

perspective

Special Issue on ICS

Newsletter of the Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship
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ICS at work toward the reformation of scholarship

by Robert VanderVennen

If your car breaks down, you go to a garage to have a mechanic fix it. You don't take the car back to the original engineers and designers. When the carburetor on my car was balky last week, I took my car to a repairman. I didn't go back to the persons who designed it to ask the basic questions such as why was it designed as it was, and why can't a more reliable carburetor be used, maybe even one that lets the car use less gas, or shouldn't a car have a different sort of gizmo that will do away with the carburetor altogether.

Yet I hope somebody is asking these deeper questions about how a car ought to work, and why is it designed the way it is. Only then we have cars that run as well as a car can, and only then will cars be more in tune with the environment.

It is these deeper questions of reality and education that the Institute for Christian Studies is set up to work with. It is work that is behind the scenes. But the work of the Institute also needs to be in the spotlight at centre stage because it can exist only if people see it as important enough to make donations to keep it going.



ICS Junior Members are struggling to answer questions from a Christian philosophical perspective



Wolters is helping Junior Member Rubboli, from Italy, to deepen his insight into a Christian approach in history.

These matters are close to our lives and should be of great personal concern. For example, in a Christian elementary school or high school we want the teachers to do all their teaching from a deep Christian understanding of reality and of the way we ought to live. Where do the teachers get these Christian insights into their subject areas? They get them from their teachers in Christian colleges, and also from books and articles and speeches and conferences--wherever they can find Christian leaders who can deepen their Christian insights. BUT--have you thought about where the teachers at Christian colleges get their Christian understanding of their academic fields, so they can give leadership to students?

Take the typical professor at a Christian college. Where did he get his education? Perhaps he started by attending a public or Christian school in his community, and then he may have attended a Christian college, as many of them do. But a very important part of his education still lies ahead of him. With a B.A. degree he is not ready to become a college professor. He needs another four to six years of full time study. Why? To deepen himself professionally in the academic field he wants to specialize in. At the time he has received his B.A. he has learned the basics of his field, he has surveyed its wide territory and has an introduction to its methods and issues. But now he needs professional deepening. It's as though each chapter in his college textbook becomes a special course in his study for the master's and doctor's degree. You can understand that our future college professor will get much of the perspective from which he views his field of study from this deep and intense study. He will get much philosophical insight about the meaning of his academic field from this advanced university study.

Will that perspective and philosophical insight be Christian? Most likely not. But won't our future Christian professor then carry ideas and perspectives that are un-Christian into his college classroom? Yes, he probably will to some extent, even though he does not want to.

Look carefully and you will see two kinds of problems here. One is that our Christian college professor has received some of his most crucial advanced education from people who do not accept Christ and his normative rule in their work, and therefore will miss getting a Christian perspective worked out in his field. The other problem is that even if one or two of his university professors are indeed Christians, the whole set-up of thinking about the studies assumes that Christian perspective is meaningless or harmful, so that the individual Christian finds it hard to develop and practice a consistently Christian approach.

Not much is being done about these two problems in North America. The Institute for Christian Studies is working on both of these problems, by doing Christianly-rooted research at the foundations of knowledge, and by helping students get their advanced education at the level of master's and doctor's degrees in a way that helps them develop meaningful Christian insights.

The hardest part of helping people understand what we mean by doing research at the foundations of knowledge is to make it seem worth doing, that it is not just a waste of time. This kind of work is not close to our everyday lives in ways that we can see. But here are two examples that will try to make it clear.

Dr. Hendrik Hart is doing his foundational research in the area of epistemology, which is the theory of knowledge. He is asking, "What does it mean to say that you know something?" What can you know for sure? The Bible says some things about knowing that are very different from what philosophers and scientists today say about knowing. Are those philosophers and scientists missing something? If a philosopher like Dr. Hart wants to think about knowing in distinctly biblical Christian ways, how can he do that in ways that will make sense to other philosophers and scientists and will help them develop ways of knowing and criteria of knowledge in their own fields? After some years of research on this problem at the Institute, Dr. Hart was given a sabbatical year in 1975-6 to write the results of his research into a 500 page syllabus which will eventually become a published book. The book won't be sold at the corner drug store, though, since it is not light reading. But if it is good work it should be a help to thinking people everywhere who wish to work at the Christian reformation of scholarship in their own specialized field of study. Through these specialists this Christian philosophical work can be expected to give helpful insight to teachers, pastors, and many other people whose lives and leadership affect us constantly.

The second example comes from Institute research on biblical anthropology. Everybody knows what the nature of man is, right? Man was created by God in His image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness. We learned that in catechism. But that information isn't very helpful in showing us clearly how to discipline children in the classroom, or how to make good friendships and good marriages, or how to go about therapeutic counselling that is distinctively Christian. There seem to be some steps missing in between. Those steps need to be taken by Christian scholars whose study of the Bible and study of disciplines like education and psychology will enable them to take those steps in ways that are sound and that will convince other scholars that they are on the right track. That kind of study takes time spent in careful concentration by Christian scholars working together. It can't be done on Saturday mornings by the concerned school teacher, nor even during the summer by the college professor working alone. Dr. Arnold De Graaff and Dr. James Olthuis, together with their graduate students, are now in their second year of intense, sustained study of this issue at the Institute. This is hard theoretical work done week after week. Its fruits will be seen directly in the later professional work of their students, and in the ways they will be able to influence the direction of the work of fellow teachers, counsellors, pastors, social workers,

lawyers and all whose work deeply influences the lives of others.

These two examples show what we mean by foundational Christian research. It is scholarship at the roots of learning, the kind of work that simply must be done if in the long run a Christian culture is to sustain itself and be a leaven in the world. The alternative is for Christians to do their teaching and other professional work on the foundations laid by secular scholars, foundations such as positivism, existentialism, behaviourism, neomarxism, humanism, and other secular "isms" that deny the fundamental Truth of the universe.

It should be clear that a foundational approach to learning means dealing with the basic issues of existence. You want to know as best you can what a thing really means. You want to go back to the fundamentals, to the roots. With a wrong start at the roots you will never end up with a good plant. Without a good foundation you won't have a good building. Society is crumbling for lack of good foundations.

A foundational approach to learning requires interdisciplinary work. A key is teamwork, with members of the research team drawn from various disciplines, especially from theology, philosophy and the scientific disciplines. The Institute is set up as an interdisciplinary faculty for foundational research and teaching. The graduate students are called Junior Members because they, too, are members of the research teams, learning as they work with the Senior Members.

The fruits of this kind of work are not spectacular, and they take a long time to show their effect. The fruit is insight, which comes through the lives and work of Institute graduates, and comes through heightened Christian perceptions of those who benefit from reading or hearing the results of our research. There is a quickening here, and a stirring there. If the insights are sound, the effect can accumulate and crescendo, so that after a few years there is a noticeable change in the way people look at certain educational matters. It may even be that by then the fact that the origins of the change came from the Institute will have been forgotten or obscured.

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We are working toward a reformation of scholarship, and that can't be achieved overnight. We are doing work whose full impact may only be realized 20 to 50 years from now. That's the way it is with ideas. They need time to percolate, to work their way into the consciousness of many people until they become attitudes that are part of the air we breathe so that they seem very common and regular. That is what has happened with Darwin's ideas on evolution, with Freud's ideas on human sexuality, with Keynes' ideas on economics. We would like to have the light of the

gospel of Jesus Christ illuminate all academic studies and all teaching, and all professional practice. The only way we see that this can be done is through foundational research that is based on the Truth of Jesus Christ revealed in the Bible.

If you agree, we ask for your support through prayer, financial help, and learning along with us.

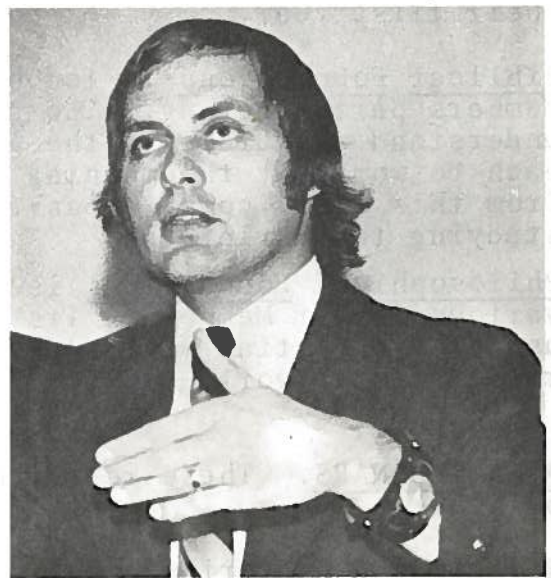
*Dr. Robert E. VanderVennen is the Executive Director of AACSB.

Academic Study Program at the Institute

Take a look with us at the kind of studies that take place at the Institute for Christian Studies and the ways we go about them. The Institute is in some ways like other advanced study centres, but at the same time it is developing its own unique program and methods.

Keep in mind that central to the purpose of the Institute is to study God's creation in the most basic way. We want to know how the Bible is to bring light to our academic pathway, so that from the very foundations up we can direct scholarship to the praise of God rather than the praise of man. If the foundations of modern secular scholarship are often misdirected, how can one build on the true foundation stone which is Jesus Christ? How can one shape psychological theories that will do justice to what the Bible says about the nature of man? How can one have a philosophy of history that faithfully develops what the Bible says about the providence of God and the "fulness of time"? And so on.

It was because the answers to these questions continually need to be worked out that the Institute was founded. This is also the reason why the Institute classes are not set up for the teachers to hand out the answers to the students. The whole classroom set-up at the Institute shows this, and therefore the teaching-learning methods are different from those in most other schools.



Dr. James Olthuis
Senior Member in theology



Dr. Al Wolters
Senior Member in
History of Philosophy

The key word is "research", the struggle to come to know. The professors are leaders in that struggle, and the students are active participants in the struggle, too. But the usual teacher-student relation does not exist, so the teachers are called "Senior Members" and the students are called "Junior Members", and together they constitute research teams. "Research" means searching together. We usually call our classes "seminars", since in the university this means a research class in which advanced students are sharing the search with the professors. This kind of work can only be done by advanced students, which is why the student body is limited to people who are college or university graduates, who already have the B.A. degree when they come to the Institute.

Seminars at the Institute in 1976-77

There are three kinds of seminars at the Institute: foundational, area, and interdisciplinary. In addition there is a limited amount of tutorial work in which a Junior Member carries on a research program privately under the regular direction of a Senior Member.

FOUNDATIONAL SEMINARS. These seminars are introductory and exist mainly to get new Junior Members from widely different backgrounds to the same level of work in essential areas. There are two such seminars, and they are both required of all new Junior Members in their first year.

Biblical Foundations is led by Dr. Olthuis, with several other Senior Members participating. The purpose is to help each person to read and understand the Bible as the Word of God for all of life, and to help each to work out the meaning of the Bible for scientific analysis. From this study comes a basic theological knowledge and a method for studying the Scriptures.

Philosophical Foundations is led by Dr. Wolters, also assisted by various Senior Members. Its purpose is to give all Junior Members the use of a Christian philosophy as a working tool plus a Christian reformational world-view as a perspective from which to work.

AREA SEMINARS. These research seminars are in various academic areas of study.

History and Historiography is led by Senior Member McIntire as an effort to understand different ways of viewing the process of history, and the study of history since each such perspective influences what a historian considers important. To help them find a philosophical

perspective on history that is faithful to the Bible, Dr. McIntire and his Junior Members are examining this year and over a period of a few years the perspectives of various Christian and non-Christian historians, philosophers and social theorists. They have been looking closely at the views of Butterfield, Dawson, Dooyeweerd, Niebuhr, and others. From this work has come two books of essays on Christian views of history written by various people but edited by McIntire which are to be published soon by Oxford University Press.

History of Philosophy, led by Dr. Wolters, requires careful reading of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason for the purpose of answering the question: what is religious significance of Kant's view of human nature? Wolters and the Junior Members in this seminar are doing a thorough historical analysis in order to find out what kind of spiritual direction is shown in the way Kant uses but also turns away from the philosophical tradition into which he was born. This deepened understanding of philosophical roots will help us go about Christian foundational research with greater clarity. Everyone in this seminar must be able to read German.

Theology Junior Members are being led by Dr. Olthuis in a study of the very crucial issue of the relation between creation and redemption. This calls for the study of the views of important 20th Century theologians as a backdrop to developing further biblical insights into this theme.

In Systematic Aesthetics Dr. Seerveld and Junior Members are working at finding systematic methods useful for Christian understanding of literature, music and art works. They are trying to arrive at precise understanding of such basic concepts as "style", "image" and "symbol". They are studying in German and French as well as English the writings of important aestheticians and philosophers of which two, Mikel Dufrenne and Hans-Georg Gadamer, have visited and lectured at the Institute in the past two years.

Historiography of Aesthetics is another way in which Dr. Seerveld and his students are trying to develop methods to try to understand Christianly the spirit behind art works produced through the centuries. This year they are carefully reading books by Suzanne K. Langer, Friedrich Schiller and Mikel Dufrenne. Special effort is directed to artistic works produced during the 18th Century.

Economic Theory and Economic Systems is led by our newest Senior Member, Dr. Griffioen. There are two emphases in this seminar. One is an effort to study the contributions of Christian scholars in the area of economic thought. The other emphasis is study of the economic problems of totalitarian regimes and the future of the Western



Dr. C.T. McIntire,
Senior Member in History



Dr. Cal Seerveld is
Senior Member
in Aesthetics

system with the aim of working toward a Christian witness within economic life.

History of Socio-Economic Thought leads Dr. Griffioen and his Junior Members through the history of Christian social thought, dealing with its biblical roots, developments in the middle ages, the period of the Reformation, and recent times, including such trends in social thought as liberalism and socialism. Particular attention is given to the "end" of the Keynesian era and its implications for Christian thinking about economic theory.

In Political Theory there are no seminars this year because Dr. Zylstra is on sabbatical leave of absence and therefore is not conducting seminars. Ordinarily he leads two seminars, one in Systematic Political Theory and the other in the History of Political Theory.

INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINARS. These seminars deal with issues that lie between the various disciplines, or academic fields of study. We complain that university education today is too fragmented and fails to understand the wholeness of God's creation. Moreover, some of the most important issues lie between the academic disciplines. Because interdisciplinary study requires that people in various disciplines work together using the same philosophical viewpoint, we believe that the Institute is especially equipped to do good interdisciplinary work. This year we have two interdisciplinary seminars.

Knowledge and Anthropology brings together Senior Members Hart, De Graaff and Olthuis to examine critically Dr. Hart's new book manuscript which tries to develop a Christian way to understand what knowledge is, and a fundamental Christian understanding of the nature of man that will be useable in developing and testing theories of psychology and of teaching.

Philosophy of History joins our historian McIntire and philosophers Wolters and Hart together with Junior Members in examining the nature of historical knowledge, the relation between history and the sciences, whether there are general laws in history, and what it means to explain something historically. To do this they are studying a certain school of thought known as the analytic philosophy of history. Members of this school of thought reject religious and metaphysical ideas of history in favour of examining the logic and language used by historians. The aim of the seminar is to understand the leading writings in this school of thought and use them to stimulate our own thinking on the basic issues they raise.

Besides these seminars there are a certain number of tutorials in which a Senior Member meets privately with a Junior Member at intervals over the year to guide the research of the Junior Member on a given subject. Dr. De Graaff, for example, has tutorials with four students

this year in the area of psychology, in addition to his participation in one interdisciplinary seminar and his work with the Curriculum Development Centre. The interests of these students are too different to make it workable to bring them all together into one psychology seminar.



Economics Senior Member
Dr. Sander Griffioen

Seminar work requires the regular attendance of the Junior Member at the seminar classes and their sharing in the discussions. Each Junior Member must prepare a research paper of 25-50 pages with copies for each of the other Members of the seminar. This paper is then presented and discussed at one of the weekly seminar meetings. Because of the research nature of these courses, they meet once a week for three hours, in a morning or an afternoon, so the participants can get more deeply into the subject being discussed than is possible in a class period of only an hour. The Junior Member's grade for the seminar is based on the quality of his regular participation in the discussions from week to week, and also on the quality of his paper and its presentation.

The Institute Programs

For the Junior Members these seminars can add up to a certificate or a degree. One year of study brings the Certificate in Christian Studies to a Junior Member who completes the two foundational seminars and one or two others. By a year of study we mean ten to twelve months, though the seminars meet only from early September into April, which is the normal academic year for Canadian universities.

The Master of Philosophy degree (M.Phil.) can be awarded for full time study that takes at least two full years. The degree requires completion of the two foundational seminars plus four other seminars, plus a thesis paper which must be defended in an oral examination. The thesis paper is a research paper of about 75 pages, which is usually an extension of research and writing done for one of the seminars. The thesis research is done in one of the areas of emphasis offered by the Institute, namely, philosophy, history, theology, aesthetics, economics, political theory or psychology.



Dr. Bernie Zylstra
is ICS Senior Member in
Political Theory

The Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.D.) is set up for each Junior Member on an individual basis. A person must apply to enter the program for the Ph.D. and the



Dr. Henk Hart, Senior Member
in Systematic Philosophy

policy is that no program will be approved unless the Institute has at least three Senior Members who have academic strength in the field where the Ph.D. research is to be undertaken. Further, it is assumed that each Ph.D. candidate who has also taken his master's degree at the Institute will spend one year or more of his doctoral study time at a university that can clearly help him with his research. The Ph.D. degree is expected to take about three years of study after the M.Phil., and includes the writing of a dissertation of 150-200 pages.

Publications of the Institute

The way the research study program of the Institute is set up naturally leads to the writing of many papers. Junior Members contribute one research paper for each of their seminars, and candidates for the degrees each must write a major research thesis or dissertation. Senior Members, too, often make their contributions to seminars by way of papers, sometimes even books, representing their own research. Visitors often give guest seminars, though they often are not in the form of written papers.

The result is the potentiality for publications to reach outside the walls of the Institute to people who wish to learn along with Institute Members. The Institute is now beginning to make use of that potential. We have bought a used offset printing press which will help us duplicate at low cost many of these papers. We are now beginning to make available master's degree papers that make a good contribution to Christian understanding. You will more and more see lists of Institute papers that can be purchased at low cost. But you must keep in mind that not all papers can be made available because some papers may be less successful than others in their attempts at learning. Papers written for seminars are often exploring and probing new areas, and there will often be fumbling efforts that do not stand up after careful examination. That is the nature of research into new fields. Some papers should not be widely distributed. Some that are distributed will have ideas that will turn out to be immature and ill-founded. That is to say that the Institute will not automatically stand behind every idea expressed in every paper. These papers are written for people who are learning, whether they be within the Institute or not, and they are naturally written for an academic community.

In addition to written papers, the Institute and the AACs are increasingly recording on tape certain lectures and speeches that can be duplicated for distribution. Some of these are academic

lectures, especially lectures that have a wider context than a specific research seminar. Others are popular talks given at the Institute or conferences or meetings that we sponsor. This is a further medium for sharing our work with a wider public.

Often people ask us for lists of good books to read in a given academic area. Christian students and teachers, for example, ask us for reading lists that will help them get a good background in a certain subject, especially material that will help them with Christian perspectives. We have started systematically putting together such reading lists. A short form of such a list in the field of aesthetics appears in this issue of Perspective, and you can write us for the full list with helpful

comments on the books by Dr. Seerveld. We occasionally print in Perspective a "Reader Service" page giving suggested publication titles.



Dr. Arnold De Graaff
Psychology Senior Member

Dirk van den Berg: A profile

by Peter Ennema

Early in December Dirk and Julia van den Berg began their long journey back to their troubled homeland of South Africa. They left behind them a community of people to whom they had become attached. Those of us who had come to know this cordial couple remember Julia's cheerful exuberance and Dirk's contained reflectiveness. Together they spent a year in the Northern Hemisphere--three summer months in Europe taking in an art gallery a day, and the remainder in North America, mostly Toronto. During their stay Dirk got to see the wider AACS community and some of the continent as a speaker in the Discovery VII lecture series.

Dirk did his undergraduate study at and received his masters degree from the Christian university at Potchefstroom. His massive thesis--a critical look at the influence of the form-matter ground-motive on Greek sculpture--reflects his familiarity with the Calvinistic tradition of philosophizing and his special interest in the work and ideas of Dr. Seerveld. For a number of years Dirk has served as Instructor in the History of Art at the University of the Orange



Dirk van den Berg

Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa. His coming to Toronto was occasioned by a year-long leave of absence to further his qualifications as a junior staff member at the Orange Free State.

Dirk used his time at ICS doing bibliographic work, attending seminars in aesthetics and holding special seminars in order to deepen his understanding of art theoretical and aesthetic matters especially as they relate to art historiography and the development of an art historical methodology. The problems of historical periodization and art historical categories engaged his special interest and dovetailed especially with the current research

in the Institute's aesthetics seminars. For Dirk the stay at the Institute functions as part of his Ph.D. research. Dirk is investigating "modern religious art". He intends to give a structural account of the nature of this type of art as well as an historical account of its development. His Discovery lecture on the "Backgrounds to modern religious painting" showed some of his ideas on the topic.

Dirk found the ICS a congenial setting to discuss and rethink art historical categories he had come to question. The context of constant interdisciplinary work was appreciated, since Dirk found this setting a challenge after working with college classes in South Africa. He feels that Institute members are fortunate to have the opportunity to struggle communally with the meaning of Christianity for academic work. Dirk thought it ironic that the work of the Institute has such import for thought in South Africa yet seems to have little impact in Toronto.

In February Dirk returns to his heavy teaching schedule and to his participation in the Christian academic life in South Africa. We continue, enriched by his critical, insistant questioning and thankful for his contributions in seminar sessions and informal discussions.

*Peter Ennema is a Junior Member enrolled in an M.Phil. program in aesthetics.

Selected reference materials on aesthetics

Reliable sources in the English language for an overview and some kind of general orientation to the field of Aesthetics. For students and people who are seriously interested in studying the field.

Monroe C. Beardsley, Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present. A Short History. New York: Macmillan Co., 1966. 414 pp.

The best, current, over-all history of aesthetics in English.

Stanley Edgar Hyman, The Armed Vision, A study in the methods of modern literary criticism (1948). Revised edition abridged by author in Vintage paperback, 1955. xiii-402-xxvii.

A helpful overview which provides a grouping of literary critics who have worked in the recent past.

Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, History of Aesthetics (1962-1967), 3 volumes, translated by Kisiel and Besemeres. Warsaw/Hague: Mouton, 1970-1974.

A sweeping overview of the "classical" tradition regarding beauty and art, as it evolved in thinkers from ancient Greece to Europe around 1700.

Ruth L. Saw, Aesthetics. An Introduction. New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1971. 231 pp.

A most sensible introduction to the field of aesthetics, well-written in non-technical language.

Wayne Shumaker, Perspectives in Criticism: Elements of Critical Theory. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952. x-131.

A cogent, penetrating discussion of the nature, function and limits of literary criticism.

Jean Mary Morman, Art: of Wonder and a World. Blauvelt, New York: Art Education, Inc. 1967. 112 pp.

Sister Morman's exciting little book is a provocative text for teaching art and art history to older children, high school students and the interested adult.

Hans Sedlmayr, Art in Crisis. The Lost Centre. (1948), trans. Brian Battershaw. London: Hollis & Carter, 1957. x-266.

A searching analysis of nineteenth and twentieth century art by a major, modern German art historian, whose Roman Catholic perspective intensifies and shapes his awareness of the loss in meaning art suffered at the hands of secularized faith.

Materials written from a reformational Christian perspective:

Calvin G. Seerveld, A Christian Critique of Art and Literature (1963-64)
Toronto: Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship,
reissue at press 1977. c. 125 pp.

Calvin G. Seerveld, A Turnabout in Aesthetics to Understanding.
Toronto: Institute for Christian Studies, 1974. 26 pp.

Mary Siebenga, "Foundation of Modern Art". Lecture notes for a course
in modern art history at Trintity Christian College, Illinois, 1971.
Blue dittograph 268 pp. (available postpaid for \$6.00 from
331 Finch Avenue, Pickering, Ontario L1V 1H9).

Lambert Zuidervaat, Kant's Critique of Beauty and Taste:
Explorations into a Philosophical Aesthetics. Toronto: Institute
for Christian Studies, 1975. Masters thesis, 486 pp.

A well-written, painstaking examination of Kant's fundamental
ideas and contribution to philosophical aesthetics. (Available
postpaid from the AACS for \$14.50)

Circulating newsletters:

Broadsheet of the Arts Centre Group. 1975- (London: 19 Draycott Place)
Editor Nigel Goodwin.

Christian Theatre Artists Guild Newsletter. 1976- (Minneapolis,
Minnesota 55414: P.O. Box 14157)

Christianity and Literature, quarterly of the Conference on
Christianity and Literature. (Department of English, Calvin
College, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506). Editor Clarence Walhout.

For The Time Being, fine arts magazine. 1972- (Grand Rapids, Michigan:
Department of English, Calvin College) Editor C. Barendrecht.

Genesis, journal of the Society of Christians in the Arts. 1975-
(Greenwich, Connecticut: P.O. Box 1194) Editor William Edgar.

Patmos (Newsletter) Bulletin. 1970- (Toronto: Patmos Gallery,
6A Church Street) Editor Calvin Seerveld

Salt, a news and discussion forum for Christians working in the
arts and media. 1974- (Berkhamsted, Herts, England: 121 High
Street) Editors Meryl Fergus and Tony Wales.

This selected list was prepared from a four page annotated bibliography
prepared by ICS Senior Member in Aesthetics, Calvin Seerveld. You may
obtain the bibliography without charge by writing to the AACS.

Former students reflect on ICS experience

by Mary Gerritsma

Beginning with this issue and for the next several issues of Perspective, we will introduce you to some former ICS students. I have and will be contacting many former ICS students, asking them about themselves, their work and ideas and how these relate to their previous study at the ICS.

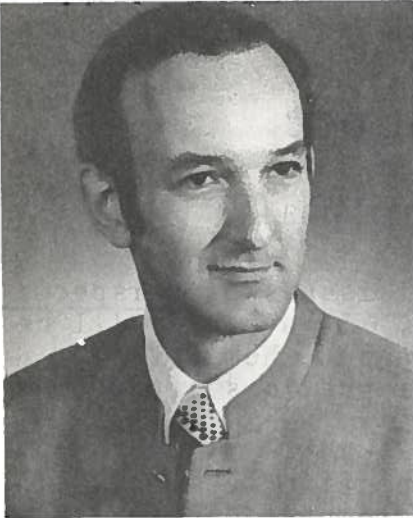
These write-ups will try to expose to the AACCS supporting community the consequences of Institute studies and will also attempt to answer some questions about the place and function of the ICS. Is the ICS worth it? What happens to students who once studied at the ICS? Is the ICS so theoretical that students cannot put what they learn into practice? Was their personal development at the ICS a contribution or a detriment to healthy service as prophets, priests and kings in our day? Is new ground being broken in their attempts to live life styles claimed for Christ?

The one thing most former students of the ICS have in common is their constant struggle with these and other questions. The AACCS membership needs to learn about these struggles from the point of view of those who have attended the ICS. Although Perspective is obviously promotional literature for the AACCS and ICS, my desire is that these write-ups not have the flavour of "success stories". Rather, they should inform supporters and those interested in the work of the AACCS and ICS of how former students struggle with living integrated Christian lives, in general.

The three former ICS students who share their ideas in this issue are all teachers. Their backgrounds, reasons for coming to the Institute and reactions to having been there are completely different. Each, however, was able to integrate their ICS experience into their lives in such a way as to be better prepared for the task in which they are presently serving.

BERT POLMAN LEAVES ICS FOR OBC WITH STRONGER "REFORMED FEELERS"

Bert Polman is very decidedly Dutch in heritage. He stresses how his one year at the Institute strengthened his "voelhoorens"--reformed feelers. By this he means that besides learning a great deal about aesthetics under Seerveld, he also advanced in his thinking about a Christian's witness in scholarship in general and in daily living matters. Whether or not it has anything to do with being Dutch, Bert feels that the ICS confirmed his earlier commitment to the principles of organizations like the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) and the Committee for Justice and Liberty (CJL). These organizations, he claims, taught



Bert Polman

him a great deal about how to serve as a Christian as did his specific studies at the ICS. Along with his alma mater, Dordt College, the ICS was another institution which helped to equip him for his present work.

Bert is now in his second year of teaching church music, music history, music theory and keyboard skills at Ontario Bible College. He also works as chief liturgist for the Campus worship community. Bert and his wife Betty came to Toronto in 1972 when Bert decided to study aesthetics under Calvin Seerveld. He had already completed his doctoral course work in Musicology and American Studies at the University of Minnesota. But Bert wanted to be challenged to think more foundationally in the area of systematic aesthetics.

The thing that impressed me about Bert was the success in which he has integrated his Institute experience into his total life. Although he did admit that he wasn't able to fully benefit from some of the more highly theoretical aspects of historical aesthetics, Bert indicated overall satisfaction with his ICS studies as they now relate to his work at Ontario Bible College. The ICS also helped him be a better equipped servant of the Lord in his whole life, not just in his teaching. Bert says of his ICS experience:

I certainly gained insight into reading of Scripture and thoroughly enjoyed work on scholarship in a community. The systematic aesthetics work has helped me to see the role of the aesthetic in all of our daily living, and particularly in the musical art, and the liturgy of the church. I think my personal Christian witness is more integrated now with my public witness and particularly with my witness as a Christian musicologist. Intellectually the ICS has certainly contributed to Christian integration in my living, but putting some of these ideas into practice is very difficult in our present day society.

I asked Bert if he experienced any theory/non-theory "gap", having come from the ICS. I found his answer to be inspiring, emphatic, and unique:

No! I have found the ICS study I did quite helpful. The only "gap" I experience is my own fault--I don't do much in specific philosophies and hence some of my study of Kant is just theory, and even forgotten. Certainly in the area of music, and the area of liturgy too, I found no such gap. You should remember, however, that I had already finished Ph.D. course work in Music and American Studies, and had specific determination to pick up things at the ICS that tied in or changed ideas I had earlier worked on. I had more basis to integrate ICS theory with earlier theory and practice.

Bert recognizes that he was unique as an Institute student because he had a broader academic background and was simultaneously working toward his doctoral degree from another university. Other students at the ICS had no recognized degree to look forward to. About this matter, Bert says, "The ICS should have made a much more honest attempt to explain that ICS study did not qualify you for a degree which would be generally recognized. This did not affect me, as I am to get my Ph.D. elsewhere! Study at ICS is an academic risk, but one I recommend!"

M. PHIL. STUDENT SERVES AS TEACHER IN BOWMANVILLE, ONTARIO

John Hull, one among the first group to graduate in 1975 with the M.Phil. degree from the Institute, now teaches at Durham Christian High School in Bowmanville, Ontario. At the ICS John concentrated mainly in philosophy, but at Durham Christian High he busily hops between grade 9 and 11 English, grade 12 Bible, and grade 11 World Religions and Social Studies. He definitely feels that his study of philosophy at the Institute equipped him for this by providing him with the theoretical tools to move in a number of directions. He is currently teaching everything from novels, creative writing and biblical exegesis to current events, problems related to the field of labour church life, and the meaning of our culture.

John's background at the ICS and at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, is quite a contrast to the academic backgrounds of most secondary teachers in Ontario. John did not specifically prepare to teach on the high school level. On the one hand he feels handicapped by not having formal teachers' training and an Ontario Teacher's Certificate. On the other hand he feels that as far as the content of courses at Durham Christian High is concerned, he has had a better background than many other teachers.

My special studies of theory do not help me directly, except in as much as I deal with Truth in all my classes. Then it applies very much because I contrast the Biblical notion of truth with the humanist notion. Indirectly it is very helpful because I studied a number of false dilemmas at ICS which have political, economic, and ecclesiastical expression. When I meet them I usually recognize them in my teaching setting, and it is not so hard to deal with them.

John reports that he is somewhat surprised to find himself teaching in a high school in view of his four years of graduate level study at the Institute. It was only after a long search that John found the job at Durham. Although he is grateful for having found a place within the Christian community to use his gifts, he does feel that he could more effectively use his talents in a college



John Hull teaches
in Bowmanville

setting. This dilemma has made John wonder if there is a place in any Christian community for his special gifts and background. His acceptance as an ICS graduate in Bowmanville depends a great deal on his own wisdom and tolerance in dealing with a rather conservative Christian community. John feels, however, that he learned at the ICS how to lead an integrated Christian life and how to communicate wisely the blessings which arise from this. He commented that his actual studying at the ICS didn't help him with this so much as just being there. In other words, he feels that his experience at the ICS was much more than just an academic one.

BETSY JONES EXPRESSES GRATITUDE AND RESERVATIONS ABOUT ICS

Betsy Jones studied for one year at the Institute, 1973-74, the last year that education was offered as a course under Arnold De Graaff. Coming from Charlotte, North Carolina, with an M.A. in education and two years' teaching experience, she studied biblical and philosophical foundations as well. She did not come with the intention of obtaining a degree from the Institute, but rather to gain insight via research and discussion into a Christian perspective of education. She was motivated to come to the ICS after hearing that the Institute could provide her with insight into a Christian world and life view. She was eager to participate in what she had hoped would be a "community of learners which stressed research and theory but also provided personal guidance for students where they were at in their intellectual growth and critical abilities".

In some ways, Betsy's experience of the Institute was not as favourable as she had anticipated. She recognizes now that much of this was because she had never been exposed to Christian education. Also, she was new to the concept of an academic Christian community and had not been exposed for very long to the "reformational vision" of the AACSI-ICS. (Note that, by contrast, Bert Polman and John Hull became acquainted with the ICS framework earlier at Dordt College.) Betsy tumbled into the ICS, coming from teaching in a public alternative school in North Carolina in which she saw lack of direction, confusion in philosophy, goals and preoccupation with beaurocracy and red tape instead of meaningful curriculum and effective teaching. For her, the ICS was a ray of hope for a viable Christian alternative. She quit her teaching job, left her family and friends in North Carolina, and with a few possessions in her little yellow Volkswagen, she set out alone for Toronto. Betsy enrolled enthusiastically at the ICS, but nevertheless experienced some disappointment.



Betsy Jones

My disappointment in attending the ICS was that I did not receive the personal, individualized attention I had expected from a Christian community-oriented school. As a beginner to Christian thought, I honestly had a difficult time sifting through what was distinctly

Christian from that which I had been exposed to before I learned about "reformational thought". Why was I not responded to where I was at, eager to learn, often a challenger, but also sincere in a desire to develop and express myself Christianly? These were my critical questions.

Betsy realized that she had come to the ICS with expectations and preconceptions about the way a "community of learners" worked together. After she arrived she didn't see the kind of pedagogical setting she had anticipated. She felt that somehow the ICS could have made a better effort to find out where students like herself were at in their personal development in Christian thinking.

Betsy came to the Institute with needs that couldn't be answered with only ideas and theories. She benefited and very much appreciated the Christian framework of thought; nevertheless she expressed some reservations as well.

The ICS offers a framework, a very workable structure for organizing input and critiquing history, philosophy, and modern thought. But it is a framework. It is not the framework. Theories are definitely important for organizing a Christian life style. But I have found, since leaving the ICS, a gut, existential knowing that often reinforces what I've learned to be "Christian thought". I've discovered far more confidence in acting out the me from day-to-day seeking Christ than in a neatly worked out framework of what it means to be Christian in any certain situation. My teaching experience has been more enhanced in a non-Christian setting than in a Christian setting. To be open to each experience, yet held firmly in the grip of the Word of God, enables one to see and experience His hand in broken, very broken situations. We are not invited to partake freely in the sin around us, but neither are we to be afraid to be in the world (i.e. in a non-Christian work setting) because Christ places us in the very pit of brokenness and confusion so that in all things He may be made manifest.

In line with her commitment, Betsy is teaching for the second year at a small private high school in Toronto. She teaches a variety of subjects in grades 9-13 to students from many backgrounds-- Canadian, Chinese, Indonesian and West Indian. While she feels that her study and class time at the ICS did not specifically equip her for her task here, she does appreciate the work of the Curriculum Development Centre. Particularly helpful for her in teaching social studies was the unit on Kenya which she herself helped to prepare. Other aspects of the Institute which she feels positively contributed to her growth and ability to serve were the various articles, lectures and books developed or written by ICS Senior Members which provided her with resources from which to evaluate and organize her teaching contents. These, she said, have sharpened her understanding and ability to be critical of belief systems that shape cultures and life styles. "My experience has shown that the ICS has a place--a very definite and valid place. But its scope is limited to the area of Christian theory."

Institute hosts Calvin interim

by Peter Van Geest

On January 4, twenty-three students from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and three from Trinity Christian College, Chicago, Illinois, came together at the Institute for Christian Studies for the annual January interim program. What at first appeared to be a conglomeration of different topics, namely: contemporary theology, hermeneutics, the nature of the Word of God, and ethics, was over the period of three and a half weeks shaped into a coherent course of study.

Led by Dr. Gordon Spykman from Calvin and Dr. James Olthuis from the Institute we began the session with a discussion of the booklet: The Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority (Report 44, of the Christian Reformed Church Synod). Questions that had been bothering us for years, such as: "how far does the authority of Scriptures extend into our lives?", or "just why are the Scriptures relevant for today?" were finally given the chance to be heard. It was a good place to begin and easily allowed us to move into a discussion on the general concept of the Word of God. The emphasis was on the relationship between a person's understanding of the Word of God and his world-and-life view (a phrase which we summarized in the word "glasses" --how does one see reality). We noticed that in contemporary theology there are almost as many different kinds of "glasses" as there are theologians. However, despite the complexities involved we nevertheless managed to discuss at least some of the major theologians and their world views.

The last week of the course was the highlight for most of the students. What we had earlier discussed in relation to a biblical view of man, and the effect a person's "glasses" had on his method of interpreting the Bible, was now made concrete in a discussion on ethics. Much of the dialogue revolved around Dr. Olthuis' book I Pledge You My Troth,

which presents his understanding of the biblical notion of troth and fidelity. The interchange between professors and students was particularly interesting at this point because it was often on the level of personal experience in our families, friendships, and marriages.



Dr. Gordon Spykman and
Dr. James Olthuis leaders
of Calvin interim seminar

It didn't take long before we felt quite at home on "the fourth floor". Not only was there the satisfaction of doing intensive study in a specific area, but there was also the feeling that the complaint of "Institute aloofness" was for the most part a myth. This was partially due to congeniality around the

ever-brewing coffee pot, but also because the entire Institute staff, in a series of afternoon lectures, gave presentations on the work they were doing.

Perhaps Dr. Hart summarized it best by saying that in doing work which is theoretical in nature we should always make sure that our theory remains in contact with everyday reality. That was precisely the impression many of us were left with when the interim was finished: what we had discussed was relevant to our everyday lives.

*Peter Van Geest is a history major in his senior year at Calvin College.

AACS News

* Marcia Hollingsworth named Director of Development

We are happy to announce that In January Marcial Hollingsworth was appointed Director of Development for AACS. She has served the AACS in Development work since 1972, most recently as Development Coordinator. This promotion recognizes Marcia's great ability for this kind of work and her success in encouraging people to support the services of the AACS in Christian higher education.

As Director of Development it will be Marcia's general task to interpret the work of the AACS and the Institute to the general public, and in turn communicate the insights and critique of the people to the staff and Board. The work involves building public trust, fund raising, advertising and being responsible for Perspective newsletter. She continues to be deeply involved in the planning of AACS conferences and lecture tours.



One of the first projects Marcia is working on is a drive to recruit new members for AACS scheduled for the Spring. She is also available for speaking engagements on behalf of AACS.

We ask you to pray for Marcia as she undertakes this work and to receive her with your encouragement.

* All AACS receipts for 1976 tax deductible donations were sent out by the first of January. If anyone has not received his receipt, please contact AACS giving the details.

* The AACCS is offering a two-week summer course on the theme, "Biblical basics for a Christian Philosophy", July 18-29. The course will be led by Dr. Al Wolters, Senior Member in history of philosophy at the Institute.

This fourth annual Basic Issues Course will show how fundamental biblical themes open up new perspectives for a reformational world-view and philosophy. In lectures and discussion, Dr. Wolters and the participants will explore some leading ideas of a Christian philosophy, specifically taken from the Amsterdam school of philosophy.

The course is intended for all who are interested in deepening their understanding of important biblical concepts for a Christian philosophy for their life and work. It will be especially helpful for those in leadership positions in the Christian community: teachers, campus workers, pastors, elders, and youth leaders.

All sessions will be held at the Institute for Christian Studies. The fee for this two week course is \$80. Write to the AACCS, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4, for more information and a registration form.

ICS News

* Senior Member Calvin Seerveld was invited to Lenoir-Rhyne College, a college of the Lutheran Church of America in North Carolina, during December. While there he gave several convocation and chapel addresses, and conducted special classes. The visit was arranged through the Thomas F. Staley Foundation, which invited certain Christian scholars in North America to challenge students and professors on campuses on the relevance of biblical faith for learning. Seerveld also participated in this program at the University of Michigan, Covenant College in Tennessee and others, making known his work in Christian aesthetic theory at ICS.

* In a forthcoming article in Vanguard magazine, Seerveld writes about the paintings of Jean-Baptiste Chardin under the title of "Glory to God in the Kitchen". "It's fine to sing-along with angels, Glory to God in the Highest, but it's not enough for us to leave it there", says Dr. Seerveld.

* The December meeting of the Conference on Faith and History, in Washington, D.C., was devoted to a discussion of the book A Christian View of History? edited by Marsden and Roberts. C.T. McIntire, as author of one of the chapters in the book, was a member of the panel which lead the discussion. While in Washington, McIntire also attended the annual meetings of the American Historical Association, the American Society of Church History, and the American Catholic Historical Association.

* On January 18-21 McIntire gave public lectures on "Religion and the Philosophy of History" at Northwestern College and Dordt

College in Iowa. The talk was based on themes in his forthcoming book, God, history, and historians.

* On November 26, Dr. Sander Griffioen was the guest of the Christian Labour Association for a day of communal reflection on the theme "Inflation and Unemployment". The president of the CLAC, Hank Kuntz, and all the staff workers, except those from the far west, were present.

* On December 16, Dr. Griffioen visited Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ontario. Dr. David Lyon, a British guest professor in sociology at Wilfred Laurier, and Griffioen presented their views on Marx's critique of religion in a "Christian-Marxist dialogue". Dr. Remkes Kooistra, Christian Reformed chaplain organized the meeting.

* ICS and Dr. De Graaff were hosts to 15 psychology students and their professor from Tabor College for two weeks of an Interim course from January 17-28. Tabor is a Mennonite Brethren College in Hillsboro, Kansas. De Graaff gave lectures and led discussion for three hours each day for those two weeks. The other half day was spent by each student in private study of a major psychological paper or book on which the student was assigned to write a paper. The Tabor students spent two weeks of preparatory study in Kansas before coming to Toronto.

The course was directed at developing a working model by which psychologists can have a Christian way of understanding the various different schools of thought in psychology. Such a model will enable students of psychology to benefit from the strengths of different viewpoints while at the same time having an integrated way of looking at man and God's world. Without an integrated philosophical-Christian model a person is likely to be merely pasting together bits and pieces from contradicting schools of thought. A vital dimension of the course involved looking at the relation between creation and redemption as seen by Mennonites and by Reformed people, and what it means to be a Christian and also a psychologist who is in the world but not of the world.

The arrangements were made by Dr. Al Dueck, professor of psychology at Tabor. Dueck had attended De Graaff's 1975 AACCS Summer Leadership Seminar in Woodbridge, Ontario, and he also served as respondent to a major paper De Graaff presented last year at Atlanta, Georgia. This led him to want for his students the experience of two weeks of study with Dr. De Graaff.

* In August, 1978 the Institute will host a one week conference which will focus on "A normative direction in the social sciences". Ten lectures will be presented by scholars from Canada, the U.S., Argentina, South Africa and the Netherlands. This conference will be open to professors and lecturers in the general area of social sciences and to a number of graduate students. The conference coordinators are Dr. Bernard Zylstra of the Institute and Dr. Elaine Botha, professor of social philosophy at the Christian University of Potchefstroom, South Africa. More detailed information will be available at a later date. Send inquiries to Dr. Sander Griffioen, who is serving as secretary of the conference c/o Institute for Christian Studies.

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Studies in Aesthetics, July 5-15, 1977

The Institute is offering a two week summer graduate course, July 5 to 15, which will deal with the beginnings of aesthetic theory in the 18th Century and how this still shapes our aesthetic thinking today. The course will also include lectures on the history of art and principles of art and literary criticism.

Dr. Calvin Seerveld, Senior Member in Aesthetics at the Institute, will be giving the unifying series of lectures. Other Christian scholars, including Dr. H. R. Rookmaaker, Art Historian at the Free University of Amsterdam, and Dr. Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan will also give presentations.

This summer course is intended for college and university professors who teach art and literature, and for graduate students in these areas.

All sessions will be held at the Institute for Christian Studies. The fee for this two week course is \$80. Write to ICS, 229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4, for more information and a registration form.

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