



CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS: TRAINING GOD'S SOLDIERS OR GOD'S PEACEMAKERS?

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Introduction

For decades, American educators have discussed the power of the hidden curriculum in schools, that is, the unwritten outcomes of what students learn, particularly in subtle, non-explicit ways through the behaviors and attitudes of teachers, staff members, and administrators.¹ Since the hidden curriculum is tied to human beings, it also stems from the perspectives, biases, and philosophies of these persons. Although many schools purport an attempt to present a neutral, factual curriculum to students, no educational institution is immune from its promotion of a hidden curriculum. Educators who are reflective practitioners acknowledge both an overt as well as a hidden curriculum in schools, and they honestly attempt to articulate what messages they wish for their students to receive. Educators in K-12 Christian schools typically embrace the power of both types of curricula; indeed, they often choose to teach in Christian schools precisely because they have the freedom to share their faith openly with students, disciplining them in ways of Christ, and encouraging them to think and to act from a biblical perspective.

However, it is possible that as it is in any school that the messages that students receive in many Christian schools, from both the explicit as well as the implicit curricula, might be either mixed or misguided, or both. For that reason, all teachers must continually reflect upon the purpose, pedagogy, and product of education, and Christian educators are no exception. In fact, since Christian education has eternal implications, it is arguably even more important for teachers in Christian schools to ask themselves why they do what they do. Because any school culture tends to be dynamic rather than static, Christian school constituents must continually and deliberately evaluate and define their own culture instead of merely allowing it to develop and change on its own.² Peace educator Hossain Denesh provides further motivation for teacher reflection when

he states, "One of the main functions of education is its considerable contribution to the formulation of our worldview, which in turn provides the necessary framework for all our life processes—our thoughts, feelings, choices, and actions."³ In keeping with this impetus for reflection upon Christian education, this article seeks to explore the ways in which the Christian school movement is historically linked to American patriotism⁴ and the rhetoric of war (particularly as it relates to the so-called "culture wars") and to offer a different model that makes space for the biblical virtue of peace.

The New Religious Right Movement

The history of the Christian school movement in the United States is inexorably connected to the conservative evangelical response to American culture in the 1960s and 1970s. The founding of most Christian schools occurred during this time frame, and the number of schools burgeoned and peaked during the late 1970s and well into the 1980s. Historians who have studied this growth phenomenon have concluded that the desire and motivation that compelled parents and church leaders toward Christian schools was in large part the same desire and motivation that led to the rise of the Christian Right during these decades.⁵ In other words, Christian schools were considered one of several means of addressing the secular liberalism that was interpreted as pervasive and threatening to the American culture at the time. Walter Capps views the New Religious Right as a revitalization movement, one "designed to forestall or correct the downward cultural tendency."⁶ This clarion call for the revitalization of American culture spawned the formation of new political organizations in the late 1970s, such as the Moral Majority and the National Christian Action Coalition, with the intention of reversing the cultural trends that conservative evangelicals found so disturbing.⁷ In short, evangelicals who had previously leaned toward a fundamentalist type of separatism from American culture rose up in alarm as a response to what they perceived as a cultural threat.⁸

From its inception, the Christian Right has articulated a fairly clear political agenda. Leaders of this movement such as Jerry Falwell (d. 2007) and Pat Robertson, among others, have attempted to merge biblical principles with national purpose, patriotism and elements of fundamentalism.⁹ In his thorough examination of the New Religious Right phenomenon, Capps explains how making "Christian" synonymous with "American" led to a strong religious nationalism:

To achieve this conjunction, the movement launched a bold attempt to recast American history in biblical terms, transpose Christian teaching into distinctly American terms, and to package the synthesis in the form of programs, candidates, and ideology to submit to the voters.¹⁰



Leaders dedicated themselves toward achieving a symbiotic relationship between national piety and national patriotism in order to achieve their overriding political goal, that is, to return America to what they believe is her historical and biblical roots. Thus, they entered a culture war that involved battles on many fronts, desperately seeking to overturn the cultural trend toward secularism.

War Rhetoric among the Christian Right

If the foundational purpose of the Christian Right movement was to engage in fighting a culture war, then logically, its leaders used war rhetoric that stirred a patriotic response among conservative evangelicals to join the battle. Warfare against an unseen enemy that seemed to be blatantly challenging the ideal of a Christian America was portrayed as both inevitable and also vitally important. Moral Majority founder Jerry Falwell called the local church "an organized army equipped for battle" ready to "bombard the territory."¹¹ In response to the court case against Bob Jones University in the 1980s, Bob Jones III stated that "Christians are surrounded by hostile forces."¹² In other words, according to Aaron Haberman, the court case was viewed as yet another battle in the war against the secularist government. Borrowing from a typical fundamentalist view of the world as arranged in polar opposites (i.e., good versus evil, light versus darkness, truth versus error), the Christian Right believed that they were engaged in "a fight to the finish, and within which everything that one believes in is at stake, with an enemy both malevolent and nearly all-powerful."¹³ Conservative historian Gary North viewed the entire history of western civilization as "the history of Christians' struggles against unlawful state power and the anti-Christian theologies that have undergirded it."¹⁴ And in this historic struggle, apparently these leaders viewed themselves as mandated to raise an army of soldiers since "the battle for Christian existence is upon us . . . [and] it will take Christian rebels to stem the tide of the humanistic state."¹⁵

Christian Schools as a Training Ground

As the Christian Right mustered its resources for the culture war, battle lines were drawn on three primary fronts: religious, political, and educational. The success of each of the three arenas reinforced the work of the others.¹⁶ Specifically, on the educational front, as members of the conservative evangelical community became convinced that they were engaged in a battle against what they viewed as alarming trends in American culture in the 1960s and 1970s, there was widespread agreement among them "that the public school system [was] the most influen-

tial and dangerous disseminator and sustainer of the godless, profoundly anti-American, secular-humanist viewpoint.¹⁷ This belief led to a phenomenal increase in the number of Christian schools during this time.¹⁸ There was a confidence in these early days that Christian schools would lead to a Christian revival on a national scale, a fourth Great Awakening of sorts, wherein an army of Christian young people who had been trained in biblical principles and Christian patriotism, would lead the nation back to its original purpose.¹⁹ Simone Schweber reminds us that all educational endeavors serve as crucible[s] for collective memory work.²⁰ Thus, teachers in Christian schools perpetuate a view of the founding fathers of the United States as conservative Christians, rather than what most of them really were, a mixture of deists and Free Masons.²¹ Additionally, they tend to highlight the more positive aspects of the Christian involvement in American history and ignore the more difficult aspects, such as the treatment of the Native Americans as well as African Americans.

War Rhetoric in the Christian School Movement

Leaders of the Christian school movement engaged in similar war rhetoric in order to persuade parents to remove their children from the enemy's territory—i.e., the public schools. Rousas J. Rushdoony, a theologian whose writings influenced the philosophical underpinnings of the Christian school movement, connected the war rhetoric of the Christian Right with Christian education: "The battle for the Christian school is thus the battle for the faith. We are in the most important and crucial war of religion in all history, the struggle between Christianity and humanism."²²

In *The Christian School: Why It Is Right for Your Child*, a seminal work that quickly became a key resource for Christian schools, Paul Kienel raises his concerns about the evils perpetuated against American children in the public school system: moral depravity, drugs and violence, low academics, homosexuality, transcendental meditation, evolution, and humanism, among other things. In a chapter specifically dedicated to the subject of patriotism, Kienel explicitly perpetuates religious nationalism in the Christian school movement:

. . . this nation more than any other affords us the opportunity to provide our youngsters a Christian school education— an education that includes a patriot's dream of a land where people love their flag, love their country, and are not afraid to say and to sing "God bless America."²³

In research studies of specific Christian schools, the rhetoric of administrators and teachers echoed that of the movement's founders. A principal at a fundamentalist Baptist school bluntly stated, "To me America is God. God has brought America together and now we're slowly losing it."²⁴ Speaking of her students, one teacher in a different school in a



different study said, "To me, as a Christian, they are the hope of America."²⁵ Interestingly, although researchers readily acknowledge that Christian schools are not monolithic—they are, in some ways, as diverse as the denominations with which they are associated—there are some characteristics that almost all of them share. One of them is that "being good Christians is equated with being good Americans."²⁶ Another is that constituents consistently view themselves as being "engaged in a symbolic crusade."²⁷

Although it might be tempting to dismiss the rhetoric of these Christian educators as extreme examples, a careful examination of the textbooks most frequently used in Christian schools provides a sobering example of the war rhetoric that is so pervasive. In a deliberate attempt to counteract the humanistic slant of secular publishers, A Beka Publishing (associated with Pensacola Christian College), Bob Jones University Press (associated with the university of the same name), and self-paced ACE (Accelerated Christian Education) offer the most widely used curricula in American Christian schools to date. Frances Peterson studied seven social studies textbooks published by A Beka Publishing, eight social studies textbooks published by Bob Jones University Press, and 86 social studies booklets published or distributed by Accelerated Christian Education. In her extensive examination of these publications, Paterson noted that while the rhetoric condemning abortion and homosexuality is incredibly strong, the language describing slavery and racism is more neutral.²⁸ Additionally, the authors demonstrated "extreme hostility" toward communism, and anti-government themes are pervasive. David Berliner noted that the ACE curriculum in particular "pays homage to capitalism and contains a great many patriotic messages. These themes are often blended with Christianity, communicating the message that this is God's chosen country."²⁹ Berliner, Paterson, and Rose—all of whom have studied Christian schools and their curriculum at length—raise concerns about the messages that this curriculum and its rhetoric sends to students in Christian schools. Paterson stated it well:

[W]e should consider whether such training might increase the Balkanization of our society and lower the quality of public discourse by encouraging young people to develop a value system that is based on an us-versus-them world view. We must ask ourselves if that is the kind of polity we hope to create.³⁰

Contradictions and Complexities

Ironically, in spite of the fact that a key reason for the founding of many Christian schools was to engage in the culture war against the in-

fluence of secularism, attempts to merge American and Christian identities have created quite a number of contradictions. Specifically, Christian schools tend to both resist and reinforce secular values. For example, while they teach students to reject the American cultural norms of attendance at R-rated movies, promiscuity, and indulgence in drugs and alcohol, there is rarely any teaching against the pervasive nature of American materialism, competition, or nationalism. In these ways and others, Christian schools have perhaps unknowingly absorbed characteristics of the broader American culture, such as an over-emphasis on individualism³¹ and a blind following of the government's call to arms as a civic duty.³² Thus, while the government is viewed as an enemy on certain issues, patriotism flourishes. Paul Parsons illustrated this paradox well:

They get a tear in their eye at the sight of the flag, but some then defy those elected to uphold that flag. They revere our past while decrying our present. They teach that the country is never the enemy, but the government sometimes is.³³

Susan Rose saw the Christian schools she studied as myriads of contradictions; they encourage neither a full rejection of secular humanism nor a full embrace of evangelicalism. Compromises and accommodations thus ensure the continued existence of Christian schools in significant ways. According to Melinda Wagner, apparently for constituents of Christian schools, "if the Christian walk is to survive in American society, it must be walked the American way."³⁴

As a caveat, it would be a mistake to assume that patriotism and nationalism is unique to Christian schools. Especially since September 11, 2001, a renewed patriotism bordering on nationalism is evident in public schools as well, especially in formal and informal curriculum.³⁵ Additionally, it is important to recognize that not all Christian schools have confused Christianity with Americanism. In fact, two Mennonite schools (one in Iowa and one in Pennsylvania) were publicly vilified as unpatriotic when they refused to display the flag or sing the national anthem.³⁶ A spokesperson for one of the schools explained that their actions, stemming from their pacifist tradition, "indicate[d] not disrespect for this country but an acknowledgment of God's reign over all nations."³⁷

These exceptions aside, Christian schools would benefit from considering the irony that the pluralism in American culture which they seem so adamant to battle actually gives them the right to exist and to thrive.³⁸ Perhaps then, those involved in Christian schools should re-examine the Christ and culture issue so eloquently delineated by H. Richard Niebuhr decades ago in order to decide which culture war, if any, they should be fighting.³⁹ Undoubtedly, "the Christian walk and the American way are at odds on many points."⁴⁰ As an example, the Christian ideally negates and denies the self while the American typically glorifies the self. Additionally, Richard Miller explains that sometimes in evangelical circles, there is an emphasis on the orders of creation over



against the orders of redemption, leading to loyalty to the nation rather than to Christ.⁴¹ Christian schools should focus on educating their children in a catechism⁴² that promotes genuine Christian principles, even if they do not necessarily align with what American culture values.

Additionally, thoughtful Christian educators should recognize that Christian education, in itself, is no panacea, and the Christian schools are more likely to *reflect* than to *determine* the spiritual levels of their constituency.⁴³ If that is true, then Christian educators should reconsider what the spiritual level of their constituency actually is. Perhaps young Christian parents who will be making decisions about the education of their children in the coming decades are seeking something different in their evangelical faith. It is possible that they may not want a perpetuation of the inexorable tie between Christian schools and the Christian Right. Perhaps they do not necessarily want their children to absorb the belief that the American way is God's way and vice-versa. Based on recent reports on the current state of American evangelicalism,⁴⁴ I believe that there is evidence that young Christian parents are indeed seeking something else in their personal faith and in their desires for their children. Therefore, for those practical reasons as well as for ideological reasons, I propose that Christian schools in America change the way they educate children.

*How Then Should We Educate? A
General Proposal for Change*

Capps, Parsons, Peshkin, and Rose have established that social and moral concerns have historically been the primary motivations for parents enrolling their children in Christian schools.⁴⁵ Christian schools have a much higher calling than merely protecting precious children from the evils of the world. They can and should be providing a necessary catechism of the faith that is sadly lacking in many evangelical churches today. Parents should understand that the purpose of a Christian school is far more than providing a safe place for their children to learn; it is certainly more than the perpetuation of American ideals, even if those ideals are rooted in Christian principles as many conservative evangelicals contend. While most Christian educators in the 1970s were emphasizing these purposes, there were some Reformed thinkers who thought otherwise. In a collection of essays edited by Cummings in 1979, authors expressed a clear understanding that the purpose of Christian schools was to teach a Christian world and life view, to mentor and disciple students in their Christian faith, to provide a witness by denying ourselves and following Christ, and to glorify God by participating in his

redemptive mandate.⁴⁶ While most Christian educators would readily agree with these purposes, often they have been lost amidst the fear mongering about the culture wars. Therefore, Christian schools should return to a clearer, more biblical purpose of education.

Therefore, if providing a biblical catechism were to become the primary focus, Christian schools would change in significant ways. In addition to teaching children the grammar of academic subjects in the early grades, as proposed by Dorothy Sayers in her essay on classical education,⁴⁷ Christian teachers should also provide the grammar of theology. Then, as students mature, both in their grasp of the humanities as well as their understanding of the Christian faith, they should be encouraged to examine the issues that have puzzled Christian intellectuals for hundreds if not thousands of years. They should research, debate, write papers, and give speeches about issues such as eschatology, Calvinism vs. Wesleyanism, works of the Holy Spirit, baptism, dispensationalism, and yes, pacifism too. In other words, Christian schools should be places where such debate and discussion is conducted with a healthy respect for the Christian thinkers who have preceded us, not a place where being a Christian is only connected to one way of thinking.

However, encouraging this kind of deliberate openness among students requires a different way of thinking for Christian teachers, one that is not always comfortable. It means viewing faith as ðan ongoing dialectical process between certainty, self-critical introspection and doubt, [and an] open[ness] to be touched by truth anew.ö⁴⁸ Such an attitude, while acknowledging that there is no such thing as ideological neutrality,⁴⁹ allows the potential for a healthy reexamination of the Christian tradition in different ways. It humbly approaches the study of peace, among other topics, without the fear that has so long characterized the Christian school movement. Christian parents should not be afraid to allow their children to study what other Christians with a high view of Scripture have chosen to believe about controversial issues. As long as Christian schools unapologetically cling to the common orthodox creed almost every one of them publish, they should allow these issues to be studied and debated in healthy and respectful ways. Such ecumenismô which has, incidentally, grown in recent decades in the Christian school movement in order to survive financiallyô has the potential for a broader impact on public life.⁵⁰

Following the examples of many Christian liberal arts colleges, K-12 Christian schools should be more authentically Christian as well. They should be encouraging their students to develop a living faith, one that grows by responding to the challenges of the culture in which they live in healthy ways rather than running from it or fighting it with war rhetoric that eventually falls flat.⁵¹ In other words, to educate young Christians is to disciple them in the ways of Christ; unquestionably, it includes moral education that is deeply rooted in biblical principles.⁵² Specifically, ðdiscipleship is about giving oneself over to being an in-



strument of the gospel, which requires thinking hard about what it means really to be an instrument of the gospel.⁵³

Such an education is transformative, not triumphalistic. Steven Vryhof said it well:

The goal here is not self-serving advancement, not evangelization, not promotion of a political agenda, and not "value-free" information; rather it is Christian lifestyle, a life of obedience to God, attempting to fulfill God's will in all areas of life.⁵⁴

In summary, a graduate of a Christian school should be what Vryhof called a "rooted cosmopolitan," that is, one both rooted in community and values and also able to speak with anyone in the world about any topic.⁵⁵ Such a Christian will be effective in the global community of the 21st century.

Therefore, if educating students in Christian schools is educating them to live out their faith, this living faith will undoubtedly focus on Christian virtues such as love, self-control, and gentleness. Certainly no Christian would argue that these virtues should not be an integral part of the Christian life. Likewise, it would be difficult to see these virtues as those that sustain war rather than peace. Even a cursory examination of Scripture leads one to understand that peace is an important theme.⁵⁶ Therefore, a truly biblical education will open the possibility that peace and Christianity are not mutually exclusive terms, just as war and Christianity are not necessarily synonymous. There is, for example, no real reason to emphasize "Jesus' words 'I have come to bring a sword' to the virtual exclusion of any personal attention to the need to create a society in which justice and righteousness prevail."⁵⁷ The pacifist tradition is not one to fear but should instead be explored by students in Christian schools in order to offer a necessary balance to the views that have dominated the curriculum for so long. Admittedly, the issue is incredibly complex and beyond the scope of this article to explore. But teachers should expose students to the various iterations of Christian views on peace and allow them to wrestle with the issue for themselves.⁵⁸

Although it might be tempting to view this proposal for change in Christian schools as radically innovative, concern for the lack of an integration of biblical principles of peace in Christian schools is hardly new. In 1844, H. G. Adams edited a collection of Scripture passages and quotations as a handbook for Christian teachers because he was astonished at the trend in educational curricula even then. He articulated his hope for change:

Acting on this general principle [of doing all for the glory of God], the Christian tutor will find it his duty, not only to guard his pupils against those impressions which tend to the encouragement of war, but also to make specific efforts to imbue their minds with a deep sense of the importance of meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, and charity; above all, of the return of evil for good.⁵⁹

Perhaps this handbook should be republished and take its rightful place alongside Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary and other primary sources from America's rich educational history that now hold honored places on bookshelves in Christian schools. Additionally, teachers could make the pursuit of nonviolence as heroic as they have previously made the pursuit of militaristic force.⁶⁰

And since the goal is to encourage our students to be rooted cosmopolitans, it would behoove Christian educators to learn more about peace education from their brothers and sisters who are teaching around the world. These educators believe that a deep desire for peace is a universal characteristic,⁶¹ "deeply rooted within the human soul."⁶² Rather than conform to a survivalist worldview "one that demands conformity, blind obedience, and passive resignation,"⁶³ they should acknowledge that their worship of a just God demands that they relinquish their pursuit of power and control to him.⁶⁴ Rather than viewing war as somehow connected to God's apocalyptic triumph,⁶⁵ they can learn from African educators to hear the gospel story differently, that "God in Christ absorbs the guilt. God in Christ returns evil with good, epitomizing enemy love. God in Christ overcomes the violent death-dealing forces, commencing a new reign of justice."⁶⁶ For them, worshiping means that people hear and tell stories to one another with openness to the presence and the power of God. Christian schools in America should worship God this way instead of confusing worship of God with worship of the nation. Learning from African peace educators is just one example of how the goal of producing graduates who are rooted cosmopolitans can encourage an openness to other cultural perspectives that may in fact be more truly biblical than those of American evangelicalism. Again, such a perspective requires humility and a recognition and surrender of one's own ethnocentric tendencies in order to acknowledge that American Christianity may not always offer the best approaches to education. If such humility should prevail, Christian schools could produce students who graduate as rooted cosmopolitans, confident in their orthodoxy but open to conversations and ready to take their places in a global community.

Conclusion

Kevin Roose, a journalism major at Brown University, recently matriculated to Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia for a semester. Founded by Jerry Falwell, Liberty University is widely regarded as a bastion of conservative evangelicalism and a training ground for the



Christian Right. Roose attended Liberty as an experiment of sorts in order to learn about the religious Right and to write a book about his experiences.⁶⁷ The book is a refreshing look at the educational environment within a Christian university; Roose examines everything from curriculum to dorm life to social expectations. Pertinent to this discussion, however, is the overriding theme of the book: that both the political and ideological Right and Left should stop demonizing one another. There are flaws, mistakes, and misunderstandings on both sides of the spectrum. And if Christian educators could acknowledge that fact, while holding unapologetically to orthodox theology, Christian schools would do a better job producing disciples of the living Christ—peacemakers who honor him, rather than little soldiers in a culture war. As Alan Wolfe states, “A good debater and a deep believer are not the same thing: one craves certainty, while the other is moved by mystery.”⁶⁸

¹The first mention of this concept is widely attributed to Philip W. Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (New York: Rinehart & Winston, 1968). Another notable contribution is Henry Giroux and David Purpel, eds., *The Hidden Curriculum and Moral Education* (Berkeley, CA: McCutchan Publishing, 1983).

²Kathy A. Mills, “The Culture of the Christian School,” *Journal of Education and Christian Belief*, 7, No. 2 (2003), 129.

³Hossain B. Danesh, “Towards an Integrative Theory of Peace Education,” *Journal of Peace Education*, 3, No. 1 (2006), 64.

⁴By “patriotism,” I do not refer simply to one’s love and appreciation for one’s country. Instead, I am concerned about the kind of patriotism that borders on nationalism, that is, confusion between worship of God and worship of one’s nation.

⁵When I use the term “conservative evangelical,” I do so with a political and not necessarily theological definition in mind. I acknowledge that some conservative theologians are not necessarily conservative politically. Therefore, in this article I use the phrase interchangeably with “the Christian Right.”

⁶Walter H. Capps, *The New Religious Right: Piety, Patriotism, and Politics* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1990), 199.

⁷Aaron Haberman, “Into the Wilderness: Ronald Reagan, Bob Jones University, and the Political Education of the Christian Right,” *Historian*, 67, no. 2 (2005): 234-253.

⁸Although Christian fundamentalism and evangelicalism share some common characteristics, they are not synonymous. One difference between them is that fundamentalists have a tendency to think in simple dichotomies and to view the world as an arena of conflict; therefore, they tolerate no ambiguities. Evangelicalism as a movement originated in the early 20th century as a deliberate response to the separatist nature of fundamentalists. Although it may appear that I am conflating the terms in this article, it is not my intention to do so. I am in-

stead suggesting that many Christian schools that would self-identify as evangelical have perhaps unwittingly adopted a more fundamentalist way of thinking and operating. For further study, see George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991) and "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," in *Reckoning with the Past: Historical Essays on American Evangelicalism from the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals*, ed. Daryl G. Hart (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 303-321.

⁹Glenn H. Utter and James L. True, *Conservative Christians and Political Participation: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004).

¹⁰Capps, *The New Religious Right*, 182.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., 124.

¹³Ibid., 10.

¹⁴Gary North, *The Theology of Christian Resistance* (Tyler, TX: Geneva Divinity School Press, 1983), ix. Gary North, R. J. Rushdoony's son-in-law (see end note #23) is considered by many moderates as an extreme example of an ultra-conservative, hyper-Calvinist historian. Yet his influence on the Christian Right is undeniable.

¹⁵John W. Whitehead, "Christian Resistance in the Face of State Interference," in *The Theology of Christian Resistance*, ed. Gary North (Tyler, TX: Geneva Divinity School Press, 1983), 3.

¹⁶Alan Peshkin, *God's Choice: The Total World of a Fundamentalist Christian School* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

¹⁷Capps, *The New Religious Right*, 79.

¹⁸Paul F. Parsons, *Inside America's Christian Schools* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987); Susan D. Rose, *Keeping Them out of the Hands of Satan: Evangelical Schooling in America* (New York: Routledge, 1988); and Geoffrey Walford, "The Fate of the New Christian Schools: From Growth to Decline?" *Educational Studies*, 27, No. 4 (2001): 465-477.

¹⁹James C. Carper and Jack Layman, "Independent Christian Day Schools: The Maturing of a Movement," *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 5, No. 4 (2002): 502-514. See also Rose, *Keeping Them out of the Hands of Satan*.

²⁰Simone Schweber, "Fundamentally 9/11: The Fashioning of Collective Memory in a Christian School," *American Journal of Education*, 112 (2006), 394.

²¹This idea is taken from Capps. I do wish to acknowledge that there is evidence that some of America's founding fathers professed a genuine Christian faith, most notably our first two Presidents, George Washington and John Adams. However, I also believe that Capps's point is well taken. Teachers in Christian schools tend to use any references in primary sources that mention God or Christ as evidence that most of these men were Christians in much the same fashion as conservative evangelicals view themselves today. On the contrary, Capps is correct when he states that most of them were deists or Free Masons. Notable examples include Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, among others.



²²As quoted in Rose, 1. Rousas J. Rushdoony is known in theological circles as a proponent of Christian Reconstructionism, a belief that arises from a post-millennial view of eschatology. Christian Reconstructionism embraces what is known as dominion theology; i.e., the belief that it is the Christians' primary task to bring the kingdom of God to earth. Thus contrary to the traditionally held separatist view of fundamentalists, Reconstructionists believe that they have a heavenly mandate to change the culture, especially by educating the future leaders of America. Rushdoony's writings on Christian education, founded in his theological and philosophical perspectives, have influenced the Christian school movement in significant ways. See for example Rousas J. Rushdoony, *Intellectual Schizophrenia: Culture, Crisis, and Education* (Phillipburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 1969); *The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum* (Valecito, CA: Ross House, 1981); and *The Roots of Reconstruction* (Valecito, CA: Ross House, 2003). See also Robert L. Thoburn, *The Children Trap: Biblical Principles for Education* (Fort Wayne, TX: Dominion Press, 1986). Thoburn, a disciple of Rushdoony, founded one of the first successful Christian schools on the east coast (Fairfax Christian School in Fairfax, Virginia) in the early 1960s.

²³Paul A. Kienel, *The Christian School: Why It Is Right for Your Child* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1975), 96.

²⁴Rose, *Keeping Them out of the Hands of Satan*, 99.

²⁵Peshkin, *God's Choice*, 89.

²⁶Rose, *Keeping Them out of the Hands of Satan*, 120.

²⁷*Ibid*, 170.

²⁸Frances R. A. Paterson, "Building a Conservative Base: Teaching History and Civics in Voucher-Supported Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82, No. 2 (2000), 150-155.

²⁹David C. Berliner, "Educational Psychology Meets the Christian Right: Differing Views of Children, Teaching, Schooling, and Learning," *Teachers College Record*, 98, No. 3 (1997), 404.

³⁰Paterson, "Building a Conservative Base," 154.

³¹Rose, *Keeping Them out of the Hands of Satan*, 202.

³²Tobias Winright, "Review of the Books *Blessed are the Pacifists: The Beatitudes and Just War Theory*, *The Horrors We Bless: Rethinking the Just-War Legacy*, and *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War* (2nd ed)," *The Christian Century*, 125, No. 4 (2008), 46-50.

³³Parsons, *Inside America's Christian Schools*, 153.

³⁴Melinda Bollar Wagner, *God's Schools: Choice and Compromise in American Society* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 205.

³⁵Edward J. Brantmeier, "Everyday Understandings of Peace and Non-Peace: Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding at a US Midwestern High School," *Journal of Peace Education*, 4, No. 2 (2007), 127-148 and Ken Montgomery,

öRacialized Hegemony and Nationalist Mythologies: Representations of War and Peace in High School History Textbooks, 1945-2005,ö *Journal of Peace Education*, 3, No. 1 (2006), 19-37.

³⁶Rich Preheim, öPacifist School Rapped as Unpatriotic,ö *National Catholic Reporter*, 40, No. 40 (2004), 9 and öStar-spangled Hoops,ö *The Christian Century*, 122, No. 5 (2005), 9-11.

³⁷Ibid, 9.

³⁸Parsons, *Inside America's Christian Schools*, Peshkin, *God's Choice*, and Mark A. Pike, öThe Challenge of Christian Schooling in a Secular Society,ö *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 13, No. 2 (2004), 149-166.

³⁹H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951). Note: I fully recognize that Niebuhr's analysis has been legitimately critiqued as outdated and misguided. But because it is such a well-known classic, I reference it to make the point that the relationship between Christianity and culture still remains complicated and can be viewed in many different ways.

⁴⁰Wagner, *God's Schools*, 105.

⁴¹Richard B. Miller, öChristian Pacifism and Just-War Tenets: How Do They Diverge?ö *Theological Studies*, 47 (1986), 455.

⁴²In using the term öcatechism,ö I am not necessarily referring to a specific type of Christianity such as Catholic or Reformed traditions. Instead, I use the term more broadly to refer to any attempt to educate children in the basic tenets of Christian doctrine and principles.

⁴³Carper and Layman, öIndependent Christian Day Schools,ö 512.

⁴⁴Frances Fitzgerald, öThe New Evangelicals,ö *The New Yorker*, 84, No. 19, (June 30, 2008), 28+ and Jon Meacham, öThe End of Christian America,ö *Newsweek*, 153, No. 15 (April 13, 2009), 34-38.

⁴⁵Capps, *The New Religious Right*, Parsons, *Inside America's Christian Schools*, Peshkin, *God's Choice*, and Rose, *Keeping Them out of the Hands of Satan*.

⁴⁶David B. Cummings, ed, *The Purpose of a Christian School* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1979).

⁴⁷Dorothy L. Sayers, öThe Lost Tools of Learning,ö a paper delivered at Oxford University in 1947.

⁴⁸Wilhelm Wille, öAmbivalence in the Christian Attitude to War and Peace,ö *International Review of Psychiatry*, 19, No. 3 (2007), 236.

⁴⁹Pike, öThe Challenge of Christian Schooling,ö 154.

⁵⁰Melinda Bollar Wagner, öGeneric Conservative Christianity: The Demise of Denominationalism in Christian Schools,ö *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 36, No. 1 (1997), 13-24.

⁵¹Alan Wolfe, öThe Evangelical Mind Revisited,ö *Change*, 38, No. 2 (2008), 8-13.

⁵²See Miller and also Gretchen M. Wilhelm and Michael W. Firmin, öCharacter Education: Christian Education Perspectives,ö *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, 17 (2008), 182-198.



⁵³Luisa M. Saffiotti, "Discipleship as Peace-building: Living and Ministering in Right Relationship, Becoming Instruments of Transformation," *Human Development*, 27, No. 2 (2006), 6.

⁵⁴Steven Vryhof, "Traction on Reality: The Thinking Behind Reformed Christian Schools," *Journal of Education and Christian Belief*, 6, No. 2 (2002), 118.

⁵⁵Steven Vryhof, *Between Memory and Vision: The Case for Faith-based Schooling* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).

⁵⁶Wille, "Ambivalence in the Christian Attitude," 236.

⁵⁷Capps, *The New Religious Right*, 85.

⁵⁸See for example Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Theological Contexts of Just War Theory and Pacifism: A Response to J. Bryan Hehir," *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 20, No. 2 (1992), 259-265; J. Daryl Charles, *Between Pacifism and Jihad: Just War and Christian Tradition* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2005); Kenneth Kemp, "Personal Pacifism," *Theological Studies*, 56 (1995), 21-38; Lawrence Rosenwald, "Notes on Pacifism," *The Antioch Review*, 65, No. 1 (2007), 93-106; Alain Epp Weaver, "Unjust Lies, Just Wars? A Christian Pacifist Conversation with Augustine," *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 29, No. 1 (2001), 51-78; John Henry Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (2nd ed.) (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994) and *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace, and Revolution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009).

⁵⁹H. G. Adams, ed, *The Peace Reading-Book; Being a Series of Selections from the Sacred Scriptures, the Early Christian Fathers, and Historians, Philosophers, and Poets—the Wise and Thoughtful of All Ages; Condemnatory of the Principles and Practices of War, and Inculcating Those of True Christianity; Designed for Use in Schools, and for Private Tuition* (London: Charles Gilpin, 1844), v.

⁶⁰Ian M. Harris, "Challenges for Peace Educators at the Beginning of the 21st Century," *Social Alternatives*, 21, No. 1 (2002), 28-31.

⁶¹Angela M. B. Biaggio, Luciana K. De Souza, and Rosa M. F. Martini, "Attitudes toward Peace, War and Violence in Five Countries," *Journal of Peace Education*, 1, No. 2 (2004), 179-189.

⁶²Ian M. Harris, "Principles of Peace Pedagogy," *Peace and Change*, 15, No. 3 (1990), 261.

⁶³Danesh, "Towards an Integrative Theory," 66.

⁶⁴Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

⁶⁵Wille, "Ambivalence in the Christian Attitude," 241.

⁶⁶Russel Haitch and Donald Miller, "Storytelling as a Means of Peacemaking: A Case Study of Christian Education in Africa," *Religious Education*, 101, No. 3 (2006): 395.

⁶⁷Kevin Roose, *The Unlikely Disciple: A Sinner's Semester at America's Holiest University* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2009).

⁶⁸Wolfe, "The Evangelical Mind Revisited," 12.