

FAITH & LEARNING

A Select, Annotated Bibliography

George Brown, Jr.

Boonstra, Harry. *Our School: Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church*. The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, No. 39. Donald J. Bruggink, General Editor. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001.

A history of Calvin College and its relationship to the Christian Reformed Church.

Carmody, Denise Lardner. *Organizing a Christian Mind: A Theology of Higher Education*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996.

This book is informed by the Roman Catholic tradition and offers a theological perspective on higher education. The author calls the book a “theological essay” prompted by the papal document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. Human nature, the natural world, politics (or, the realm of social arrangements), and God provide the framework in which Carmody wrestles with the issues of ecclesiastical control in relation to higher education.

De Jong, Gerald F. *From Strength to Strength: A History of Northwestern 1882-1982*. The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, No. 9. Donald J. Bruggink, General Editor. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982.

De Jong traces the history of Northwestern College from academy to junior college to four-year liberal arts college.

Diekema, Anthony J. *Academic Freedom and Christian Scholarship*. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000.

For twenty years, Diekema served as the president of Calvin College. Diekema offers a definition of academic freedom, identifies the forces that threaten academic freedom, describes the context which shapes the discussion of academic freedom, and puts forth some proposals for consideration. His proposals, which are presented in a chapter on policy development, include some practical advice for faculty, presidents and provosts, governing boards, students, and ecclesiastical officials (cf. pp. 133-143).

Dovre, Paul. J. (ed.) *The Future of Religious Colleges*. The Proceedings of the Harvard Conference on the Future of Religious Colleges. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.

“What will be the place of religiously informed scholarship in the academy of tomorrow?” “Is the trend toward disengagement from a distinctive religious identity and mission inevitable?” Can churches

that have lost their college-relatedness be transformed?" "Can colleges that have lost their church-relatedness be transformed?" "Are the diverse educational missions of religious colleges viable in an intellectual sense?" "In a social sense?" "How can such viability be encouraged and secured?" "Will public policy and the interpretation thereof be an ally or an enemy of religious colleges?" (page xi). The authors who have contributed to this volume wrestle with these questions in an effort to provide those with a vested interest in Christian higher education guidance for living into the future.

Ferguson, Duncan S. and Weston, William J. (eds.) *Called to Teach: The Vocation of the Presbyterian Educator*. Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2003.

"Foundations," "Engagement," and "Application" constitute the three sections into which *Called to Teach* is organized. The chapters in the first section examine the biblical, theological, and historical foundations of the calling to teach. The perspective of these chapters is distinctively Reformed, reflecting the book's focus on Presbyterian higher education. Chapter 5, "The American Presbyterian College," in the second section presents a typology of Presbyterian colleges. Case studies are the focus of the third section of the book. Chapter 8 presents case studies representing the three types of relationship between the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the almost seventy colleges and universities that have some denominational connection—Maryville College in Maryville, Tennessee, is presented as an example of the "dimensional" type; Waynesburg College in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, is presented as an example of the "pervasive" type; and Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, is presented as an example of the "historical" type. Because this volume focuses on the vocation of the teacher in Presbyterian higher education, the discussion is not limited to teaching in colleges but includes theological education as well.

Gleason, Philip. *Contending with Modernity: Catholic Higher Education in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

This volume should be seen as a companion to George Marsden's *The Soul of the American University*. Gleason offers a rather comprehensive history of Roman Catholic higher education. His research points to the need for Roman Catholic educators to draw on recent—that is the period from about 1950-2000—developments in philosophy and theology in articulating a vision or "theoretical rationale" for the distinctive role and place of Roman Catholic colleges and universities within the wider context of higher education in America.

Hodgson, Peter C. *God's Wisdom: Toward a Theology of Education*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.

Hodgson teaches at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. For Hodgson, the purpose of education is “. . . to awaken, discipline, focus, and expand the development of wisdom in human beings as they respond in however diverse ways to the beckoning call of being, truth, goodness” (page 126). Drawing on the resources of the Judeo-Christian tradition, he employs the term *paideia* to describe the kind of wisdom he has in mind.

Henry, Douglas V. and Agee, Bob R. *Faithful Learning and the Christian Scholarly Vocation*. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

The collection of ten essays in this volume were originally presented as lectures in the H.I. Hester Lecture Series at an annual meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Colleges and Schools. The authors represent Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Quaker traditions as well as the Baptist tradition. They include well-known evangelical activist Tony Campolo, University of Chicago emeritus professor Martin E. Marty and Quaker educator Parker Palmer. Campolo describes three types of Christian college (denominationally sponsored, sectarian, and radical Christian) and argues the case for radical Christian colleges that are countercultural in character and socially engaged. Marty moves out from Colossians 1:15-20 to explore four tensions in Christian higher education (material vs. spiritual, secular vs. religious, the privileged vs. the exposed, and vocation vs. Vocation). Palmer challenges the Enlightenment influence on “objectivism” in higher education and proposes a “Gospel epistemology” (characterized by truth that is personal, communal, mutual/reciprocal, and transformational) as an alternative. The absence of women contributors is striking, and sad.

Holmes, Arthur F. *Building the Christian Academy*. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001.

In a survey of seven formative episodes in ecclesial-educational history, Holmes – professor of philosophy emeritus at Wheaton College – discerned four emphases that he claims constitute the “heart and soul” of the Christian academy:

1. The usefulness of liberal arts as a preparation for service to both church and society
2. The unity of truth
3. Contemplative (or doxological) learning
4. The care of the soul (what we call moral and spiritual formation) (page 2).

Hughes, Richard T. *How Christian Faith Can Sustain the Life of the Mind*. Foreword by Samuel S. Hill. Grand Rapids, MI/ Cambridge, U.K.: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001.

Hughes addresses the question, “How can Christian institutions of higher learning honor the integrity of the Christian faith and the integrity of the academic enterprise at the same time?” (pages 13-14). Recognizing that at some church-related colleges, the scale is tipped toward the side of learning at the expense of faith, while at more evangelical colleges the situation is reversed, Hughes – who directs the Center for Faith and Learning at Pepperdine University – seeks to make the case that Christian faith can sustain the life of the mind. For Hughes, the “life of the mind” includes at least four dimensions: “a rigorous and disciplined search for truth,” “genuine conversation with a diversity of perspectives and worldviews that are different from our own,” “critical thinking,” and “intellectual creativity” (pages 2-4). He also distinguishes between an absolutistic, legalistic version of Christian faith and a more dynamic form of Christian faith, with the latter being more capable of the kind of rich and rigorous contribution necessary for sustaining the life of the mind. Hughes believes a theological approach is required in seeking to answer the question he poses in this book.

Hughes, Richard T. and Adrian, William B. eds. *Models for Christian Higher Education: Strategies for Success in the Twenty-First Century*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997.

This study examined fourteen Christian colleges and universities in seven different traditions (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Mennonite, Evangelical/ Interdenominational, Wesleyan/Holiness, and Baptist/Restorationist) in an effort to understand how the faith commitments which were part of their establishment continue to be nurtured while achieving academic excellence. A section is devoted to each tradition. Each section is introduced by an essay, followed by studies of the two representative institutions. The introductory essay for the section on the Reformed tradition was written by James D. Bratt, who answered the question: “What Can the Reformed Tradition Contribute to Christian Higher Education?” Whitworth College in Washington and Calvin College in Michigan were the two institutions included in this section of the book. Leadership surfaced as a significant factor in sustaining the distinctive character of a Christian college or university. But a broadening of the scope and vision of both religious commitments and academic excellence and an engagement with the culture were found to be common features.

Kennedy, James C., and Simon, Caroline J. *Can Hope Endure?: A Historical Case Study in Christian Higher Education*. The Historical Series of the Reformed Church

in America, No. 47. Donald J. Bruggink, General Editor. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005.

A history professor and a philosophy professor team up to present a historical case study of how one denominationally affiliated liberal arts college – Hope College in Holland, Michigan – has sought to follow a “middle way” between the way mainline Protestant and evangelical Protestant undergraduate institutions have developed. After tracing the contours of this “middle way” through different periods of Hope College’s history, the authors identify the challenges of being an institution of Christian higher education that is able to hold in creative tension faithfulness to the Christian vision and openness to new and ever-changing circumstances.

Litfin, Duane. *Conceiving the Christian College*. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.

Litfin begins his collection of thoughtful essays by distinguishing between two models of Christian higher education: the “umbrella model,” in which a variety of voices can be heard, while the voice of the sponsoring Christian tradition continues to be the dominant or privileged voice; and the “systemic model,” in which the entire faculty give voice to only the views of the sponsoring Christian tradition. This first essay is Litfin’s response to the challenge to be clear about one’s identity as an institution of higher education in the Christian tradition. Ten more challenges follow.

Marsden, George M. *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Marsden’s proposal is “that mainstream American higher education should be more open to explicit discussion of the relationship of religious faith to learning” (page 3). What makes his proposal “outrageous” is that an academic culture has emerged in which faith has been pushed to the margins by a more secular, positivistic worldview.

Marsden, George M. *The Soul of the American University: From Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Marsden’s book explores Protestant higher education by concentrating on a limited number of “pace-setting” schools that set a standard for higher education in America. Marsden traces the establishment of a Protestant non-sectarianism in part 1 and in part 2 examines the impact of a scientific worldview on the shaping of the American university. In part 3, Marsden explores the themes of academic freedom, fundamentalism, and liberalism.

Marty, Martin E. with Jonathan Moore. *Education, Religion, and the Common Good: Advancing Distinctly American Conversation About Religion's Role in Our Shared Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Unlike many books on religion and education that focus either on religion in the context of K-12 public education or on the role of religion as an academic subject in higher education, this book covers the whole span of education. The first four chapters make the case for the importance of discussing the relationship between religion and education, provide a historical perspective, and frame the issues involved in such a discussion. Chapter 5 examines the role of religion in public education, while Chapter 6 focuses on church-run primary and secondary schools and home-schooling. Higher education is the theme of the next three chapters. Chapter 7, "Church-Related Higher Education and the Common Good," is particularly relevant to the challenges faced by the three affiliated with the Reformed Church in America colleges. The overarching concern is how religion is to serve the public or common good through education.

Nord, Warren A. *Religion & American Education: Rethinking a National Dilemma*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

Nord provides a comprehensive examination of the role of religion in American education. He explores the question, "What hearing should *live* religious voices receive in public schools and universities?" (page 5). Nord challenges three assumptions in relation to public institutions of education: that the sacred and the secular can be separated; that secular ways of making sense of the world are "religiously neutral"; and that secular thought is rational while religious thinking is irrational (pages 6-7). Nord seeks to make the case for holding secular and sacred worldviews in a creative tension.

O'Brien, David J. *From the Heart of the American Church: Catholic Higher Education and American Culture*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994.

O'Brien, like Denise Carmody, is responding to *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. O'Brien seeks to make a constructive contribution to the debate about what "church affiliation" means. His perspective is that of viewing affiliation as "a source of support and encouragement for the works of teaching and research to which Catholic and non-Catholic academics alike are committed" (page xvii). Chapter 10, "Disciples and Citizens," is especially stimulating in thinking about the purpose(s) of an institution of Christian higher education.

Simon, Caroline J. *et al. Mentoring for Mission: Nurturing New Faculty at Church-Related Colleges*. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.

Essential to maintaining the identity of a church-related college is a faculty's commitment to the college's understanding of its mission. The authors argue that such commitment is not to be taken for granted or assumed, but, rather, carefully nurtured by the mentoring of new faculty.

Sloan, Douglas. *Faith and Knowledge: Mainline Protestantism and American Higher Education*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.

Sloan is professor of history and education at Teachers College, Columbia University. His focus is on significance of the theological renaissance in American Protestantism in the first part of the twentieth century for Christian higher education. He discusses three ways the tensions between faith and knowledge have been approached – by rejecting modernism, by accepting some form of “scientific naturalism,” and by what Sloan calls a “two-realm theory of truth.”

Van Wylen, Gordon J. *Vision for a Christian College: Essays by Gordon J. Van Wylen, President of Hope College, 1972-1987*. Ed. Harry Boonstra. The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America, No. 18. Donald J. Bruggink, General Editor. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988.

A college president's inaugural addresses, various commencement and convocation addresses, board reports, and other papers are a rich source of insight into an institution's core values, guiding principles, educational philosophy, and mission. This volume in The Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America consists of the addresses, reports, lectures, and reflections of Gordon J. Van Wylen who served as the president of Hope College from 1972 to 1987. These papers cover topics ranging from salaries and tuition to the liberal arts and diversity.

Wells, Ronald A. ed. *Keeping Faith: Embracing the Tensions in Christian Higher Education*. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.

Keeping Faith is a collection of essays occasioned by the inauguration of Calvin College's eighth president, Gaylen J. Byker. Stephen Monsma discusses Christian higher education in an age that is largely secular, while William Romanowski looks at popular culture's challenge to the Christian liberal arts. Susan Van Zanten Gallagher examines the place of gender studies in the curriculum of the Christian college. These and other contributions to this book offer a helpful sketch of the tensions facing small, liberal arts colleges in the Christian tradition.

Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education*. Ed. Clarence W. Joldersma and Gloria Goris Stronks. Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004.

Wolterstorff, Noah Porter Professor Emeritus of Philosophical Theology at Yale Divinity School, has his roots in the Christian Reformed Church branch of the Reformed tradition. He taught at Calvin College for many years before going to Yale. The nineteen essays that comprise this volume cover subjects such as “Rethinking Christian Higher Education,” in which he argues that the church-related college is “a project of and for the Christian community” (page 7); “The Integration of Faith and Learning – The very Idea,” in which he explores the place of the Christian psychologist in the context of pluralism; “The Project of a Christian University in a Postmodern Culture,” in which he traces the philosophical roots of the contemporary world view and what this means for Christian participation in what he calls “the social practice of science” (page 123); and “What is the Reformed Perspective on Christian Higher Education,” in which he points out that the radically decentralized character of the Reformed tradition means that one cannot speak of “*the* Reformed view of Christian higher education” (page 277).