INSTITUTE FOR THEOLOGICAL ENCOUNTER WITH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BULLETIN

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A Blessed and joyous Easter! I am writing this during Lent. I am sure that the season of Lent will give way to the joys of Easter just as the sorrows of this life will give way to the joys of the next. Whatever else heaven holds out to us it will be a life of ecstasy with Christ.

At our fall Workshop on *Computers, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality* there was talk of our striving to be in control and the prospect of our not being able to control the new electronic technology. I would like to turn my thoughts from editing the Proceedings of that meeting to thinking about the beginnings of life.

What once was radically out of our control has recently begun to yield to that control. Human conception has depended on which sperm, out of a myriad of other sperm, might fertilize the egg. We had no control over that process. We couldn't will sperm #123, say, to fertilize the egg. Now, in a way, we have established human control at least to some extent. We can, if we will, pick out the one sperm that will be used in an attempt to fertilize an egg. We can't foresee yet how "this" sperm will interact with "this" egg, but we are closer to that result than ever before.

In vitro fertilization (and now cloning) are ultimately technologies of control. Although these technologies are promoted as "technologies of compassion" for childless couples, they are "technologies of control" in reality. Do we want to control the physical attributes of our children? Some people certainly do? Will this enhance the child's freedom? That is at best problematic. To "create" children with pre-planned characteristics does not enhance anyone's freedom but it does create another level of control. What may be popular now may be wildly unpopular twenty years from now.

One way to combat the threatening human control over other human beings is to realize that the Lord really wants us to love him in a way that guarantees that we be "out of control" of ourselves and others. He wants a gift of our human freedom so that we may be free before him and for him. Our task is to grow freer by letting go of our need to "be in control." Is another "tower of Babel" coming upon us? Are we trying to gain control that we are much better off not having? A second "tower of Babel" is not inevitable, not if we yield our need to control. Anyway, be of good heart. After all, the Lord has said, "I have overcome the world."

Robert Brungs, S.J.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Mark your calendar for the October 14-16, 2005 Workshop on *Biological Advance, Patenting and the Law.* You should be receiving your invitation in March or April and we plan to have the information on the ITEST web site by that time. If you wish to register on-line we hope to have that available. It depends on the health of our webmaster. The venue is Our Lady of the Snows Shrine in Belleville, Illinois, a half hour drive from Lambert Airport. For the past four years we've held the meetings at this location and participants agree that it is a good fit for us. However, we are open to suggestions for other locations in different geographical areas. If you have any ideas, please let us know.

Our essayists for this workshop: Dr. Joseph Murphy, SJ (Theology), Mr. David Saliwanchik, Esq. (Law), Dr. Randy Prather (Animal Research), Dr. Brendan Niemira (Agriculture) and Dr. Kevin FitzGerald, SJ (Human Cloning and Stem Cell Research).

2. The ITEST Board of Trustees wishes to thank the members who generously donated to the ITEST Premier Club (2005). This money can be used for operations rather than for specific projects. Most of our grant writing concentrates necessarily on fund requests for special projects or programs since most granting institutions do not fund operations.

The categories of Donors:

$1,000. and over: PREMIER CLUB MEMBER	9
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3. RECOMMENDED: A gem of a book written by S. Carla Mae Streeter, OP, ITEST Board Member and Professor of Theology at Aquinas Institute in St Louis, *Seasons of the Soul: An Intimate God in Liturgical Time.* pp.87. Chalice Press, *www.chalicepress.com*, St Louis. 2004. Cost: $7.99 if purchased through the Web, plus postage and handling.

> *The seasons of the soul are the seasons of the church year, a means of remembrance of the church's Beloved. With poetry, prose, imagery, and passion, Carla Mae Streeter takes readers through the liturgical seasons on a spiritual pilgrimage that is filled with the love of an intimate God. Every season becomes an awakening, revealing our awe, our excitement, and our comfort in knowing that God is our companion and our life partner. (from the book blurb)*

4. The *St Louis Post-Dispatch* recently devoted a front page spread in their *Everyday* section to ITEST Board Member, Benjamin F. Abell, Professor of Meteorology, St Louis University. While teaching courses in Earth and Atmospheric Sciences may be a laudable endeavor, it usually does not merit a full page spread in a city newspaper. The Post-Dispatch in this case focused on Ben's volunteer "on air" forecasting for an FM station in St Louis, noting that, "... Abell has provided free weather forecasts for KWMU-FM* since 1972 and for Mind's Eye Information Service (a closed circuit FM radio station for the blind) since 1978." And, "Abell teaches three or four classes every semester, with topics ranging from general science to calculus to graduate courses." (Quotes from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 2, 2005 by Patricia Corrigan)

Congratulations, Ben. *Ad multos annos!* The Board appreciates your generous support and encouragement.

**A radio station operated by the University of Missouri.*

5. At the end of April we will be mailing third renewal notices for calendar year 2005 membership in ITEST. If you have not renewed yet, please do so at your earliest convenience. Remember, we accept MasterCard and Visa as methods of payment. We appreciate your tucking in an extra donation to help us in continuing our ministry in the faith/science area.

6. We are in the final "throes" of editing the proceedings from the October, 2004 workshop on *Computers, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality* and are planning a late spring release. Only dues paid members 2004, 2005 will receive this book as part of membership.

7. Since January we have submitted grant requests to several major funding sources for assistance in getting our "educational modules" project underway: *Exploring the Universe, Discovering God.* (See ITEST Bulletin Vol. 35. No. 4 for description of project) Once we have the funds we will need input from people who are competent in education and science or technology at every level (kindergarten through adult). A few people have already volunteered their services; however, we welcome more participation. When funded, we plan to hire a project coordinator whose duties would encompass every facet of the project. If you have any suggestions about someone who would do well in this position, please get in touch with us as soon as you can. The earlier the better.

SECULARISM VERSUS SECULARITY

October 1994 ITEST Workshop
Session 1

Dr. Christopher Kaiser, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan
Dr. Richard Blackwell, Philosophy Department, Saint Louis University
Dr. Helen Mandeville, English Department, Saint Louis University
Dr. (Fr.) Bert Akers, S.J., Immaculate Conception Parish, Towson, Maryland
Dr. Edmund Pellegrino, M.D., Prof. (Emeritus) of Medicine and Medical Ethics, Georgetown University
Dr. James Childs, Dean and Professor of Moral Theology, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio
Dr. (Fr.) Donald Keefe, SJ, Dunwoodie Seminary (Retired)
The Honorable Thad Niemira, Associate Circuit Judge, City of Saint Louis

[In 1994 ITEST sponsored a Workshop on the topic of Secularism versus Secularity. The volume of Proceedings of that meeting was an ITEST best-seller and by 1996 the Proceedings were out of print. Yet, the material in those proceedings is of real value even now. Consequently the editor of the Bulletin has decided to devote the whole Spring issue to this material. Finally, let it be noted that Father Keefe, SJ and Judge Thad Niemira filled in for Mr. William Bentley Ball who had a heart attack a few days before the meeting.]

KAISER I've prepared a few comments about my paper. First of all, let me deal with the question of the definition of secularism. I struggle with the definition in my paper where I talk about two predominant definitions — a substantive one and a functional one, or actually, a substantive definition and a combined functional and substantive one. The substantive definition — Bryan Wilson's definition — is that secularization involves a decline of religion in some way or another. That is not the definition that I choose to follow. I follow more along the lines of Peter Berger's definition in which religion may survive in a secular world and, in fact, may thrive in a secular world, but with a redefined role. I try to parse that a bit by saying that there is a dissociation of religion from various areas of life and, secondly, that there is an alienation. There are a variety of issues, clearly ones involving creation and science and technology, which traditionally have strong religious and, in many cases, monastic associations, which then become alienated. Medicine would be another example in many cases.

So, secularism or the process of secularization, if you will, is a redefinition of the role of religion. This makes it problematic, as I see it, to realize the entirety of the biblical teaching. Biblical teaching does not recognize a secularization of religion from other areas to the degree which we expect today. At any rate it does not recognize that secularization comfortably.

Let me make a few observations about my paper. It is quite detailed. I tried reading it on the plane on the way here, and I felt some sympathy for those of you who also tried to do that. The detail makes rapid reading difficult.

I can say a few things about the general impression of what I'm trying to do here. I did put a lot of detail into it. Rather like an artist, I'm trying to sculpt something; namely, a sense of the massiveness of secularism. I'm trying to delineate its extent, particularly with western styles of technology and medicine and economics which are now pervading other cultures. I also want to sketch its extent in so many different dimensions of our existence. To that end I list everything from the political to the cultural and theological. There are six items in the list I have in my paper.

I also treat that extent in terms of the length of time it has taken for us to arrive at the present situation. My paper goes fairly far back into history. I more or less leave things off somewhere in the middle of the 19th century; some of the other papers basically pick these threads up in the 19th century and even in the 20th. The burden of my paper is that secularism has roots going way back, although, in general, I don't see that secularization as an irreversible development until well into the 18th century.

That's some of the general sculpting I tried to do in the paper. I do that partly because it matches my own experience of the massiveness of secularism. When I introduced myself, I mentioned a bit about my becoming a Christian. I was raised in a basically secular atmosphere — a church background, but a secular one, nonetheless. At 17, when I felt I knew just about everything, I first met someone who took Christian faith seriously — that is to say, really believed it was true. I was truly shocked.

That kind of belief was completely impossible as far as I was concerned. I experienced the massiveness of secularism at that early stage and I understood how implausible the Christian faith is for one who has had a secularist upbringing.

Secondly, I've experienced that massiveness more recently in terms of my trying to communicate something of my own discoveries as a scholar to others, even to other Christians, even to my own students at Seminary. I reflect on a couple of those experiences in my paper... I've also experienced that massiveness in the churches for that matter. What we assume to be a fairly surgical separation between, say, science and the facts of science on the one hand and faith on the other, was not always the case. One of the other papers brings this out as well. Prior to, say, 100 or 150 years ago, most of the contributors to science were deeply believing people, and their faith and their science were not separated at all. There may have been tension, but there wasn't a separation. As I have tried to explain that to people, it simply doesn't compute for them, I find. It's very difficult for them to grasp that things may have been different from what they are now. There are other examples of that as well. Thus, in my experience, there's a kind of massiveness to secularism to which I've tried to do justice in presenting this historical introduction.

I would also like to mention the inescapability of secularism. There is in the Reformed Tradition an idea sometimes called the antithesis. I don't know if you have something like this in your traditions or not. But the antithesis, going back to Abraham Kuyper, has to do with the fact that Christians are in antithetical situation to non-Christians, namely, that the Christians have the truth and the non-Christians are completely outside that truth, whereas, from the work I've done, I see that, whether we're Christians or not, we're very much in the same boat. Secularism is very much a part of our lives and it puts us in a rather different situation than that of, say, the writers of Scripture or our medieval ancestors, some of whom I mention in the paper.

In terms of how one is to live as a Christian in a secular world, I think I would be something of a Lutheran. If I can paraphrase the idea of being *simul justus et peccator* (simultaneously just and sinful), I would say that we have to be simultaneously secular and believing. It's very difficult to try to be a purist or to obtain any kind of independence of secularity. Secularism is so massive and so inescapable that it penetrates all aspects of our lives. Yet that, too, may change, and there may be a future era as different from ours as ours is from that of our traditional forbearers.

BLACKWELL I presume that my role in the program is to talk a bit about the question of secularism as it relates to science in general, and particularly to science in the present scene. Perhaps I can best give a sense of what I'm trying to do with this paper by saying a few things about how my thinking evolved to get to this particular point. Then I'll just point to the conclusions at the end.

I teach history of science and philosophy of science. In the last six or eight years I've been working primarily on the Galileo case. The Galileo case is rather peculiar in that everybody seems to have a pretty good idea of what happened. There is, however, very little agreement on why it happened. That was my concern as I went into this type of work. To make a long story short, I concluded that on a large scale the Galileo situation was the interaction between science and religion which, at that time, was occurring at two quite different levels. Sometimes they became confused with each other. Sorting them out will, hopefully, be helpful to our discussion. A good part of my paper is about those two levels.

Almost everybody refers to and gives all their attention to the conceptual and intellectual level. They are almost totally concerned with the models of the world in which the religious and scientific communities thought they were living. It's about argumentation, evidence — the usual sorts of rational critique applied at this point. There is, however, a second level that I have become convinced is operating in the Galileo case, namely, a level of volitional choices and values. The choices made by Cardinal Bellarmine and many people in the Vatican were different from the choices being made by Galileo and his friends regarding epistemological values, the nature of truth and this sort of thing. At any rate, that's where my ideas originated.

Is there any merit to these ideas that one could test by looking at other historical moments in the relation between science and religion? The Darwin case suggests itself. So, too, does the somewhat peaceful interregnum between Newton and Darwin, as well as the situation in the 20th century. Again, to make a long story short, these further reflections may make a more convincing argument that there are two levels of interaction present. If we look back through the history of the interrelation between science and religion, we find a quite changeable relationship between the two over the years. There have been some peaceful episodes and there have been some very tense times. There have been times when the religious side of the question exerted itself more powerfully; on the other hand, there have been times when the scientific side has been in the ascendancy. I am trying to argue that in all of those cases, in all of those disputes, there has been both a conceptual, intellectual dimension and a volitional dimension.

The bulk of my paper tries to make that distinction and give some historical argumentation, as well as other evidence, to support the view that these two dimensions are, in general, present in the relations between science and religion. If that be the case, I conclude that we have a unique situation in the 20th century. These two same levels of interaction have evolved in uniquely different ways, ways which I think are greatly to the detriment of the religious community in an interchange between religion and science.

My main conclusion, my main theme at any rate, if you happen to have it in front of you, is found in two short paragraphs on page 61 of the book. Let me comment on it. Before doing that, let me say that I hope you'll see what I'm doing. I wrote something else on this a year or so ago by the way, and the audience to which I presented it completely missed the point. I'm interested in seeing whether I'm wrong, whether I'm totally dense or whether that other audience was off the wall. But the meaning of this distinction and how it can be used in the science/religion interaction is on page 61 of this volume.

> The main conclusion of this paper should now be evident. In addition to their respective work used at the conceptual level, both science and religion also contain their own distinctive set of volitional commitments. We had delineated these commitments in detail earlier to justify the conclusion that, although clashes can and do occur at this level, that is not inevitable. A religious scientist or a scientific religious believer is not a contradiction in terms as some might want to argue today. The choices that you make regarding your values and epistemological standards in the two areas do not contradict each other. However, [and this is the main point] there is also nothing to prevent an alliance between an acceptance of the volitional commitments required by science and a concomitant counter-choice to reject the values of religion. That I think is one of the characteristics of the world we're living in now.

I could have added another sentence here, by the way, which I think also is true now. This is the second main point: there is nothing to prevent an alliance between an acceptance of the volitional commitments required by religion and a concomitant counter-choice to reject the value of science. In this case we end up with an anti-intellectual religionist.

> The result is a peculiar form of antireligious science which many scientists seem to advocate today [certainly not all, but many]. It's peculiarity arises from its denial not so much as a conceptual claim but of the volitional commitments central to religion. It thereby goes beyond mere disagreement with religion to the stronger claim that the latter is not even a relevant participant in the dialogue about developments in science....

That's the sort of concern that I want to raise here. My paper ends on the next page (p. 62) with a very pessimistic set of views. I'm not sure what we can do at this point. Rhetoric is the only way of communicating. But the way in which people are trained in both the sciences and humanities in graduate school is almost deliberately designed, it seems, to avoid communication here and there are serious problems in that area.

I'll conclude with one last point. Father Brungs asked me to include in my remarks what the term *secularism* means in my paper. Fortunately, I must have anticipated this because I have a sentence or two at the bottom of page 60 of the book. I'll read them here. I hope you don't want to try to nail me to the wall on this definition in this context, but this is how I view the term.

> This turn toward the secular, as we might call it, has resulted from the view of many scientists, certainly not all, that the scientific mindset not only does not appeal to the transcendent but more strongly that it can and should deny the transcendent altogether. By secularism here, we mean the view that only the natural world is real and also that that world is adequately understood by natural reason alone, especially the scientific mode.

I do not present it here as an all-inclusive definition of secularism, but it is the way I want to use the term in my paper in talking about the science/religion interaction.

AKERS I have had a chance to think a little bit more about the wondrous luminosity that I'm experiencing out there on the Barrier Reef at Ocean City, Maryland, a reef connected really to nothing, not to the mainland, not to the land mass, not really even to the underlying plates. One is just sort of adrift there in God's lovely cosmos. But we might remember that in the book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, the brilliant Dr. Percy experienced a similar period of lucidity, convergence, simplicity and a kind of luminous synthesis. As he describes it, that was right before, his mind crystallized — kind of like the safety windshield of a car which has met an immovable object. So, I'm reassured that Dr. Pellegrino is here with us in case anything untoward happens to me.

We made the cover of *Time* again — "How Man Began." It's a relatively good article, but it's light. I admit I was a little disappointed with it. But it's a fascinating area of study. What struck me was the Introduction where the author said that many definitions of the species — Man, mankind, human beings — have been attempted. Indeed — many of them are familiar to us.

Of course, the most famous of all, *rational animal*, even in its most fundamental, authentic meaning, deserves some review from time to time. Someone remarked recently, "Yes indeed, there's intelligent life out there and they all got together and decided to designate the blue planet as the loony farm. That's where they send those who didn't quite measure up here." Rational has to be understood in a very strict, restrictive way. "The only animal who laughs," we've been told, and yet there is laughter of sorts in the animal kingdom. The hyena and the jackass make laughing sounds.

"The only animal that cries." Well, animals do cry, sort of, and they do grieve. We know that. We're the only animal we know of that shaves, the only animal that straps roller blades on its feet. And so on. Of course, the one I guess I've come to love more than any other was the ancient one that Aristotle declared inadequate and that is *man as the featherless biped*. Every time I shave, I fall back on that one.

One thing the *Time* author does conclude: whatever else we can say, man is in fact the only animal that publishes articles like this reflecting with incredible energy and concern on his own origins — as far as we know. That should say an awful lot, because the question, where did we come from, is very closely, of course, related to where are we going and "what's it all about, Alfie." I don't think that's an accident. I think this most fundamental search of the human being is indeed so uniquely different from anything else we have found in the universe that it sets us absolutely apart. The question is open, of course: are there other intellectual creatures? The Christian tradition has long held that there indeed ought to be and are angels. That's a different question.

This urge of the human soul, the heart, whatever it is, asks this question ceaselessly — asks the question and answers it. In my little addition to my paper at this time, I think it's important to take a slightly different tack; namely, to play very briefly with something much more fundamental than the ideas in my essay itself. That other idea is the approach on a fundamental level to the whole issue of the primary perspective, the primary ideology, the absolute fundamental sacred or secular canopy which is unavoidable for humans. The questions cannot not be asked. They are asked in everything we do, every breath we take. The questions cannot not be answered and they are, in fact, answered willy-nilly in one way, shape, or form in every word, every thought — as the *Confiteor* at Mass would say: "in everything we do and everything we fail to do." We are making ideological choices.

It simply baffles me how there could be a secularity in any fundamental sense. Granted, of course, there are limited areas of autonomy; there must be, there should be. Geometry is its own pocket. If, as a Jesuit priest, I'm teaching chemistry in the classroom, I should not be giving homilies. I should be helping the students learn chemistry. But what chemistry *means*, *why* geometry is important, represents a much larger canopy. And it's my contention, along with far greater minds like Peter Berger, we're just beginning to unpackage this thing. No single system is valid apart from a much more overarching, agreed-upon knowledge system, value system. All knowledge is a symbol system. All reality is mediated to our intellect and articulated in some form of *verbum* (word), whether it be the language of chemistry, the language of mathematics, the language of theology, the language of French.

How it can be that we humans, with our tremendously limited knowledge, but tremendous energy and dedication, how can we care so much what time it is by the atomic clock and still not raise the question of what time is it relative to what? That would be a stupid way to tell time. What time is it? Three. Three? Or three after what? Three after four? It has no meaning. How can we be content not to ask the more fundamental question? We don't know where we are. We don't know where the cosmos is. I'm not saying we can answer it, but how could we not want to know? How could we not bend as much effort at least to ask, to articulate the need for the question?

Suppose we found ourselves flying through the air at 600 miles a hour in a space capsule or in an airplane. Wouldn't we want to know where we're going, how we got here, what's happened? So, I think there are these absolutely fundamental urges, transcendental *a prioris*, in the human person that demand answers. Therefore, I do not believe there can be pure secularity. What I mean by that is we must, we will, we do ask ourselves who we are, what's it all about. Because of a particular hunger in the human soul, we are not content even with asking what's it all about, but we have to ask "for whom." We cannot be content with only a "what" answer.

Jacques Maritain said a magnificent thing one time. He said his proof of the existence of God is not a proof; it's an indicator of God. He said his proof of the existence of God is that, if there is not a God, I will never

be understood. No one will ever know, never ever know, the real me. So there should not be only a "what" answer but also a "who" answer, perhaps.

I learned this morning at Visitation Academy that even before our time St. Francis de Sales once said, "We do not know where we're going, but we as Christians know with whom we go." An extraordinary Christian faith answer that leaves all kinds of room for scholarship and science!

So the last point then is my humble construction, borrowed of course largely from others. It's become commonplace in the paradigm world of science and the world of communication at large and so forth: I do not believe there can be a life without a canopy. Society is impossible, political society is impossible without it, expressed or unexpressed. But that canopy is a faith. That's pretty much agreed upon. The first principles of St. Thomas, or whatever first principles we hold in each science, are borrowed, and the ultimate primary ones are borrowed from nature. They are given to us. They are faith. And that faith system cannot be challenged except from inside a larger faith, not from inside itself.

If true, there is a tremendous convergence — I'll close on this — namely, we're obviously going to be stuck willy-nilly with one kind of faith or other. We can choose a secular faith or a religious faith, but it's going to be a faith.

In my more recent experience, having worked with the moderns and so forth, I wonder if the momentum has not shifted. We have spent so much time — not here, but in the past century or so — defending ourselves from the onslaught of the "modern philosophers." I wonder if the momentum has not already shifted. That is to say, I think that, from the perspective of the post-modern world, the "modern philosophers" seem limited. They are reductionists. They are self-limited and self-limiting. They set up self-limiting rules, maybe for good reasons, maybe for good, practical, pragmatic purposes. But they are quite limited. I don't think the Judeo-Christian faith canopy is at all self-limited. I think it's quite the opposite.

MANDEVILLE If you have read my paper, you know I had a lot of problems writing it. I have a difficulty with the whole concept of secularism. I have problems with any word that ends with an I-S-M. I am rather distracted by at least a seeming parallel with Modernism. I started looking into that and thought, "Gee, are we doing the same thing with secularism as we did early in the 20th century with Modernism; namely, putting false labels on people and refusing to see what might be of value in this world and in the love of this world. (I will eventually get to secularism.) In my paper I used much the same definition of secularism which Dick Blackwell presented. It's close to his but he gave it more elegantly than I.

I am considering this whole topic from the perspective of St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises,* especially from the "Contemplation for Obtaining Love." I approach life from an incarnational theology which sees this world as holy and good. Thus, any celebration of this world is to me a celebration of God. I find it very hard not to see religious meaning in a celebration of nature, of external nature and of human nature. I feel that way even if a person, after writing a beautiful poem or an essay — someone like Lewis Thomas, for example — tells us that he or she's an atheist. Thomas wrote to that effect in his autobiography. But I don't think that he can be a true atheist, not having written that way. Even if he is, I'm not. So, I can still read him and find transcendence in his writing, a sense of awe, a sense of worship in his perception of the world.

So, as I said, I primarily have problems with the question or with the concept of the term *secularism*. I also have a problem with what I see as failure to distinguish between religion and institutional forms of religion. People can reject a particular institutional form of religion without rejecting religion as such. I mention Emily Dickinson — among many others — as an example of this. On the other hand, we have authors like Iris Murdoch who declares herself, if not an atheist, certainly an agnostic. Yet, in her writings like *The Sovereignty of the Good* and *Metaphysics as the Basis of Moral Philosophy,* her language is quite religious. All her imagery looks like something out of Christian spirituality. I would swear she has read the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. She talks about worship and careful attention to this world so that one can reach the — she never says God, but that's what it sounds like she's moving toward all the time. She illustrates this rather odd contradiction that some of the most religious-sounding writers declare themselves atheists. Some of the writers don't sound very religious; like Annie Dillard — people can read her and they'd say she sounds pantheistic if anything. Well, she's an incarnational writer. She sees not only the transcendence of God but the immanence of God. So I don't think that we can rely simply on the text to decide whether an author is secularist or not.

Part of the problem here is that, when we're talking philosophy and science, we use a basically conceptual approach; in the arts we have a visual, physical, generally indirect, not abstract, approach. So we may have to infer these religious dimensions of the work.

This allows me to see religion where someone else (even the author) might deny that the author had any intention to write religion. So, more to my good! Augustine said, "Whatever is good belongs to Jesus." He didn't say it quite in those words, but his idea affects the way I tend to approach any of the arts. I tend to see religious dimensions in them. In general I don't agree with Father Akers, but I really *see* religion all over the place and I think it is present much more than we're allowing for here in this conference.

I mention in my work Alvin Ailey — a very religious artist. I'm considering primarily the 20th century. (My dissertation was on Thomas Browne [17th century], a very religious scientist.) I'm concentrating on the 20th century where I see religion constantly being expressed.

Sunday in *The New York Times,* there was an article about a video presentation by two young Jewish artists on the Islamic and the Judaic religious dimensions of Abraham's cave and of its history which involves Sarah and Abraham. Here are two young people trying to bring hating people together by exploring the religious dimensions of their history. I think that this happens more often than we realize and that maybe we're too pessimistic in our perception of secularists in the world.

I began, as I say, by defining secularism for the purposes of this paper. Please note that I'm talking about the arts — my assignment said "Humanities" but by "Humanities" I mean the "Arts." I defined secularism as a rejection of transcendence, an explicit or implicit denial of a world or power or meaning beyond the human. This rejection of transcendence frequently takes the form of a denial of human dignity. There is an exhibit in London right now which, I think, is a good example of it; namely, Lucien Freud's paintings. He has these huge, meaty haunches of bodies with practically no emphasis on the face, which, in effect, says man has no spiritual nature. To my mind that's a denial of transcendence. In much of contemporary photography there's a denial of transcendence.

I'm not saying that presenting a human being as ugly is a denial of transcendence. Rodin, for example, has some sculptures like that. I think of one particularly, titled *The Old Lady*. She has sagging breasts and she's wrinkled; she's basically ugly, but there's a sense of real dignity about her. So, I think that, as long as the artist explores human dignity and invests the character with human dignity, there is transcendence. Eudora Welty does this in her WPA photographs. Look at her photographs in contrast to those of other WPA photographers who simply demeaned the people they were photographing. As long as that sense of the spiritual dimension of a person or the dignity of the person, which I see as spiritual, is present, I think we will find that transcendence is there. We can't deny the transcendence.

So these people are looking for a meaning beyond this world, beyond just matter. People are finding spirit. To my mind, from my background and with my orientation, I think that spirit points to transcendence.

PELLEGRINO A couple of weeks ago I asked Father Brungs if he'd excuse me from commenting because I had not prepared a paper specific to this topic. I have three full time jobs and one of them is a clinical job. I'm also a clinician. I asked Bob if I might beg off. He said you'd be indulgent with me if I sent you something closely related to the topic, so I took a paper which is in press. It will not be the paper that will be published in the Proceedings of this particular meeting, but it touches on some facets of secularization, though I hadn't conceived it that way.

I have a second paper which I'm not going to read to you. I wrote it last night. It deals with the question of the secular and profane in medicine. It repeats some of the themes of the first paper specifically from the point of view of this meeting. I'll mention just a few ideas from that second paper. I hope it is clear. In any case, we'll be discussing those issues.

I, too, will give my working definition of secularization; it's very close to what you've heard from the others. Perhaps we may be able at this meeting to come up with some kind of an agreement on the notion of one aspect of secularization. There are others. I'm talking more about the process — secularization — the process whereby human beings move from a position of belief in a transcendent power. We heard that word from the last speaker. That transcendence is vested for the monotheistic religions in God. In other religions it is found in various other forms of the transcendence. Secularization, as I see it, is a movement from belief in the transcendent to a position of disbelief and denial of such power. We see it in the assertion — this is one aspect I would add to what's been said — of the centrality of humans as determinants of history, morality, and purpose in the universe.

Additionally, as a further explication of what I mean by secularization, I would say it's a sense of the loss of the numinous. To put it in more general terms, it's a depreciation of the presence of the divine and of a deity in human affairs. That's expressed in a multitude of different ways; it's really the substitution of man for a desacralized divinity. I see that in some of the theologians quoted in Dr. Child's paper, in Bultmann, Van Buren and others. They so desacralize God that he be-

comes man.

Medicine is a rather good arena in which to study this process of secularization for the following reasons: First, medicine has been from its beginning intermingled with the sacred, with the divine. In many cultures today medicine still is the mediation between man — humans, man and woman — and whatever those forces are that brought about what we call disease, illness and so on — distemper with the universe. The purpose of healing in those primitive views was somehow to heal this relationship. That relationship has been attenuated over the centuries. In the earliest days of Hippocratic medicine, one of the most important theses was to separate medicine from the Orphic religions as a secular enterprise based in what was then the Greek philosophical notion of looking and observing reality. Then, a second piece was separating it from philosophy as a purely empirical science.

That process of secularization has been proceeding. I'm not going to go through the whole history because I can only gloss the text of this new paper. We must look at the impact of this secularization in the contemporary world where it is particularly felt, because medicine deals with those issues which bring us most concretely and unavoidably in confrontation with the transcendent. Any serious illness is a spiritual challenge in which the person so afflicted must come to some conclusion about where we stand — I'm using transcendent; but we're talking about God — in reference to God and His place in our particular confrontations with finitude.

The second area we must look at is medical ethics. Here secularization makes a very great difference. It is not simply a matter of finding religion everywhere, because we have the usurpation of the divine by the human. Let me quickly list some things so you know what I'm concentrating on and where I'm coming from. I call them fallouts of the desacralization of medicine. We can go over them very quickly.

We know about the absolutizing of autonomy, the human individual as the creator of his or her own values, the rejection of any religious source for morality, of anything outside of man, the rejection of the transcendent. This is an unqualified endorsement, therefore, of moral relativism, cultural, historical and religious. That brings me to the increasing acceptance of euthanasia, and so on. I won't go through all of that. I'll just list a few.

We see things like: erecting a distinction between having a life and living a life; the equalization of animal and human life — those who argue that a dog has a greater claim on human life than a disabled human being; capitulation to the technological imperative in all forms of reproductive biology; the deconstruction of the Hippocratic oath itself to accommodate autonomy and the desacralization of medicine; the devaluation of the lives of the young, the old, the weak and those on the periphery. We see it: in the movement from a covenant of trust to a consumer/provider relationship, which we will see increasingly when health reform takes its fullest expression, governed by contract law rather than ethics; the move from ethics to economics as the primary motivating factors in the healing relationship; the physician converted from healer to case manager and fund holder; the physician as functionary in an industry, that ghastly metaphor for what it is we do — the health care industry; the movement from *primum non nocere* to *primum non expendere*; the abandonment of the notion of the moral community.

I've given you the end result simply to catch your interest. In between I develop in a somewhat more coherent fashion the idea of a dissociation of the sacred and the profane, medicine from the sacred, and the sacralization of certain elements and remnants. For example, compassion has become *the sacred.* Compassion is something everyone ought to manifest. But in the name of compassion, once it is detached from its religious roots, particularly its roots in the Christian perception of life, then compassion becomes an excuse for converting, healing and killing. Dr. Quill, for instance, often preaches compassion.

So I'll be mentioning during the meeting the move from the sacred in medicine, always intermingled with the profane. The dominance of the profane in that tension-relationship, or the dynamic relationship of the equilibrium, has an impact on our lives — an impact of utmost importance.

I'll say a few words in discussion about the future — what this means, where we will go. Dr. Blackwell ended pessimistically. I will also end pessimistically. I see no way of healing this dichotomy as it grows wider and wider. I think we're headed for two opposing views of what medicine is. This is something which will have a meaning for each and everyone of us. We're all patients potentially — perhaps even now. The desacralization of medicine is more than an abstract notion.

CHILDS I'm certainly grateful for the opportunity to go last. Being last gave me a chance to read my paper again. Those of you who may be newer to ITEST, as well as some veterans who haven't been alert, need to observe a few things about the process I've experienced. Step one — Father Brungs first wrote me and said, "We're having another conference on secularism. You were a part of the last one and wrote a

paper for it. Wouldn't you enjoy being here?" I was delighted at that kind offer and said yes. Then I got a follow up letter — step two — "You wouldn't mind, would you, if I circulated that paper as long as I clearly indicated that it was written 18 years ago?" "Of course not." Then I arrived — step three — right before dinner: "Would you be willing to say a few words about your definition of secularism?" Then I sat down and at the podium I heard the moderator say that I was the sixth essayist. You get the point.

I won't comment on the essay itself because I didn't come as an essayist but as an interested participant. The paper itself is a bit of a relic — it does not even use inclusive language. It maps a small part of the terrain of theology and secularity. It has, I suppose, some value in that respect, although those who were here when it was first presented in 1976 and didn't like it then probably won't like it now either.

I agreed, however, to offer a few words about my present thinking on the subject of secularism. So, empowered by a little sherry, I crafted something to argue for the sake of argument. My proposal: it can be argued that secularism has reached its apotheosis and become irrelevant. Rationality, in its relentless quest to falsify all other claims, has succeeded in falsifying itself. What do I mean by that? I haven't the slightest notion. In fact, I do have a notion, but I may not want to stick with the bold form of that proposition.

I'm think it's apparent that the apotheosis of secularism, the outcome of the relentless rational empirical critique of the shaping of our minds, has led us deeper and deeper into a recognition of our own pluralism. It has also led to a recognition of the fact that rationality itself is always filtered through some particular lens or other. We cannot escape our particularity. The most pessimistic outcome of all of that is something like Alasdair MacIntyre's *emotivist society* in which ethics is reduced to how I feel about something, how you feel about something or how we, who hang out together, feel about something. It is not a set of claims that can be said to define any reality that obliges us to do or not do anything.

That has an upside. When we recognize the fact that we are always interacting in terms of our own particularity and that there is not a pure and successful rationality, as the Enlightenment project had hoped, we must again come to the table respecting one another's particularity. We recognize that we must begin the discussion anew, more in the fashion of dialogue than debate. It must be a dialogue in which people try to find in their divergence some ground on which to stand together concerning the values they hope to recover or discover.

In one of the essays for this workshop, the author used the image of an oak tree whose roots were cut. The tree still stands tall and looks pretty good, but in fact it's dying. Rationality and faith in reason — a kind of radical secularism, if you will — is still like that oak tree standing tall and looking pretty strong. Many of the things, which Dr. Pellegrino suggested are problems which are very much with us. But I would like to suggest that the roots have been cut. Therefore, I'm interested as a theologian in the dialogue of public theology. I'm interested in returning to the discussion, not in an effort to reduce Christian claims to rational propositions to gain a hearing, but to restate Christian claims in a dialogue with other particular viewpoints. This way I would hope to create a situation in which that dialogue can occur. Mutual respect is, of course, the absolute necessity of dialogue; it is the reigning methodological principle.

I'm encouraged by diverse thinkers like Ron Thiemann and Michael Perry. Thiemann, dean of Harvard Divinity School, is a personal friend. His book, *Toward A Public Theology*, discusses these things. He reacts against claims of radical secularism that would drive out even the most apparently benign principles of our common life, because they seem to have roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition. He does so by calling up our diversity and, within that diversity, calling on Christians to speak authentically out of their specificity.

Michael Perry is a fine Catholic lawyer on the faculty of Northwestern University whom I got to know personally and to whom I was privileged to respond with a paper about his book, *Love and Power*. In that book he talks about the new possibilities of dialogue at the level of public policy. I am interested in Hans Küng's proposal in his recent book, *Global Responsibility*, in which he talks about steadfast dialogue to deal with the pluralism of the international scene, which turns up the volume on our own experience within this society.

I'm always sustained by Pannenberg's *Analysis of Theology and the Philosophy of Science* in which he's able to see that the scientist, the philosopher and the theologian together need to create spheres of meaning within which they try to understand the parts in terms of that whole. Because they do those things, each in their own way, they share the same kind of rationality or story building by which we make sense of the world. Thus, they should not look at one another as aliens, but as people engaged in a similar enterprise, albeit starting out from very different notions and points of departure.

These are snapshots of the things I'm working on. It's also a snapshot of the work of those with whom I'm in dialogue as I work through these ideas. I've tried to

pursue them in a chapter of a book now in press. This comes out of a project with the Park Ridge Center in Chicago on assisted suicide and active voluntary euthanasia. I've tried to pursue this systematically in a manuscript I've just finished on Christian vocation and business ethics. I'm trying to see, in short, how it works in such diverse subject areas as these.

The house ethicist in a seminary must dabble in all sorts of things; I don't have the privilege of much specialization. This is where I am. I don't have a conclusion for these remarks. I presume that I will learn more from you and maybe I'll have a conclusion by the time I head home to Columbus.

KEEFE It was suggested last night that Judge Niemira and I are to each other as Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Since I'm going first, that makes me Tweedledum.

There's no point in trying to summarize Mr. William Bentley Ball's paper, because, in its few pages, it's obviously itself a rather violent summary already. I would start off by saying I'm in complete agreement with what Mr. Ball has to say here. Certainly there is evidence that *Planned Parenthood vs Casey* is a quite brutal seizure of power by the Supreme Court and an assumption of an authority which simply cannot exist in a free society. How did it get that way?

Well, everything has causes going back to the Fall of man and it is somewhat beyond my brief to trace that sequence. This is especially true since Professor Kaiser did something similar yesterday with a rather more elaborate apparatus than I can provide. I've decided that the best thing for me to do is see if I can locate secularization in law as a theme. In other words, instead of speaking in that rather holistic sense which the theme has in its broader application to western culture, we might look at its special application to law.

I think secularization of law is the rationalization of law and its consequent dehistoricization. That dehistoricization takes law out of the concrete, historical, customary matrix in which it grows in a free society and reduces it to that array of Cartesian clear and distinct ideas which is the goal of the "autonomous reason" of the Enlightenment. When one thus rationalizes the law, one submits it to a criterion of truth, goodness, justice — whatever — that is outside history. One no longer tests the law by its resonance to the culture out of which it grows. Rather, one now tests the culture by its conformity to an ideal justice, an ideal truth, and so on. This criterion is non-historical and it dehistoricizes the law.

For example, Earl Warren years ago used to ask of those attorneys appearing before him who were arguing for the rule of law, not whether this law or this position was legal, but whether it was just. Now, if we give the Supreme Court the mandate to pursue justice, that abstract idea which may be spelled out in various ways but which is incapable of being pursued wholeheartedly unless one has *all* the power and authority in the state, we clearly have a problem. If I really am given the charge of making the world just, then clearly nobody else can have any authority which would compete with mine. It's my definition that any resistance to my view of justice is the pursuit of injustice. This arrogation of utter sovereignty, of unlimited authority by any single governmental entity, is the death of a free culture, of a free society. That dynamic has been effective for centuries in the western world.

The tendency to suppose that perfection is unfree, that it must submit to canons of intrinsic or extrinsic necessity, is a perduring temptation in the western world. It's inherited, of course, from paganism. If one were to point to the moment of its effective radication in the western world, I suppose one could go to the 13th century and reception of Aristotelianism and of the Roman law, which were more or less coincidental. Both Aristotelianism and the Roman law were of pagan derivation. Roman law understood authority to be rooted in the power of the *princeps* (leader), and Aristotle understood truth to be a timeless, intrinsically necessary principle of reality. When we apply these ideas to the emerging Christian culture of the Middle Ages, we begin to insert a kind of dichotomy into the culture. On the one hand, we have that freedom which is nourished by the very Christianity of the people themselves. On the other hand, we have notions of the ideal and authoritarian organization of society which are antithetical to that freedom.

We cannot restrict ourselves simply to the American situation. The American legal system is an outgrowth of the customary law which is called Common Law in England, the law which is common to the realm of England, the law of the land. This was highly idiosyncratic Common Law, in sum, moderated to an extent by the commercial law that was brought in from the Romans, whose law of contracts and property and so on was very largely effective even in England. But this was a law that grew out of custom. It didn't rise out of the pure rationality of organized power: it's source was free.

However, over the course of the centuries the Common Law went into a decline. This begins probably in the 16th century, but it is noticeable by the 18th when Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) began his assault upon the Common Law, as defended by men such as Blackstone (1723-1780) whose commentaries were the text books

for the emergent American legal system. Out of the Benthamite critique came the new source of legal rationality, a norm which was already in place in the universities. The tradition of Common Law rationality had been inculcated in the Inns of Court where lawyers were trained, but the Inns of Court were on their deathbed by Bentham's time. It was now academic law that began to take over. John Austin (1790-1859) is perhaps the strongest voice in this movement.

On the American side we may look to Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841-1935) as a peculiar American version of the same mentality which looks upon law as an exercise of rationality divorced from its roots in the customs of a free people. It has become, then, a device for the imposition of the worldview of an elite. Perhaps the clearest example of this is Holmes' famous judgment in *Buck vs Bell*, a case decided, I think, sometime in the late 1920s. It was a Virginia case in which the question had to do with whether the state could or could not forcibly sterilize one of its inhabitants. The decision that came down from the oracle for whom Holmes spoke was that three generations of imbeciles are enough; therefore, go ahead and sterilize this woman.

The *fiat* character of such decisions is obvious enough. Mr. Ball's insistence that the rule of law has vanished is precisely evident in this kind of *ipse dixit,* "I have spoken," approach to law. Law in a free society is not a matter of imposing one's will. Law has to do with protecting and vindicating the public decencies of a free people by which they are able to remain in free and reasonably harmonious association with each other. These are matters of discovery. As a rule, they're informed by the religious consensus of the people concerned.

The rule of law, then, is something that governs the free interchange of such a people. It is practically impossible to spell it out as a theory. It cannot be enclosed within a framework of concepts, precisely because it has to do with freedom. But it is something that can be recognized. In the Constitution it is spelled out in negative terms. There's a negative anthropology, in the Constitution, a series of "thou shall not's" — you shall not intrude upon freedom in these strategic areas. However, when you begin to rationalize the world, rationalize law, then the first thing you have to get rid of is freedom, because freedom cannot be rationalized, by definition. It cannot be reduced to necessary reasons.

We are in a situation now wherein the inclusive authority of necessary reasons is taken for granted by the ordinary citizen. For an example, there is the vexed question between the relationship between pornography and the incidence of violent crime, rape, abuse of children, whatever it may be. It has been urged, but it cannot conclusively be shown, that there is a *necessary* relation between the legitimation of pornography and the rise of crime. All we have here is, perhaps, statistics, but we cannot show a necessary relation. But the common supposition that one must establish such a chain of necessary causation if one's association of, e.g., pornography and crime, is to be intellectually respectable, begs an enormous question. Crime is understood to be crime precisely because it is not necessary, because it is a free decision. We're speaking here, then, in the terms of proximate occasions of crime. We don't suppose that because one has bad companions that, therefore, one *must* commit murder. We suppose, however, that there is some sort of a relationship between the minor choice of bad companions and the major free act of entering into violent crime. But contemporary sociology, the contemporary academy and, very largely, the contemporary imagination, suppose that there is no such causal connection unless it is a necessary one.

Our society has already imaginatively departed from the context of social and political and legal freedom. Once that step has been taken, it becomes very easy to end up in the situation described by Hobbes and pointed to by Mr. Ball's paper — the law becomes a matter of what I think it is, in such wise that I try to impose my thought, my ideas, upon the rest of the world. We are involved then in the struggle for power, not for ordered freedom under the rule of law. We no longer have a free community where my freedom upholds yours. Rather, my freedom is now in competition with yours. We're now in a Nietzschean world, one in which each one of us is trying to be a "Superman."

"Supermen" are now on the Supreme Court, and their *fiat* is law for you and me. To this Mr. Ball objects, quite properly. However, his objection is something that is, perhaps, a little old-fashioned. Hobbes in the middle of the 17th century pointed out the situation of man in nature is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. This is beginning to describe the situation of the ordinary American citizen insofar as his life is not organized and his freedom is not inhibited by the greater power of a sovereign state. And that sovereign state is not one governed by the rule of law but one which is governed more and more by the decisions of an elite. The elite is difficult to define, difficult to locate, but quite simply it is constituted by those who happen to possess the power of the state. This is a melancholy situation.

More and more we find ourselves in a situation where it is entirely reasonable, for example, to the ordinary student in a law school that the police should have the power to put a roadblock across an interstate and check the drivers to see who is drunk. Now this is the kind of

thing that 50 years ago would have been a joke. It's no joke today. It's the law of the land. There are many things of this kind that are accumulating. We are a far less free people in many ways than we were 50 years ago, and there is no end of this decline in sight.

I think that what has happened, quite simply, is that, instead of looking for the truth of the human situation and finding that truth intrinsic to man as an image of God, so that he has an *intrinsic* dignity, an *intrinsic* reality which must be respected, we more and more look upon each other as without intrinsic meaning, without intrinsic significance, without dignity, then, except insofar as it is provided from outside. That makes us the objects of manipulation. We are to be controlled. We are like bees in a bottle. If we're not in a bottle, we're not a community. Insofar as we are in a bottle, we are there by reason of *force majeure*, by intrinsic imposition of the power of the state upon us. That remark should serve as an introduction for Judge Niemira who will expand on that theme.

NIEMIRA At the ITEST Convention last August, I made the comment that, after doing some research on beauty in law, I found that many scholars, in articles published as many as five years before I gave my talk, had plagiarized all of my thoughts. Father Keefe has just perpetrated a massive plagiarism. I am afraid that he has stolen everything I wanted to say — and more. However, being less exalted, I'd just like to refer a little bit to texts we have received for this meeting and then ask only one question. I will mention a few of the texts that were referred to.

Father Keefe didn't put his statement on law in the context of everything we heard last night. For example, Dr. Blackwell spoke of volitional commitments. Dr. Pellegrino spoke of many of the fruits of secularization starting with autonomy. Fr. Akers talked about the symbolic systems needing something outside themselves for self-validation. Father Keefe talked about historical reality, historical living, as the penumbra needed to validate the legal system. Dr. Kaiser in his essay mentioned beliefs being disassociated from world structures. Father Keefe put this in context only in the legal system. It's easier for me to see this, since I operate in the legal system.

I would just quote a few phrases from Mr. Ball's paper on law: "Law gives place to power. There is no law governing mankind, no law above the laws. 'Law' is now what an ideologue with power chooses it to mean." Further on, he writes: "And that being so, the Rule of Law no longer exists but only the Rule of Power."

I asked Father Brungs to distribute to you Judge Scalia's dissent from the *Planned Parenthood v Casey* case (Appendix 2 in this volume). His dissent is a marvelous piece of literature. I'd like to read a few sentences from page 244 of this volume because they are germane to our topic. In the dissent he writes:

> The Imperial Judiciary lives. It is instructive to compare the Nietzschean vision of us unelected, life-tenured judges — leading a Volk who will be 'tested by following,' and whose very 'belief in themselves' is mystically bound up in their 'understanding' of a Court that 'speak[s] before all others for their constitutional ideals....'

He continues a little bit further on:

> ... to compare this ecstasy of a Supreme Court in which there is, especially on controversial matters, no shadow of change or hint of alteration ... with the more modest democratic views of a more humble man:....

At this point Justice Scalia quotes a section from Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address which states:

> [T]he candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the Government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, ... the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their Government into the hands of that eminent tribunal.

We're all describing the same phenomena in some way or another. Secularization has led to the acceptance and the institutionalization of arbitrary power. I would even say something different. When we talk about power, we might even use the word violence — power, violence, however one wants to describe it. In some way or other — we find this in all the discussions that we had last night and today — we have been condemning that secularization process. We have implicitly been rejecting it. I would simply ask why.

Father Keefe has suggested that the reason concerns freedom. But is there something marvelous about a freedom that allows a person to starve and doesn't take care of the poor, and so on? Freedom itself has some problems.

This is our goal; this is what we should discuss over this weekend: is there something wrong about this secularization process? My question to you is: why? what do we want? I will only make a tentative guess at it; namely, one of the characteristics of the devil is vio-

lence. I would suggest that there is something intrinsically evil in the violence. How can we as Christians accept the best parts of a secularization? How can we be Judeo-Christian secularists and come to terms with the evil that is about us and perhaps gain some modicum of control over it?

That's about the extent that I can address the issue here. Obviously, I could go back and repeat all the thoughts that were plagiarized from me, but I won't do that. I will leave a question for our agenda: Why? What is wrong? What is implicit in what we are saying and why are we rejecting secularization? I'll let it go at that.

SECULARISM VERSUS SECULARITY — THE FLAVOR OF THE WORKSHOP

[*The following are excerpts from the Workshop on Secularism Versus Secularity, March, 1994. The excerpts are indications of the riches in this volume. At some point in the future we hope to have this volume, now out of print, available on the Internet. That is another ongoing project, added to several other projects that are more important. But we will try to make it available there.*]

KAISER I also wanted to thank Helen Mandeville for showing in her paper that, even in what would seem to be secular art, there are issues of transcendence. It is something that Peter Berger also discusses in *Rumor of Angels*. It's very important for us to realize that, in a sense, we're talking about two different levels; namely, what we may be able to see as the truth by God's grace and the light of God's word, even though the generally accepted truth may be very different.

I want to ask you very specifically, Helen, in regard to the history of art, whether you would see a change in the function of art over the centuries. I'm influenced somewhat here by a person at the Rhode Island School of Design. I don't know if you know her work, *The Electronic Golden Calf*. Her basic position is that at one time fine art — I don't know if fine art is the right word, but, she says, the artists in the Middle Ages or the Renaissance were making a statement of what the public image of reality is. They were spokespeople for the culture as a whole, whereas artists, at least "fine artists," today tend to be more of a small group for museums and curators and so forth. There's a shift in the role of art with regard to the public. If we're going to trace what we mean by the social role of art as a whole, we have to include the media and the popular culture. Some kind of a shift has taken place there. Does that enter into your analysis in some way? We need that to help us understand how we got from A to B.

MANDEVILLE I agree with you on what I see as the traditional social and religious role of art, particularly the religious interpretive role of art through the Baroque Age. Even in America, the Hudson River painters deliberately tried to express the wonder and awe of God in their landscapes. So, that interpretive role comes into the 19th century. Even some 20th century artists do the same thing. But I think art on the whole, in the public consciousness let's say, is much more individualistic since the Romantic Age. As a result, there isn't necessarily a publicly accepted view even of what constitutes art. For example, there's a piece of rusted steel in the St. Louis Art Museum, which I thought was left over by the remodelers....

In terms of secularization, the more dangerous aspect of art today is that it is taking the place of religion. John Cyst had a good, sharp article in the winter issue of *The American Scholar*. There he mentions that, where religion was once seen as having the role of interpreting reality and putting us in touch with reality, transcendence and so on, art is taking over that role. In my paper I mention two movies which I thought were doing that: *The River Runs Through It* and *The Piano*. Everyone seems to praise these movies. Yet the young man in the first, who was portrayed as a really obnoxious person, is treated as some kind of a saint because he's an artistic fly-caster. Consider the second movie, *The Piano*, which I think is a really sick movie about a very distorted and amoral relationship. This is being promoted as having an almost spiritual dimension to it, simply because of its focus on art.

It seems to me that today a person's being an artist somehow takes the place of any kind of religious dimension in his or her work. Art becomes an end in itself; it no longer has a Medieval and Renaissance focus to it. It does not correspond to the earlier notion of art as an interpreter of reality; particularly, it lacks the religious dimension of reality....(Session 2, pp. 114-115)

AKERS I suppose "impose one's values" should have been put in quotation marks. I must point out that it's used somewhat sardonically; that phrase is the detonator button in our society. We are all so sensitized in this culture to "imposing one's values."

Bloom said in his book, *The Closing of the American Mind* — remember, he was a liberal Jewish intellectual of the '60s, so in his analysis he's hardly a hard-line conservative — that there's really only one value left in the American academy and that is the value of toler-

ance. In other words, we can do anything else, but we dare not "impose our values." This, of course, is an intrinsic contradiction.... The intrinsic contradiction is, of course, that that's the value being imposed. We cannot have a society without our willingness, either by agreement or by the imposition of force by the police or someone else, say, to drive on a particular side of the road. The very nature of society demands a certain degree of conformity.

If you and I were in conversation and a third party came in and opened a window and chilled the room, we'd have to take a stand on that. In other words, we cannot be infinitely tolerant. Our reaction to that situation would in one way or another impose a new set of values (his or ours, one or the other). We can't have the window both closed and open. We have to work out a compromise.

The whole point is the "imposition of values" by whatever term we use, amicably agreeing, contractually entering into a decision which in a democratic society we think we're doing, or entering into the tribal customs as older societies took for granted. There has to be an acceptance of the values. If some minorities choose not to accept, the majority has to act. If the majority will not do certain things, the minority will have to act. In other words, to get unity out of plurality, there has to be some principle of unity among rational human beings. We'd like that to be voluntary in some way, shape or form. But there has to be a value that's perhaps imposed by the courts. That's a red flag in our society. That's all I meant by the term "imposition of values." I deliberately used the word because we are so sensitized to it and to it alone.

I reaffirm that a value-less society is an intrinsic contradiction. The very respect we show others by seeing to it that their views not be forcibly changed, that we not turn their feet in the fire to make them confess that Jesus is Lord — that in itself is the imposition of a value system. It's accepting that that kind of force is not the way to do things.... (Session 2, 118-119)

CHILDS Justice Scalia's invocation of Lincoln's thoughts reminds me of this phrase from the Scarecrow's song in the *Wizard of Oz*: "The thoughts I could be thinking, I could be another Lincoln if I only had a brain." That's how I sometimes feel in trying to attack the complexity of the sorts of issues we're dealing with. I brought a book along with me to this meeting. There is a quote in it which pertains to a few things I said last night. I'd like to use it as a springboard to try to get into what's going on now.

This is a quotation from Charles Taylor's book, *The Sources of the Self and the Making of the Modern Identity*, in which he observes that in the Enlightenment the belief was fostered that, if we could achieve the fullness of disengaged reason and detach ourselves from superstitions and parochial attachments, we could be moved to benefit mankind. Thus, the project of modernity is to base ethics, and correlatively our social and political institutions, on rationality *qua* rationality.

I alluded to that last night in saying that this is, to my way of thinking, the driving force of secularism. At this point, where we are talking about the clash of wills or the opposition that we're dealing with here, I'd like to refer to some thoughts from Paul Tillich by way of further analysis. If this secular rationalism which Taylor describes only leads to a kind of celebration of human autonomy, without recourse to transcendence in an atmosphere of tolerance — as someone said a moment ago — it becomes what Tillich would call the *profane* or the agent of the profane, the emptying out of the transcendent dimension of reality. If, however, it becomes an imposition, the *only* way on which to argue public policy issues, the *only* way that lies behind some imperial developments in the system of justice, or whatever, it ceases to be a benign, or at least ambiguous, celebration of human autonomy. Then it takes on a religious dimension of its own and becomes what Tillich would call the *demonic*, that is the elevation of the finite to the level of the infinite, of the conditioned to the level of the unconditioned. (Session, pp. 118-119)

KAMPWERTH God will never take freedom from us. Even if we choose to impose our values on others, God does not take that freedom from us. If we wish to damn ourselves for eternity, that's our choice. While God could take that freedom back — he is all powerful — we know from experience that he will never do so. We don't know what happens after we die; we'll have to wait to find out. Some people try to tell us what happens after death, but I'm not sure they know.

.... I have confidence in people who are academically prepared and have come to some degree of knowledge through that preparation. I let those people impose their values on me because I'm not resourceful in all areas. I accept their values. I have had imposed upon me the values of a German family, of a German religious congregation, of the educational institutions I attended and the social organizations of which I'm a member. Belonging to the Rotarians is like a religion. We open our meetings with a prayer and then sing. There is a real *esprit de corps*. Those values are mine as a Rotarian. The values of the Catholic church are mine, as discordant as they sometimes seem to be.

To have a valueless society is not tolerant. Tolerance,

the lowest form of acceptance, is sacrosanct in American society. If I tolerate you, I may just be able to stand you: "I'll tolerate your chewing ice or other things that drive me crazy. I'll tolerate them because you have a Ph.D. and you're supposedly an intelligent person, but I can't stand what you say or do." Tolerance is a low-level achievement, but it's acceptable and wonderful in America. We have satisfied ourselves with almost the lowest level of everything and have called it wonderful. Look at the moral values of our leaders, of their actions, of their lifelong activities. Yet, we forgive and forget; we don't hold them accountable. In the future it will probably be more of the same.

Secularism carried to such an extreme is a great worry. .... It is a great worry for us as Christians or as Catholics. I propose that we chew on secularism versus Judaeo-Christian secularity. Individual freedom and institutionalization of values has a big part to play in that theme. Otherwise, we wouldn't be sitting here talking out of our own institutionalized values which are personalized in each of us. You could not make me a Jesuit, nor Father Brungs a Poor Handmaid. We have institutionalized the values of centuries of thought in the church, and I am proud of it. My spirituality is valid, as is Fr. Brungs'. We're both trying to be faithful to God who made us free and will not take that freedom from us.

But I also believe that we can "impose." I would prefer to say "share" with children the truth of the values we think are good. We should share with other people who, like us, want to be Rotarians, or Catholics, or Sisters, or Elks or Moose or mice or whatever. Values are good and can be imposed if we're willing to accept them. They're not evil as such....(Session 2, pp. 121-122)

AKERS I thought the conference was going to center more on Christian secularity which is a question of the legitimate, indeed imperative, demand that Judaeo-Christianity enfold itself *in the world,* in time and space. If I am correct, the planners of this meeting also saw that as an indispensable component of our discussion. Secularity is an area in which we have been defective both in this deliberation and in the wider religious arena. Karl Rahner has noted that it's not that Christians are evil; it's that we're lazy. We have yielded vast areas to the "bad guys and girls."

There are countless creative ways for us to be "Christians in the modern world." We've hardly begun to work at that obligation, at that opportunity. Christianity hasn't so much failed; it's hardly been tried. I'm paraphrasing Chesterton and who knows how many others. There is an absolutely necessary secularity in every field, and we must do better in recognizing it and living it. The boundaries have been set by the last four centuries. I see a greater danger from a false secularity within the church than from "the enemy out there." The enemy is no longer as glamorous as it was in Bertrand Russell's age. It's no longer cute to be the village atheist. But within the church I find the dilution of the transcendental, of the covenantal imperative, of faith, hope and charity, of the supernatural. Use whatever terminology is proper. Terminology (or its lack) is part of the problem. We don't have the proper terminology. We haven't done the theological homework necessary for dialogue with the world, the secular or the searching world. It is necessary to discuss Christian incarnational secularity.....(Session 3, pp. 131-132)

CHILDS Let me connect my remarks to Bert's remarks. He's on to something important. I have a quote from Alasdair MacIntyre:

> The problem is not the direction in which secular knowledge is advancing but the directions in which theism is retreating. Theists are offering atheists less and less in which to disbelieve. Theism thereby deprives active atheism of much of its significance and power and encourages the more passive theism of the indifferent.

I wish I had said that, since that quote plays into the issue of a healthy Christian secularity, which redefines the terms of the debate. Instead of treating that secularity here, we're still struggling with the dualisms and dualities that have bedeviled the history of theology throughout the entire Christian era. Those dualities are usually dealt with by one point of view rising up in a kind of heteronomous demonic power grab and crushing the opponent. The other side of the dualism then counterattacks on the same terms. We get clashes of wills, spirit *versus* matter, history *versus* eternity. A healthy secularity recognizes that we carry these things in earthen vessels; an authentic pluralism requires the search for — you can finish the thought; it's been said in many different ways already....(Session 3, p. 132)

BRUNGS I would like to mention two thematic subsets. The themes we've been identifying are broad topics. I'd like to narrow a few of them a bit, at least for consideration. First, Don Keefe noted this morning that the Common Law began to lose out when the legal training moved into the universities from the Inns of Court. I suspect, Dr. Pellegrino, that the same thing has happened in medicine. It happened in theology and in biblical interpretation. I suspect it has happened in the arts. What role has the university played in negative secularizing? This is a question we might discuss. Many of us are academically based and almost all of us have been academically formed — or deformed.

Second, I was surprised last night that nobody mentioned a philosophy of privacy. How does that play into living in society, especially in a so-called democratic society? I remember that in the book Fred Jelly quoted, *We Hold These Truths*, John Courtney Murray wrote in frustration: "How many idiots can a civilized society manage." He used *idiot* in the Greek sense of the private individual, one who has opted out of a public consensus, of a public philosophy, of a public decency. I believe that the philosophy of privacy has a great deal to play in the notion of secularism....(Session 3, p.133)

BLACKWELL Before I came to this meeting, I expected we were going to spend the whole time in disagreements and inability to come to any consensus on what secularism is. I thought that the whole discussion would inevitably stay at that level. We've gone somewhat beyond that. We certainly don't have a consensus or unanimous view, but most people here look upon the notion of secularism as somehow the antithesis to religion. We have talked about the transcendent, the rational and the human. We've talked about secularism in various ways as antithetical to the religious world view and religious paradigm, to use Thomas Kuhn's phrase.

Also, there is a shared sense that the secular dimension is in the ascendancy now. There's a defensiveness of sorts among those of us in this room who count themselves among the friends of religion and traditional ethics. If that be the perspective of the group, then the key question is where we go from here. What do we do? I can't answer that question. Obviously the suggestions we've made relate to it. One way of getting at the question of where we go from here would be to reflect a little on how we got here. A lot of interesting dimensions come forth in that approach.

I am probably more pessimistic about this question than most here... The divide between secularism and religion is much stronger now, much more devastating to religion, than it was 100 years ago in the aftermath of Darwin. There was a debate then between science and religion, but at least the religious worldview and the religious paradigm were players in the debate. Now the religious perspective, the religious paradigm, has drifted into irrelevancy in the minds of many people who identify themselves with the secularist division.

How did that happen? If my analysis is correct, we can ask whether the whole fault is on the secularist side. Have friends of religion and traditional ethics themselves fallen short? Have we gotten involved in the abuse of authority? Have we gotten involved in internal disputes that have weakened that message? What has happened in our own community? We can't control what happens in the secular world, but we should have controls and some impact in our own world. What's happened in our educational institutions? What are we doing about training our students particularly at the graduate level and in the professions? Are these questions even discussed in these institutions in any relevant way, or have these institutions themselves become secularized? I suggest we reflect on our history within the religious and traditional ethics communities. What have we done in the last century or so that has made this problem better or worse? What's happened? I don't know what's happened....(Session3, pp. 137-138)

KAISER Thad Niemira, when he was up here yesterday morning, said something about the previous speakers plagiarizing all of the things he intended to say. At that time I thought that was a joke. I know better now what he meant.

I was dreaming last night about making a major point here. I woke up this morning and furiously scribbled some things down. Now that it's time to make these points, I find out that the previous speakers have done the work for me. Nonetheless, I will reiterate some of them, maybe presenting a slightly different view. In the process I may try to explain a bit more about myself and where I'm coming from.

I want to thank Fr. Bob Brungs for twisting my arm and getting me here, "snagging me" is the phrase he used. I also want to thank especially the people who presented the pre-papers which I have found very helpful. I have had the experience a number of times here that I was sitting at the feet of a master in a subject — a good experience for me which I truly appreciated.

At the same time, I feel as if I'm coming over a hill, coming over an horizon into a different world. Maybe the best way to establish a point of contact there is to mention some of the discussions we've had. Sister Marianne, said something yesterday about being in secular universities and finding some fine Christians there. That is a point of contact for me. I was brought up in a secular context but I came into the church because I went to a secular university and met some Christians. I experienced some of the things about people who identified themselves as Christians. I saw that Christianity meant something, that they believed something and that belief involved talking and discussing what it meant. There was a sense of love in the community with the Christians there, a sense of discipleship, at least working at discipleship. I came in from the outside; it seems to me many of you are looking from the inside out. It's hard for me to make that correlation sometimes.

Let me make a few observations about this weekend and then issue a challenge. Yesterday, as the discussion

proceeded, I heard us reflecting where the secularism versus secularity hurts and what many of us feel. I approach these statements as sort of a phenomenologist. When any group comes together, it constructs a particular reality which is reflected in conversation. It's reflected in various ways in behavior. It's immediately perceived in consciousness....

The question I unsuccessfully tried to raise the other day: are we living in a different world or are we projecting or creating some different world when we come together in this particular context. I still haven't gotten to the bottom of that.

I challenge you to observe whether what we're reflecting here is the whole picture. Why is the secular side of our lives not being owned more readily? I don't understand the reason for that. Also, with the possible exception of something Bob Brungs said just a few minutes ago, I've not heard anyone speak about something that came to them in a dream, from an angel appearing to them or from a voice from heaven. These are things that characterize some things in the tradition, things that characterize a pre-secular world. Why are those not parts of our stories, at least as we're sharing them here or at least as I have heard them? Are we still on the outside resisting the secular world? As Ed Pellegrino said, is it something that's really inside each one of us? Are we so thoroughly secularized in so many ways that we don't even realize it? It's in the air that we breathe....

.... Is secularization a question of shifting from a belief in miracle and transcendence, to use some of the terms I've heard used, to a world of natural causation? Or, as I am convinced, is it moving from a world in which these things are all part of one reality to a world in which we are forced to choose between them and in which they seem to be antithetical? We've not really resolved that. (Session 6, pp. 194-196)

CHILDS It is often said at conferences of this kind, everything has been said, but not everybody has said it....

.... We've been operating basically with the notion that secularism is a way of defining reality without recourse to the transcendent and that secularization is a manifold process toward that phenomenon. Secularism, we have said, manifests itself in a variety of ways. The pretense of rationalism to be the *lingua franca* of all discourse in science, public policy, education, commerce, and health care is one way. Another is autonomy run amok.... We see it in the desire to take control over one's life from beginning to end, the legal decisions that compromise our freedom. We see it in scientific developments that threaten the integrity of our humanity, in the distressing and confused states of Catholic and other church-related universities that Chris (Kaiser) picked up on his remarks, the degree to which it has apparently eroded the Jesuit project in higher education, and so on.

At its best secularism and secularization have helped us reclaim our world and take responsibility for it. Had we discussed it more ... we might have concluded that it has had some liberating effects. It is worthwhile to have observed that it is ideological, dogmatic, and as such, demonic. At the same time that secularism exerts itself in some contexts with renewed vigor, I, at least, have argued — others have agreed — that the ax has been laid to its roots and it is an ax of secularism's own manufacture. The evidences of post-modernism, so-called, hail the end of secularism born of the Enlightenment project. For that project's trust in rationality as the path to all truth, moral and otherwise, has come up empty and left us without a grand narrative to explain reality, cultural relativism, pluralism, the hermeneutics of suspicion, the real threat of ethical relativism and other marks of the post-modernism ...

This post-modern world could be a new version of secularism, and a frightening one at that. It could be the death rattle of an old consensus or the seed bed for the growth of a new one. In any case, the Christian encounter with secularism in the post-modern situation must begin by claiming its right to speak out of its own tradition and its own faith without apology. The other players at the table must also recognize in today's situation that they, too, speak out of contingent verticularity and that the myth of a language of universal reasoning has died. Thus, the encounter will be a blend of dialogue, dialectic, debate and confrontation. The discovery of a new moral consensus for the common good through this process will be a struggle.... What is the prognosis? There is encouragement in the hunger for answers to metaphysical questions, as Dr. Pellegrino pointed out, despite the fact that metaphysics has been dissolved by what I would guess are the acids of positivism. There is encouragement in the innate sense of the need to regard and be regarded and the evidence that the law is written in our hearts, as Paul said. But most of all for us, there is encouragement in knowing both the beginning and the end of the story in him who is the *alpha* and the *omega*. We must struggle with how to be faithful in whatever chapter it is that we are within. In this struggle we have going for us the fact that the world is God's who created and affirmed it. We have God's word on it. John's stunning proclamation *logos sarx egeneto*, the Word was made flesh, threw away the reigning Hellenism of its day and continues to be the measure of all of its life. Time, another mark of secularism, is God's as well, for God is its future in the promised Kingdom. (Session 6, 196-198)