 percent of all faculties achieve maximum salary by attaining a full professor position.”

But the possibility of severing the tie between higher education salaries and those of pastors and K-12 teachers has raised some concerns, even among those who agree the current system is not working. “I'm concerned that this might affect the service-oriented ethic” college and university faculty currently have, Smith of Union College said. There is also the potential for a “domino effect” to reconsider pastors and K-12 salaries, he said. And at the practical level, each college or university board retains significant autonomy; there is no guarantee that the boards will embrace the new plan, he said. The proposed plan “will not be a panacea” for colleges and universities wage issues, he said.

The task force acknowledged the possibility that the proposed system could create problems. “If the disparity between the higher education wage scale and pastors becomes too great, pastors, who generate students and the tithe that provide the subsidy, may become disenchanted with Adventist higher education,” the report said. “Local conferences, unions, and K-12 schools are having similar problems in getting qualified individuals to serve,” it added. “Changing higher education remuneration could create a self-destructive ripple effect for the entire church.”

La Sierra University Navigates Rocky Spring Quarter

CONTINUED FROM BACK COVER

for student affairs, prevented the *Criterion* from printing a student's letter complaining about CORE. Excerpts from the banned letter appear below:

"I have just been informed that the CORE classes, here at La Sierra, are an attempt to help the students think more critically. Having gone through the first year of CORE, I was unaware of this purpose. It is my impression that CORE is an exercise in politically correct cultural sensitivity, aimed at curing all incoming students of a supposed racist perspective.... Under the pretense of supporting La Sierra's motto, 'From Diversity to Community,' the CORE classes have emphasized the study of the cultures of both ourselves and our fellow students. For this study of culture we were required to research our [own] culture. I however, take issue with this approach. First of all, if you have to research it, it may be your heritage, but [it] is certainly not your culture. Secondly, nothing is served by taking students of different races who have grown up in the same region and culture and instilling in them various different cultures. This creates the 'diversity' making it more difficult to come together as a 'community'."

Enrollment Drops

Meanwhile, after four years of relatively good enrollment, LSU began losing students. In the fall of 1997 LSU enrollment dropped by about 80 students. Again in the fall of 1998 enrollment dropped by about 100 students. At the same time enrollment at the University of California at Riverside and California Baptist University in Riverside are at an all-time high. As of June 21 LSU had 123 fewer applications for next fall than it had at this time last year, but Adeny Schmidt said she doesn't believe there will be a drop in enrollment because applications and admissions are higher this summer than they were at this time last year.

Schmidt points out that 30 students serving overseas as student missionaries

accounts for part of this deficit. Pre-health professional students transferring to Loma Linda University, she says, also contribute to this decline. President Geraty says that no one cause is responsible for this drop, but he admits that there is anecdotal evidence that some students don't come back because of CORE. He adds, however, that "increasing numbers of students say they've come [to LSU] because they like the rigorous program." He also points out that, based on student evaluations, core classes are "getting better every year." Now, he says, three out of seven classes are evaluated as "very good."

Questionable Petition

The students, however, continue to be upset. On May 18, 1999, the *Criterion* published the results of a survey of 110 students. This survey indicated that while 89 percent believed CORE made them competitive with students at other schools, 81 percent of students perceived CORE as disorganized and 93 percent would like to see CORE abolished. Sixty-nine percent said they believe CORE affects LSU's enrollment.

In the middle of May, 1999, students circulated a petition against CORE. Students report that one of the CORE teachers saw the petition in the classroom and confiscated it. Geraty says the petition was circulated "under cover," and he doesn't believe it was thrown away, as students claim it was.

According to Clark Davis, however, many students who signed the petition were pressured or misled and did not understand what the petition was actually saying. Further, he said, many of those who signed had never had a CORE class, including the student primarily behind the petition, Monte Bridges. Monte, Davis said, was a senior who transferred to LSU from Southern University.

Students Contact Secular Press

Recently a new complaint has gotten the administration's attention. Geraty says he had not heard this complaint prior to

this spring. Students are concerned that CORE classes are humanistic and opposed to traditional Christianity in general and Adventism in particular. This concern was one which eight student representatives took before the LSU Board of Trustees on Friday, May 21, 1999.

At this meeting, to which they invited Karen Joseph, a reporter from the Riverside daily paper *The Press-Enterprise*, the students said that 300 students signed a petition in which they objected to the six CORE classes because they "misrepresent the Christian God, and contain subversive attacks on Christianity and one-god beliefs," reported Joseph. In an article in the Saturday, May 22, issue of *The Press-Enterprise*, Joseph further reported that student Monte Bridges said, "Our biggest opposition is that it attacks what the school was founded on, which is the Bible. It says, in essence, that all religions are paths to the same truths."

Joseph further reported that the students clarified that they did not want a Bible college. Rather, they said they wanted to see their faith given equal time with others.

President Geraty said that the eight students handled themselves professionally with the board even though they were misinformed. He said he talked with each one personally in the days following the board meeting and addressed their concerns. He asked them for a copy of the petition they mentioned to the board, and they promised him a copy, which he has not yet received.

Some faculty and administrators believe the students acted inappropriately by complaining to the board. They also believe that campus chaplain Steve Daily became a "point guard" for the students who complained.

Geraty and Davis agree that the students should have voiced their complaints to the faculty and administrators responsible for CORE instead of to the board and the campus chaplain.

Geraty said, however, that in response to the students' concerns, appropriate committees are looking closely at each CORE class to determine whether or not it needs to be revised to reflect a more Christian/Adventist viewpoint. Already the school has revised its religion require-

ments to reflect a more structured Bible curriculum.

According to reporter Joseph, Geraty said that "next year's CORE courses will have more emphasis on the Seventh-day Adventist viewpoint, but the course topics won't change."

Geraty also told *Adventist Today* that, in response to the students' concerns, next year's classes will have no more than two teachers on each teaching team. Additionally, the administration has re-categorized the classes so the credits are largely transferable, and they can accept the credits of incoming students and assimilate them into CORE without their having to take the CORE classes they missed.

Campus Chaplain: Central or Peripheral?

One event which stirred heated response during this past spring quarter was the termination of campus chaplain Steve Daily. Daily, who is in his mid-40's, has been the LSU chaplain for nineteen years, and the LSU chaplain's office has been recognized as one of the best and most productive in the denomination.

Daily says his termination came without warning. As recently as last school year, he says, Geraty urged him to turn down an attractive call to another campus.

His termination, Daily says, is officially because he is "out of touch with the students," "burned out," and the "age gap has become too great" between him and the students. Lennard Jorgensen told him in an email message that the "most important element" in his termination is his "inability to nurture this generation of students." Residence hall deans, faculty, staff, and a large number of students, however, strongly dispute this assertion.

Although as a chaplain Daily is a conference employee, not a university employee, he believes that his removal was politically motivated and is directly traceable to administrators who are unhappy with the fact that he has vocally supported the students in their efforts to get the administration to act on their complaints regarding CORE. Further, he has questioned the terminations of several

other faculty members and staff during the past two years and has addressed his concerns regarding certain classes which he believes are teaching non-Christian beliefs and values.

Some faculty believe that the reason the student outcry against CORE became so intense this spring was because Daily inappropriately sympathized and instigated students to complain. In the words of one faculty member, Daily "whipped them into a frenzy this year" after he learned he was leaving campus.

Further, some faculty say Daily was the reason the students became upset this spring about the perceived antireligious tone of CORE.

Daily contends that he became concerned over the religious content of certain classes (not all of them CORE class-

They also believe that campus chaplain Steve Daily became a "point guard" for the students who complained.

es) only when students came to him and complained.

Daily further says that his termination was not handled in a Christian or ethical manner, and it violated basic employee rights.

Students initiated a petition process asking the administration to reconsider Daily's termination, but Daily asked them not to pursue their course so as not to contaminate the larger issue of the core petition.

Standards Raised

Geraty says that La Sierra has been raising its standards for both students and faculty. Now, he says, when LSU faculty write recommendations for students to professional and graduate schools, their recommendations will mean something because the faculty will be known for their writing and publishing. Furthermore, students will no longer be able to depend on certain classes for "an easy 'A,'" he says. "Now they will find they have to read books and write papers."

Clark Davis confirmed that a number of faculty have recently joined La Sierra because of the attraction of teaching the interdisciplinary curriculum. He also says that the student evaluations of the CORE classes have been consistently improving.

The long-term plan for La Sierra, Geraty says, is for it "to be a loyal Adventist institution" that explores what that commitment means. For most of its history, he remarks, LSU has been known as progressive. It has the freedom to explore how Adventists interrelate with the world.

The school's strategic plan calls for the LSU student body to include from 30-40 percent non-Adventists and 60-70 percent Adventists. This ratio is in keeping with the university's motto, "From Diversity to Community," Geraty remarks.

"We believe in education with diversity," he says. "It prepares people for living in the real world.

"We didn't think the university could exist if it depended solely on Adventist students," he continues. "We're looking for students from Christian academies and high schools. This is not an attempt to water down

our religious content or curriculum," he explains; "we want to find students sympathetic with our lifestyle and beliefs and include them in our school. Thirty to forty percent is not a majority," Geraty adds; "it's not enough to compromise our religious tone; it's just enough to add 'flavor!'"

Meanwhile, the LSU administration is committed to making CORE work.

"We're constantly looking for ways to improve," Geraty says; "everybody told us we'd have problems until the students who were here when we inaugurated the curriculum left and new students came in," he explains. "We hired a couple of non-Adventist Ph.D. consultants; we formed focus groups; we've interviewed people and had anonymous evaluations from all students.

"Based on all our feedback and information, we've made adjustments, and we're continuing to study the classes and to make improvements in the program," Geraty says.

Where is Robert Brinsmead?

LARRY PAHL

The name of Robert D. Brinsmead was once capable of evoking strong emotion and division in the Adventist circles brave and informed enough to discuss his controversial ideas. Brinsmead shifted theological gears in the 60s, 70s, 80s, and now radically on the verge of the Twenty First Century. Because of his decade-long silence in the 90s, it would have been easy to conclude that he had taken his place in the Adventist scrap pile with the likes of Conradi, Ballenger, A.T. Jones, or Walter Rea. The recent radical—very radical—rebirth of his pen invites a renewed look at this independent thinker.

The 1960s

Though Brinsmead was disfellowshipped from Adventism in 1961 while still a student at Avondale College, he continued to hover around the church for two decades. His core theology remained essentially Adventist. The writings which got him disfellowshipped rode on a chassis of “perfectionism,” his theme for the 1960s. Brinsmead insisted that perfection had to be obtained in this life, before the Lord’s return. He said Adventist

eschatology forced him to this position because of its insistence on a pre-Advent judgment.

But he insists that he has been mischaracterized by those who accuse him of raw perfectionism in what was called “the awakening” in the 1960s. Brinsmead said his insistence on perfection in the here and now was grounded in the thoroughly evangelical notion of forensic justification. “I taught sanctification by atonement, not by attainment.”

In this “perfectionism” Brinsmead’s theology was no different than that of many conservative Adventists today. One difference may be the singular strength with which he presented it at the time. As one who has known him for a long time said, “Bob was intense and driven.”

The 1970s

His theological odyssey took what many considered a radical turn in the 70s. He clung to a thorough Reformational emphasis and put Adventist eschatology far in the background. “Looking back, I should have let go of the investigative judgment and all the Adventist eschatological baggage, but I wasn’t ready for that psychologically at that time.”

At this time Brinsmead wrote an essay to show that “righteousness by faith”—an expression from Ellen White often used in Adventism—is wholly justification by faith. A debate raged between Brinsmead and his fellow countryman Desmond Ford on one side and the editors of the *Review and Herald* on the other. The *Review* editors insisted in a special issue entitled “Righteousness by Faith” that righteousness included justification and sanctification, in contrast to Brinsmead’s insistence on justification alone.



Larry Pahl left newspaper reporting and a corporate marketing position to do financial consulting. He’s taking advantage of what Einstein called the eighth wonder of the world: compound interest. His writings on Bible prophecy are available at <http://www.bibleprophecy.net>.

Brinsmead, in typical high confidence, quipped “we won that argument hands down.”

In the 1970s Ford and Brinsmead spearheaded what would be the beginnings of an evangelical Adventism, centered on justification by faith, not Adventism’s uniqueness. The movement was strongest in Australia and was supported mainly by young Adventist pastors, seminarians, and laymen, and a good number of American Adventist scholars.

Brinsmead was in the U.S. during part of the 1970s, and while here he tried to motivate both Adventist theologian Edward Heppenstall and Ford to write the work which would repudiate the traditional Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgment. Brinsmead, after “extensive study and thinking,” said that since the book of Hebrews puts Christ in the most holy place after the cross, long before 1844, he began to question 1844 and its corollaries. But he said he hesitated “blasting this theology because I thought someone from within Adventism should do it.”

Ford and Heppenstall refused his challenge, so Brinsmead went back to Australia and wrote *1844 Reexamined*. In the book he challenged the investigative judgment, the sanctuary doctrine, 1844, and the shut-door theology of the early Adventists.

The 1980s

The decade of the 80s was epochal again for Brinsmead. He focused on the cultic nature, not just of Adventism, but of all religion. His studies led him away from the Sabbath. In *Verdict*, the magazine he published in the 80s, two of his titles reveal the direction of his work: “Sabbatarianism Reexamined,” 1981, and “Myths About the Ten Commandments,” 1982. Brinsmead’s scholarship turned, some would say, liberal. He came to believe that the Bible must be interpreted from the context of its cultural setting. He studied less and less from the perspective of grammar and original languages and more and more from the sociological and historical perspective. He left his Reformational view of the Bible.

These studies led him to see two churches coexisting in early Christianity, the Jewish Church and the Gentile Church. These two churches differed on the status of the Jewish law and the status of Jesus. Brinsmead had not touched the status of Jesus in the 80s, but only the argument over the Jewish law. Brinsmead claims that the Jewish Christians, as evidenced by the apocryphal writings, the “primitive Paul,” and the apostles did not accept the virgin birth nor the Trinity. He said the doctrine of the virgin birth was the primitive church’s attempt to establish the uniqueness of Jesus. He claims the doctrine of the virgin birth is not true biologically, but is a theological construct placed upon the text.

This historical approach which Brinsmead adopted led him away from any kind of strict Sabbath observance. His argumentation in “Sabbatarianism Reexamined” revolves around five key points. First, the Ten Commandments are not eternal. They were made or created (Mark 2:27; Gen. 2:2,3). Since they were “made for man” there could be no Sabbath before the creation of man. The negative framework of the commandments shows they were

written for fallen man, and thus will be rather irrelevant when all is made new.

Secondly, the Ten Commandments are not all-inclusive. They do not speak to every setting and practice without stretching or speculation. Third, the commandments contain cultic elements. Most of us, for instance, do not keep donkeys and we were not taken out of Egypt by a mighty hand. These elements are not universal.

Fourth, the letter of the Ten Commandments should not always be kept. The law is spiritual. Therefore sometimes it is impossible to keep the spirit of the law without breaking the letter. There are examples of this throughout the Bible, Brinsmead says.

Finally, the Ten Commandments are no longer under the ministration of Moses. Since the Sabbath (as part of the Ten Commandments) is no longer in the hands of Moses, we must follow Jesus’ lead in Sabbath observance. Brinsmead says the burden is on Sabbatarianism to prove that Jesus and his apostles continued to interpret the Sabbath commandment according to its Judaistic letter.

Brinsmead claims that the Jewish Christians, as evidenced by the apocryphal writings, the primitive Paul, and the apostles did not accept the virgin birth nor the Trinity.

Brinsmead’s anti-Sabbath arguments were very convincing to many members of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) and their leadership. The leaders sent copies of Brinsmead’s “Sabbatarianism Reexamined” to the entire WCG ministry. This church took the momentous step of removing the Sabbath from its doctrinal platform.

Brinsmead’s historical scholarship brought him face to face with the two early Christian churches, dwelling side by side, yet separate. The Christianity of the apostles was conservative. They were committed to a Jewish way of life. They ate kosher food, kept Sabbath, went to temple, even offered sacrifices (for instance, they urged Paul to have a sacrifice offered on his behalf...Acts 21:26) On the other hand the Gentile Christians were never sabbatarian, either Sunday or Sabbath. A large proportion of them were illiterate and slaves.

Brinsmead says one of the great goals of Paul’s ministry was to unite these two branches of Christianity. “He never succeeded,” Brinsmead said. Brinsmead gives the book of Romans as evidence of Paul’s effort. He says that in Romans 14:5-7, Paul is speaking directly to the historical situation of the Roman church. Brinsmead says, “This became to me the most certain thing I ever found. I’m more sure of this point than any other fact of the New

Testament. Paul's message of justification insisted that there was no difference in God's eyes. He is saying to Jewish Christians, 'Accept the Gentile Christians who don't observe the Sabbath.' To Gentile Christians he says, 'Don't judge the strict Jewish Christians and their rigorous Sabbath-keeping.' The real thrust of justification is how to find a Christian neighbor."

Brinsmead uses another argument to make his case. Adventists have often said that Paul's silence on the matter of Sabbath observance is a proof of the ubiquity of its practice. Since all early Christians were keeping and believing in the seventh-day Sabbath, there was no reason for the New Testament to speak to the issue. Brinsmead would say instead that Paul never exhorts the Gentile churches to keep Sabbath because it is not part of the new covenant.

The 1990s

Brinsmead's "discovery" here set the stage for a new direction in his life, the Brinsmead of the 90s. During this period he gave 3,000 volumes of his library to Avondale College ("I'm not going to read them again.") He did not lift his pen to write a theological discourse for almost ten years. He ran for and was elected to public office. He put renewed energy into his family fruit and avocado farm, which is an international tourist attraction. His prodigious efforts in circulating petitions nationwide on behalf of SDA Lindy Chamberlain, who was falsely accused of killing her daughter Azariah—a trial which was the most publicized in Australian history—were instrumental in the reopening of the case and her acquittal. He even rethought his own lifestyle.

He had been living, he says, as a "Jewish Christian," that is, a conservative Seventh-day Adventist. He was a temperate vegetarian, a Sabbath-keeper, a shunner of worldly amusements. But since he saw these simply as cultural choices, he began thinking that if I am really to put my neighbor first I must, like Paul, "become all things to all men..."

He wrote an essay entitled "The End of Adventism," in which he says, "I urged Adventists to get rid of all the religious garbage and come join the human race." Brinsmead was entering a new theological universe.

Just as it had taken Brinsmead a decade to dispose psychologically of 1844 and the investigative judgment, it would take as long to deal with the humanity of the non-vertical, non-virgin born Jesus. Brinsmead said "I wasn't prepared to take the next step. I went farming and said nothing."

Brinsmead immersed himself in business and local politics for eight years and wrote nothing until 1998, when he again published the magazine *Verdict*. His provocative issue titles indicate it's a new radical Brinsmead: "No God Above;" "No Home Except Jesus, the Itinerant;" "No Atonement;" "This Man and the Christian Religion Are Not Compatible."

Brinsmead has entered an area where there is no law. "Scripture is not a law book; it is meant to be a witness of Christ. God's justice is not a legal justice, its a new kind of justice. I don't believe in a doctrine of blood atonement, nor am I preoccupied with a dying victim. That whole notion comes from pagan notions of a god who needs to be appeased. This great turning point is a resurrection theology, a whole new life of freedom and play. Judaism

was the religion of a book. Gentile Christianity was not the religion of a book, but that of a person."

Brinsmead does not believe in the story of the creation and fall—he is an evolutionist. He says there was no perfect world, no fall, no offended God separated by a gulf, requiring salvation, no hell. "These are all reworked pagan myths," says Brinsmead. "Jesus was not pre-existent. God does not have a son any more than He has a wife."

"It's a hell of a myth. It all starts when the Creator of 400 billion galaxies caught a newly created couple (who had no time even to form a character) in this speck of a planet committing a misdemeanor—which was daring to ask a few questions! He had them expelled, sentenced the whole race to eternal punishment, and finally slew his own son to save them from it so that they would love and serve him forever."

Brinsmead's essay "No God Above" relates his new vision of reality: "Religion doesn't count. There is no religious test. Whether one believes in baptism by dunking, baptism with a water pistol or none at all is irrelevant. Neither good opinions concerning religion or bad opinions have any bearing on the matter of admittance or exclusion. Aside from the one evil of not being human (forgiving, caring, compassionate, giving, etc.) there is no sin. The ben Adam (Jesus) society has one mission statement: it is to live and die in the service of humanity, to work unceasingly for the liberation of every oppressed human being."

When I asked Brinsmead, the old master of the forensic nature of justification, how a person is "justified" in his new scheme of things he responded, "A man is judged—justified—by doing the right thing." In the next breath he mentioned all the "unlearning" we have to do because of the "presuppositions we got from our mothers' milk."

We will certainly have to unlearn all that Brinsmead taught in the past. Brinsmead's journey has led him back, full circle, to raw perfectionism. The new Brinsmead requires that we become "forgiving, caring and compassionate, doing the right thing"—certainly the marks of a perfect man. But the 1960s Brinsmead at least gave a standard for perfectionism: The Ten Commandments. The new perfectionism gives no written guide, speaks with no clarity about what the right thing really is, other than that it has to do with shedding traditional orthodox Christian doctrine. The doctrine of the new Brinsmead is a total repudiation of his 1970s insistence on the centrality of justification.

In the several interviews I had with Brinsmead for this article, he seemed to take every question I was asking as if I were an adversary. He must be growing used to similar challenges from so many traditional Christians who, no doubt, find it hard to take seriously the most recent turn of his theology.

I tried to assure him that I was asking in honesty and sincerity, trying to understand his new position. To help toward this end, I said, "Bob, a young man comes to you for guidance. You sense he is honestly seeking. He wants to know more about God, about life, about reality. What do you say to him to help him in his seeking, his struggle? What do you say to him to help him down the road of life?"

Here is what Brinsmead said:

"God is a spirit and he is everywhere. He is the Spirit of life and he's not far from any one of us. Reading the Bible or some

Whither, Robert D. Brinsmead?

RAYMOND F. COTTRELL

Cognitive maturation is a process of mental growth from a primitive, subjective, piecemeal collage of facts and supposed facts, hopefully toward an ever more accurate, symmetrical understanding of objective reality. During this process additional relevant facts are discovered, irrelevant opinions are discarded, and a wise person learns to monitor his/her thought processes and to base conclusions on the weight of evidence.

At each stage of this process a wise person will recognize his/her immature understanding and be modest with respect to his/her opinions. That spirit of modesty will remain even when a person has attained to an objective, symmetrical, and reasonably complete understanding. Humility with respect to a person's opinions is one evidence of a mature mind; dogmatic insistence that his/her opinions constitute ultimate reality is unmistakable evidence of immaturity.

Robert Brinsmead's repeated and mutually contradictory positions over the years, together with his dogmatic public insistence on each of them successively, is clear evidence of immaturity. One cannot help but wonder if the present one is final, or if

it is—like the others—ephemeral and will be followed by others.

Brinsmead first came to the attention of the church in North America in the early spring of 1961, when he submitted several documents he had written to the General Conference for consideration. These documents came to the desk of W. R. Beach, then Secretary of the General Conference, who asked me to evaluate them. Having served as a teacher in the religion department of Pacific Union College for several years, as a writer and editor of the SDA Bible Commentary, as currently an associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and a member of the General Conference Biblical Research Committee, that was not altogether an illogical assignment.

With a desire to be completely objective and to evaluate the documents on their merits, I devoted careful consideration to each of them and drew up a critique of each, which I submitted to Elder Beach some three weeks later.

A few weeks after that Robert and his brother John appeared in person at the General Conference and requested a hearing. A representative committee, of which I served as a member, was appointed and

met with them for two days in the General Conference board room. A cordial atmosphere prevailed. Most of the time was devoted to listening to Robert and John present their opinions, with an occasional request for clarification. At the close we commented on things to which we suggested that they give further study. We parted as friends.

On a return visit to North America years later Robert Brinsmead was accorded an opportunity to speak one Sabbath afternoon in the Campus Chapel of the University Church in Loma Linda, for which I was present. By that time he had repudiated his former perfectionist concept of salvation and was advocating Reformation-style forensic justification with equal vigor. An evangelical background with respect to justification and sanctification led me to conclude that he had made progress from his former legalistic perfectionism, but that his view of salvation still fell short of that presented by the Apostle Paul.

As Robert Brinsmead has moved farther and farther away from the orbit of Adventism and seems to be immune to further rational dialogue, I have felt constrained to let him go his own way and do his own thing. I do agree with him, however, that some of our concepts related to Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary need further study, clarification, and probably revision.

other book may help you, but God reveals himself, as a Spirit, by the things he has created, including human life.

"We can see the face of God. There is a spirit of life. If we surrender to it, obey it, we have the spirit that is for life. To help, to save, to restore, to be compassionate and promote life—that is the spirit of God working in us and through us...

"He who loves his fellow man has seen the face of God. To be truly human is supernatural. There is something transcendent and awesome about love and being in the kingdom of God. Appreciate that. When you meet other people be quick to recognize the spirit of God working through them in their kindness. Wake up; don't be stupid. God is on display. The kingdom of God is at hand...You can live in self-forgetfulness. You need not be preoccupied with whether God is around. In him we live and move and have our being. God is accepting. God is in all things and through all things. He is not offended, needing blood atonement as the pagans believe. He shows himself by expression...by being a writer or horticulturist."

I then asked Bob, "What happens to the wicked, to those people who don't live with this view of life?"

To this he replied, "I would be inclined to think they die like an animal."

He expanded, "I hesitate to be a universalist. Maybe God has a way of reaching the utterly recalcitrant. The gift of being human is a gift that God so utterly gives...I have to entertain the possibility that if one rejects the spirit of life, I don't see why God wouldn't give him what he has chosen."

After I told Brinsmead that someone had asked me if he (Brinsmead) was saved, he laughed heartily. He ended our long interviews with this response: "Here's the real point of the whole conversation: The question should not be, 'Is he saved?' But, 'Is he human?' (as opposed to inhuman?)"

I told Brinsmead that he was indeed human, and he said he took that as the best of all compliments. He is currently 65 years old.

FAT LADY or

Beautiful Bride?

ERIC BAHME

In 1991 Dr. George Knight, professor of church history at Andrews University, wrote an article for the *Adventist Review* entitled “The Fat Lady and the Kingdom.” Four years later, this article became the foundation for a new book bearing the same title. Desiring to be consistent with the images of Scripture, Dr. Knight compares the Seventh-day Adventist Church to a “fat woman returning from a shopping spree.” Her size is indicative of the fact that she has become “rich, and increased with goods,” and has “need of nothing” (Revelation 3:17). She is a woman of favor—a lady who is not only addicted to a lifestyle of luxury, but also suffers from an inability to control her spending. Encumbered with a load of “structure and institutions,” she has “become addicted to packages and package holding.” Dr. Knight paints a picture of Adventism in 1991 as an organization whose institutions have overshadowed her sense of mission, plunging Adventism into the “degenerative process” of an “aging church” leaving it teetering between institutionalism and disintegration. Prophetically, Dr. Knight sounds the warning cry: “Wake up, fat lady, before it’s too late!” (pp. 15-20).

While *Adventist Today* recognizes that there have been some chronic concerns about the church’s use of tithe and offerings, it also recognizes that tithe and offerings paid to a central storehouse result in unique advantages: equal pay for pastors; corporately funded missions; and subsidies for church schools, to list a few. This article expresses one pastor’s opinion about tithes and offerings. It does not necessarily reflect the views of *Adventist Today*.

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Eight years later, there can be little doubt that Dr. Knight's prophetic predictions are coming to pass. While it may not be recognized as prophetic by leadership, God is trying to get our attention. The question is: "Who is listening and what should be done about it?" Like carefree crewmembers on the Titanic, Adventism is embroiled in conflict and an all-out effort to preserve its dysfunctional lifestyle, while remaining confident that the "ship is unsinkable." This point is played out over and over again in the publications of Adventism. From the Far Eastern Division *Outlook* to the North Pacific Union *Gleaner* and the Lake Union *Herald*, all of Adventism's publications are declaring: "Yes, we have a problem, but don't panic! We don't need to get in the lifeboats—just stay calm." Of the 457 articles in the *Adventist Periodical Index* on the subject of church conflict, 335 of them have been written in the last 8 years. These include titles such as "Can We Stay Together?" "How Do We Respond?" "How Much Diversity Can We Stand?" "Holding On To Your Faith In A Splitting Church," "What's Going On?" "The Church Under Attack," "Congregationalism: The Wrong Shaking," "When the Family Splits" and "My Allegiance to My God and His Church." Recognizing a problem, William G. Johnsson, editor of the *Adventist Review*, published his book in 1995 entitled *The Fragmenting of Adventism*. The cover says it all: "Ten Issues Threatening the Church Today; Why the Next Five Years Are Crucial."

Tithe Outnumbers Gospel

As our "Fat Lady" fights to maintain her lifestyle, she says some interesting things such as: "I'm changing; things will be different next time; I won't do it again; it's not as bad as it looks; I can control this;" and "we really don't have a problem." She is worried that her codependent family may seek help and is concerned about what implications this might have upon her indulgent lifestyle. Another look at the *Adventist Periodical Index* reveals 312 articles written under the subject of "Tithe," while nothing has been catalogued under the subject heading of "The Gospel." To her credit, however, the Church has written 722 articles on the subject of salvation, but in comparison this is still below the 769 articles written on church conflict and tithe combined. Dr. Knight states:

"Nearly everyone seems to agree that radical administrative and institutional reorganization, consolidation, and reform are imperative, but few appear to be willing to put their best judgments into action. The result is that a great deal of money and effort is expended in defending the existence of the status quo when these resources might better be used to develop new structures and methodologies to reach the movement's original goals." (*The Fat Lady and the Kingdom*, p. 32.)

The church has said that it will change, but the reality is few are listening to the respected voices of warning among us. Rather, the dysfunction of the bride has intensified in the last few years; she no longer teeters on the edge of disintegration, but has fallen headfirst into it. Dr. Knight describes what this disintegration looks like. Listen carefully:

"Its chief characteristics are overinstitutionalism, formalism, indifferentism, obsolescence, absolutism, red tape, patronage, and corruption. In addition, the institutional machine's lack of respon-

siveness to the personal and social needs of members causes loss of their confidence.

"During this stage many withdraw into new sects or drift without any formal church membership. Many of those who remain in fellowship with the parent body often ignore it in practice or conform to its teachings only halfheartedly. Meanwhile the denomination continues, supported by a leadership with vested interests and by a membership with emotional attachments." (Ibid. pp. 29-30).

If only we would have listened eight years ago.

Dysfunctional "Mother"

So what can be done? I believe that there is only one option left for the Seventh-day Adventist who has longed for change within the church, but has loved her too much to leave. It is time to be honest about the codependent condition of our family and to recognize the dysfunction that exists. The first step to recovery is recognition of our true condition. We can't expect "Mom" to move beyond her denial, and we must admit that we have contributed to her habits. Our own actions have made things worse, even though our intentions have been worthy. We defended her in bad times, we promoted her in good times, we nurtured her with our resources, and encouraged her in her addiction—and we did it in love. And she responded. She educated us and allowed us to get good jobs. She afforded opportunities for travel and sheltered us from the world around, and all of it made us feel good about ourselves. This will be the greatest challenge Adventism faces now—honesty about its condition. No greater pain is felt than the pain of recovery and self-discovery. Most will avoid this process. Many will run. Few will look into the mirror. And the church will do everything in her power to keep this from happening, because she's addicted to her lifestyle, and she can't do anything differently; however, you can.

Once you recognize the condition of your family you can do something about it. It won't be easy, but in the end it is the most loving thing you can do. It is time to intervene. The "Fat Lady" must be placed on a diet. Her caloric intake must be limited. If you are an Adventist who has uttered the words: "I want the church to change, therefore I'm not leaving her;" then you have only one moral choice left—stop feeding her! It is time for Adventists everywhere to stop giving their tithe through the Conference channels, but rather to seek God for his direction on where the funds are to be sent. The work of God is starving locally, while the "Fat Lady" dines in lavishness.

Call to Honesty

Scripture admonishes us to "watch," "hear," "inspect," "examine," "study," "test," and "prove." While we are not to judge people's hearts, we are to be "good fruit inspectors," and if the fruit is bad we need to know it and have nothing to do with it (Matthew 7:15-20). We are not to blindly follow the mandates of man but to "test everything" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Paul, himself instructed the Corinthians to "examine yourselves" to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves" (2 Corinthians 13:5). It was the appeal of Jeremiah that we "examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord" (Lamentations 3:40). Scripture informs us that it is a good thing to be honest about our true condition and the condition of our church.

Scripture informs us that the tithe is not optional; it is to be faithfully returned (Malachi 3:6-10). But did such faithfulness always require the believer to bring the tithe to the temple? Do we as believers have an obligation not to blindly foster dysfunctionality?

In I Corinthians 9, Paul responds to the question about his credentials and his right to financial support from the people, asking: "If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?" (vs. 12). He goes on to say: "Don't you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." (vs. 13, 14). There can be little doubt that Paul is referring to the tithing system. Paul is saying that Christian evangelists who preach the gospel should be supported by tithe, and they could hardly be described as "temple employees." The main qualification for receiving tithe, according to Paul, is whether the gospel is being preached.

In Galatians, however, Paul makes a statement so bold that he must repeat himself for emphasis: "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: 'If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!'" (Gal. 1:8, 9). It is unlikely that Paul would parallel "eternally condemned" to mean "support them with the tithe." Even though they "preached the gospel," it was the wrong gospel. Need we remind ourselves that there is only one gospel?

Multiple Gospels

Yet, I wonder what Paul would say about Adventism? William Johnson, in his book *The Fragmenting of Adventism*, briefly discusses the Adventists' view of the gospel and admits that there is confusion as to what the gospel is within the church. He says, "How can we take 'the everlasting gospel' to all the world, as Revelation 14:6, 7 mandates, if we aren't clear on what the message really is?" There are "major differences" in the interpretation of the gospel among "prominent Adventists," Johnson points out. We have the gospel according to Graham Maxwell, George Knight, Jack Sequeira, Morris Venden, and Ralph Larson (pp. 93-94). The question I pose is: What about the gospel according to Jesus Christ, and how does Paul's counsel to the Galatians affect us? This in itself should cause great consideration.

Seldom do I quote extensively from Ellen White, because I realize that Adventism has become polarized on this subject. For some, the mere mention of her name will cause you to exclaim "false prophet," and you'll read no further. For others, you are glad that I finally have arrived at the "truth" and you'll want to send me more quotes. Whatever your personal belief regarding the prophetic ministry of Ellen White, there is no debate about the pivotal role her words have played in crafting church policy. Since her words have been cited as authority for the policies we now have, it is reasonable that we consider her statements that call into question those very same policies.

Ellen G. White stated, "God does not lay upon you the burden of asking the conference or any council of men whether you should use your means as you see fit to advance the work of God in destitute towns and cities, and impoverished localities. That the right plan has been followed, so much means would not have been used in some localities, and so little in other places where the banner of truth has not been raised. We are not to merge our individuality of judgment into any institution in our world. We are to look to God for wisdom, as did Daniel." She goes on to say, "Do we individually realize our true position, that as God's hired servants we are not to bargain away our stewardships; but that before the heavenly universe we are to administer the truth committed to us by God? Our own hearts are to be sanctified, our hands are to have something to impart as occasion demands of the income that God entrusts to us." (*Pamphlets in the Concordance*, Volume II, p. 467).

Ellen G. White Directs Her Own Tithe

Even in her own example, she "appropriated" her own tithe and the tithe of others to impoverished and "neglected" areas of the ministry. She also encouraged and supported those who were led to do the same. In fact, she counseled Elder Watson, the President of the Colorado Conference, to leave the matter alone, saying: "I wish to say to you, be careful how you move. You are not moving wisely. The least you have to speak about the tithe that has been appropriated to the most needy and the most discouraged field, the more sensible you will be." (Spalding-Magan's Unpublished Manuscript *Testimonies of Ellen G. White*, pp. 215-216).

Ellen White felt that God was the One who should direct the use of our tithe, and that we each have an individual responsibility for our stewardship

"God grant that the voices which have been so quickly raised to say that all the money invested in the work must go through the appointed channel at Battle Creek, shall not be heard. The people to whom God has given His means are amenable to Him alone. It is their privilege to give direct aid and assistance to missions." (Ibid, p. 177).

"Divine wisdom must have abundant room in which to work. It is to advance without asking permission or support from those who have taken to themselves a kingly power. In the past one set of men have tried to keep in their own hands the control of all the means coming from the churches and have used this means in a most disproportionate manner, erecting expensive buildings where such large buildings were unnecessary and uncalled for, and leaving needy places without help or encouragement. . . .

"For years the same routine, the same 'regular way' of working has been followed, and God's work has been greatly hindered. The narrow plans that have been followed by those who did not have clear, sanctified judgment have resulted in a showing that is not approved by God.

"God calls for a revival and a reformation. The "regular lines" have not done the work which God desires to see accomplished. Let revival [and] reformation make constant changes Let every yoke be broken. Let men awaken to the realization that they have an individual responsibility." (Ibid. pp. 174-176).

“When we see the regular lines are altered and purified and refined, and the God of the heaven’s mold is upon the regular lines, then it is our business to establish the regular lines. But when we see message after message that God has given has been accepted, but no change, just the same as it was before, then it is evident that new blood must be brought into the regular lines.” (Remarks at a meeting held in Battle Creek College Library, General Conference, April 1901, *Ibid.*, p. 163).

The time has come when we can no longer stand idly by; the issue has escalated to a moral choice. If we continue to foster and support the addictive behavior of the “Fat Lady,” we will be guilty of her sin. Confronting addictive behavior is a matter of love. We place our pets on diets, our children on diets, and ourselves on diets. When those whom we love are addicted, we confront them, and at times place them in the care of compe-

tent professionals who can help. Should we not do as much for the church? “But what if she dies?” you ask. “What if enough people withhold the nourishment that she needs?” As Adventists we have always believed in the power of resurrection, and with resurrection comes new life. The church will either become the lean, beautiful woman that God intended her to be—coming up out of the wilderness “leaning on her lover” (Songs of Songs 8:5)—or she will die through this process. In the end, however, God will rebuild his church. There are so many areas of the Body of Christ that have been starved for years. It is our duty to begin to care for these neglected parts on a local level where God has placed us and to trust him to lead us individually. Your dollar is the only vote you have left. It is now time for you to wake up and cast your vote before it really is too late.

Thank You for Your Gifts

There are many worthy charitable organizations that are in need of your support. That’s why we are especially thankful for your gifts to *Adventist Today* and want to acknowledge your generosity.

In addition to saying thank you, we would like to share information that can help assure the maximum benefits from your gifts. By spending a few minutes carefully considering the form and timing of your gifts, you may find that you can have an even greater impact now and in the future of *Adventist Today*.

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1. Since an endowment is permanent, your cash gift to the *Adventist Today* Endowment Fund will continue to benefit into the long-term future.

2. A gift included in your will or living trust is one way to establish a lasting legacy.

3. A gift of retirement assets, such as pension plans or Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), may allow you to give more than you thought possible, while eliminating taxes that may otherwise largely consume these assets.

4. Consider gifts of life insurance. Gifts of policies or proceeds you may no longer need offer excellent tax benefits. Life insurance can also be used to replace assets given away, thereby providing for loved ones in addition to your charitable interests.

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Gifts in any of these forms can be made in memory or in honor of special loved ones.

Yes! Please send me more information on gift and estate planning ideas.

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Name: _____

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- I would like to talk confidentially about my giving options.

Cut out or photocopy form and mail to:

Adventist Today, P.O. Box 8026, Riverside, CA 92515-8026



Greg Billock

ADVENTIST TODAY

On the WEB

Jim Walters Interviews Greg Billock, Webmaster



Jim Walters

As we all know, the Internet is changing the way we live. It is changing Adventism. How would you describe how it's changing our church?

I think the Internet is primarily an accelerator for change. Trends identified in society and the church can often progress faster on the Internet. One primary way the Internet is accelerating change in the church is by facilitating the increasing availability of information. Information which previously took weeks or months to reach people is now accessible within hours. It is easier than ever before to provide details about church affairs to those interested, and to keep the widely separated parts of the church informed.

Also, the Internet is providing a venue where church members are

becoming aware of the differences in viewpoints Adventists hold. Being able to communicate with people from all over the world enlarges our communities and makes these differences, which may have been masked before by geography, jump out at us. This facilitates either further insularity, as individuals have the opportunity to seek out pockets of like-minded people, or openness, as exposure to different viewpoints brings positive experiences and relationships with individuals with whom one's differences are otherwise large.

How many "Adventist" web sites would you estimate now exist? How do you describe an Adventist site?

I'd describe an Adventist site as one that identifies itself as affiliated with, or operated by someone affiliated with, the church. There might be 5000 or so web sites fitting that description.

What are the top Adventist sites, in terms of activity?

While site traffic can be difficult to estimate, it seems to

me the top SDA sites must include the official General Conference site; SDAnet, the oldest organized SDA presence on the Internet; TAGnet, a service which provides free web hosting for Adventists; and aToday, the *Adventist Today* site.

Could you briefly describe these sites?

The GC page provides up-to-date press releases, information on church programs and structure, and information on events of interest to Adventists.

SDAnet is identified primarily with the SDA net mailing list, although other web-based services are also important to the site.

TAGnet operates over a thousand accounts for SDA ministries, churches, schools, and organizations, from small to large.

The aToday site has a broad mix of content: all back issues of the magazine are on-line and content-searchable. We also host popular and active discussion forums, polls, news updates, and provide information about the magazine. AIR (an index to the Adventist web) is also present, and covers over 1000 web sites currently. We also feature devotionals by John McLarty.

These four sites (and their constituent areas) provide a wide range of content to Adventists interested in extending their experience onto the Internet. Opportunities range from the highly interactive to the more research-oriented and meditative.

You have been the webmaster of aToday from the beginning. How did you get interested in the Internet? And please tell us about yourself—your family, education, etc.



I became interested in Internet technologies while studying engineering at Walla Walla College (where I met and fell in love with my wife, Christy). I've participated in the Adventist Internet for a number of years, and helping with the aToday site is a great way to continue that involvement. I'm currently a graduate student in the Electrical Engineering department at California Institute of Technology.

How did aToday get started?

John Vogt, who's long been a supporter of *Adventist Today*, became interested in facilitating a website for the magazine and extending its reach into that medium. During the summer of 1998 we met and settled on some goals for the website, and subsequently Rachel Cafferky and I put the site together. We were able to open in August, 1998.

How much traffic did you have as of the first of 1999?

The first few months we grew slowly as we added content to the site and as awareness of us gradually increased. By January, 1999, we had close to a hundred visitors a week.

How much traffic do you have now?

Now our traffic is closer to 3000 visitors every week.

Why the difference?

A major jump in our traffic occurred with the breaking awareness of the Folkenberg legal problems. aToday kept up with the breaking news on the story, which appealed to many, many people. Another major change to the site was the adoption of a much more robust discussion platform, which facilitated the emergence of one of the most active discussion groups in the Adventist Internet.

What was the largest number of hits that aToday received over a weekend at the height of the

Folkenberg fiasco? And how many persons visiting the site does that represent?

Traffic estimates can be difficult, even when looking at good numbers. aToday was receiving some 20,000 hits per day, corresponding to well over 5000 unique visitors per week.

What have emerged as the most popular features of the site?

Different people have different interests. Certainly our discussion forums are one of the most popular parts of the site. Others like our fully-available back issue archive, or the John McLarty devotionals. I hope that, with the breadth of available content and opportunities for interaction on the site, there will be parts which fit the tastes of large numbers of *Adventist Today* readers.

How much work does it take to manage a site such as aToday? Do you have help?

During the design and debugging phase, it took a lot of work! The site certainly owes thanks to many people: Colleen Tinker and others who have written news stories, John McLarty's willingness to provide frequent devotionals

for the site, all the people who assist in managing the forums including J.R. Layman, George Tichy, Tom Norris, Elaine Nelson, Dolf Boek, and Teri Strickland.

I think our website is yet another great way the supporters and subscribers of *Adventist Today* have given a valuable addition to the SDA church community.

You have added the AIR feature to your web page.

What is AIR, and what is your goal in this project?

AIR stands for Adventist Internet Resources, and our eventual goal is to provide a directory to the entire Adventist Internet. The index tracks visits to the various indexed resources, so Net surfers who use it can tell which resources are the most popular—and which may be hidden treasures.

What is your dream about where aToday could be in a couple of years?

I would like to see aToday expand on its present base of content. We could use a more aggressive news reporting infrastructure with reporters in all areas of the church reporting on events of local or general interest. I'd like to see our discussion forums develop into many parallel "channels" offering high-quality discussions in a wide variety of areas of interest to visitors. I'm interested in exploring new ideas for interactivity on our site, as well as using the archive of *Adventist Today* articles as a base to build a broad resource for Adventist research and study.

And how realistic is this dream? What would need to happen for it to come off?

In light of our past experience, I think this dream is quite feasible. In the spirit of the development of Internet (and church!) projects, I think this dream will be realized by utilizing the talents and interests of more people who are willing to get involved and interested in developing an area they think important, or creating a whole new area they believe would be useful.

If a person desires to help in terms of page management, who should he/she contact?

We are always on the lookout for individuals interested in helping with that management of the site! Any *Adventist Today* reader with an interest in this area can contact me using email: webmaster@atoday.com.

If a person wants to help financially, who should be contacted?

Financial support is always useful! The *Adventist Today* community can be proud of the resource to which they have already contributed in the magazine's sponsorship of aToday. We are currently asking for donations to cover our budget for operations in the last half of 1999. Anyone interested in contributing can visit the website itself, or contact the *Adventist Today* offices at (800) 236-3641.



A REAL Family

DEBRA FOOTE

We stood by baggage claim, trying to match the picture in my hand to a blond girl who would turn fourteen at midnight. No one looked like her. I was fighting back the tears at the thought of a girl given away on her birthday. Luckily, I was the only redhead there, so she found us. She chattered excitedly.

I was fighting back the tears at the thought of a girl given away on her birthday.

Once in the car, Cindy said she was hungry. We found a Pizza Hut open at almost midnight. Happy 14. She talked non-stop all the way home.

The next morning was a Saturday. We thought it best to have some time alone to get to know her. Cindy wanted to see snow, and it was March, that in-between season. Our snow was gone, but there were eight-foot drifts two hours north in resort country. She had only seen snow once, when she was three. She couldn't wait—could we pull over and let her touch it? She ran down the ditch and sank halfway out of sight. She came up laughing, dove back in, and made angels, and snowballs, and snowballs, and snowballs...

On the lake, the big toboggan run was set up. Over and over again she flew down and then raced back into line. There were Malamute dogsleds and people skating. The next thing I knew, Cindy had talked a woman into letting her borrow her skates. Later when we went to a restaurant she ate more than my husband and I



Debra Foote, trained as a teacher, lives with her physician husband in upper New York state where they care for foster teenagers.

put together, and she secured the water boy's phone number. She got lots of refills; we got none. She was a beauty.

Living with ADHD

That night there was a party at the church. Cindy's sanguine personality never turned down a chance to be with people, and she came away with instant friends.

That week we attempted to get medical and school records—quite a feat when one has been moved around so much. We set up appointments to see the local Christian school as well as our denominational school. Since Cindy already knew the kids, because of the party, she chose the denominational school. The first day of school she smeared clay all over the paper towel dispenser in the bathroom. Three days later I got a call from a mother who wanted Cindy pulled out because she was so disruptive. I asked for more time for her to adjust to the new school. Cindy was extremely hyperactive and had no attention span.

I knew little about Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, but I believed she had it, so I attended a seminar. There I saw movies of how pharmaceutical intervention had helped ADHD kids calm down and focus, and I heard statistics about kids who do not receive intervention. Ritalin used properly does not drug kids into submission; rather, it brings the dopamine level up to the normal levels most of us have. To my surprise, Cindy called it by the scientific name, saying she had been on it since she was seven. The doctor she saw for her school physical emphatically agreed that she needed it, saying that she was an extreme case.

Still, the almost daily 3:15 p.m. call from her teacher became a joke at work. The teacher would not read any of the information I gave her on ADHD and just wanted Cindy gone. She talked all the time, the teacher reported, even though she knew it would mean a chore when she got home.

The first misbehavior we worked on was the tantrums. Then we tackled the foul language that shocked the cloistered ones. People began saying they saw changes. During first quarter, every one

of the study and social items on her report card was checked "needs improvement." By second quarter, all were satisfactory.

Keeping Up with Cindy

Since she treated a sliver like a life-threatening illness, we didn't overreact to hurts. That explains how I managed to send her to school with a concussion. Not long after she arrived, my husband took her skiing. Somehow she hit her head on her ski and insisted on being taken down on the sled by the "cute" ski patrol. The next day she had a headache. Since she had many ailments to avoid school, I told her if she felt worse later, I would pick her up. I made it to the school in record time when the teacher called and said that she was feeling dizzy and sick to her stomach.

Cindy said that before her father had become too ill, he lived in one side of their house, and she lived in the other. She said that when it was time to eat, he would pound on the plywood nailed up that divided the house. We believed the story; she had to be forced to take a shower, brush her teeth, use tableware, wash her hands, and put dirty clothes in the wash.

Cindy's appetite was immense. She ate more than my husband but weighed only 105 pounds. Many times I found myself in the grocery store at 11:00 p.m. Keeping food in the house seemed like "Mission Impossible."

Gradual Improvement

When Cindy arrived in March she took an achievement test. Her rank was in the sixth percentile. Ninety-four percent of seventh graders taking the test did better. So I tutored her two hours a night, and for two months in the summer, I tutored her in English. In September she was tested again. Her rank had jumped to the 16th percentile. In most cases, children should be able to study on their own. But she was so far behind and lacking in the basics, help was necessary or she could not pass.

In the summer Cindy went to camp for a week, had a great time swimming in the pond that we live on, learned to water-ski and knee board, and went canoe-camping with us and our friends.

With eighth grade came a veteran teacher: a kind, patient, and gregarious man. Cindy thrived and had a B- average. She was at the Thanksgiving party at the school when the call came. We did not know that her mother had told her that her father had cured his AIDS with happiness. When she got home, we had her sit on the sofa between us as we told her that her father had died. She screamed "No!" and cried for a long

time. Then she asked if she could go to a friend's house whose stepfather had AIDS. While she was gone, we booked a flight for the funeral.

Cindy had only been back two weeks when she got another call. Her favorite cousin had been killed in a four-wheeling accident. I had her sit down on her bed. I tried to talk, but no words would come out. I finally choked out her cousin's name. A look of terror came over her. She said, "Is she dead?" and all I could do was nod.

Real Family

The week Cindy's father had died, suddenly her mother "missed her terribly." She had not missed Cindy terribly before. In fact, she had not called or written once in the eight months we had had Cindy. But now that Cindy's father had died, the social security payment for Cindy's support had been raised from two hundred thirty a month to over six hundred. Additionally, if her mom could convince Cindy soon enough to return home, she would also get the death benefit that was due us for the flight (she did). We already had the Christmas picture cards of the three of us ready to address. But all kids want to believe that their parents love them. And the \$200.00 a month

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promised for allowance, along with the lie of being flown back to us each school holiday weekend, convinced her to return. Dec. 18 she left for her mother's. It didn't last long. As before, she got in her lesbian mother's way. Soon she was shipped to her 21-year-old sister. That didn't last either, so back to Mom she went.

Last Christmas, Cindy spent her vacation with us. In front of us, she told our foster son that we were the only "real" family that she had ever had.

Would we risk it again for another? Is it worth it? It's not worth it in terms of tears. But the long-term rewards are another story. Because the kids always come back. Sometimes it's months, more often years—but they always come back.

Because where there is love, there is a real family.



La Sierra University Navigates Rocky Spring Quarter

COLLEEN MOORE TINKER

For the past three years the administration and the students of La Sierra University (LSU) have struggled with a new General Education curriculum. At the center of this curriculum are 29 units of required classes commonly referred to as CORE.

Adeny Schimdt, vice-president of academic affairs, wrote in the May 18, 1999, issue of the campus newspaper *Criterion*: "Three years ago the University implemented a General Education curriculum intended to prepare students for productive careers as responsible Christians in the 21st Century....The University Studies program is the Faculty's answer to this challenge. The CORE courses are intended to focus the discussion of contemporary societal issues in the light of Christian values, but more specifically Adventist values."

The concept behind the CORE classes, says university president Lawrence Geraty, is an old tradition of academia. Until this century many of the most respected universities required core classes that "prepared the students for the world." These classes taught thinking and conceptual skills the graduates would need in order to function in educated circles.

This century, Geraty says, cores gave way to more class choices for students. They demanded, and universities gave, greater numbers of classes from which students could choose to complete their general education requirements.

Today, Geraty asserts, "there is a trend among the nation's best institutions to go back to core requirements. At La Sierra we always want to be at the cutting edge, so we've put in place a core program to put a stamp on our students."

LSU's core program, confirms Clark Davis, history faculty member and team

leader for the sophomore CORE class Exploring American Culture, is part of a national movement. Andrews University has also implemented a core curriculum, and Walla Walla College, he says, is moving toward establishing one.

The CORE "stamp" is intended to enable students to "think broadly and coherently about life in the world of the 21st Century. CORE classes are designed to emphasize analytical reading, critical thinking and effective communication both orally and in writing," wrote Adeny Schimdt in the aforementioned article.

CORE Complaints

Students and some faculty, on the other hand, have criticized the CORE program. The complaints fit into three

They have been unhappy with the classes' team teaching, unhappy with what they perceived to be CORE's nontransferable credits, and some have been unhappy with their perception that CORE was nonreligious.

categories. The first category reflects the opinion of theologically conservative people who say the curriculum is secular and opposes Christianity and Adventism.

The second category reflects the concern of those who say the curriculum is humanistic and is antithetical to the philosophy of La Sierra University. Constituents, these critics say, have a right to expect that LSU will offer traditional

Adventist Christian teaching. They fear that students will learn philosophies different from what their parents believe they will learn.

The third category comes primarily from the students. CORE, they have complained, is unwieldy. They have been unhappy with the classes' team teaching, unhappy with what they perceived to be CORE's nontransferable credits, and some have been unhappy with their perception that CORE was nonreligious.

Gilbert Abella, director of library services, confirms that several Ivy League schools have instituted core curricula. He also states that during the first three to four years after initiating such curricula, many of these schools report they had problems as they worked to implement the classes, but these problems disappeared as the students and teachers became comfortable with the classes.

The problems with CORE at LSU, according to some faculty members, result from the level of abstract thinking the classes require. Some faculty believe that the courses might be more appropriate for graduate students than for students just out of high school.

Student Complaints

The students, on the other hand, have complained that CORE decreases their elective choices and gives them credits they can't transfer to other schools. They further state that the cross-disciplinary, team-teaching format has been chaotic

and disorganized and the classes are too hard. They also state that CORE has too much emphasis on sociology, and the curriculum's religious emphasis is not clear.

As the months have progressed, the students' loudest concern has been their perception that the administration refuses to consider their complaints. This last March Lennard Jorgensen, vice-president

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10