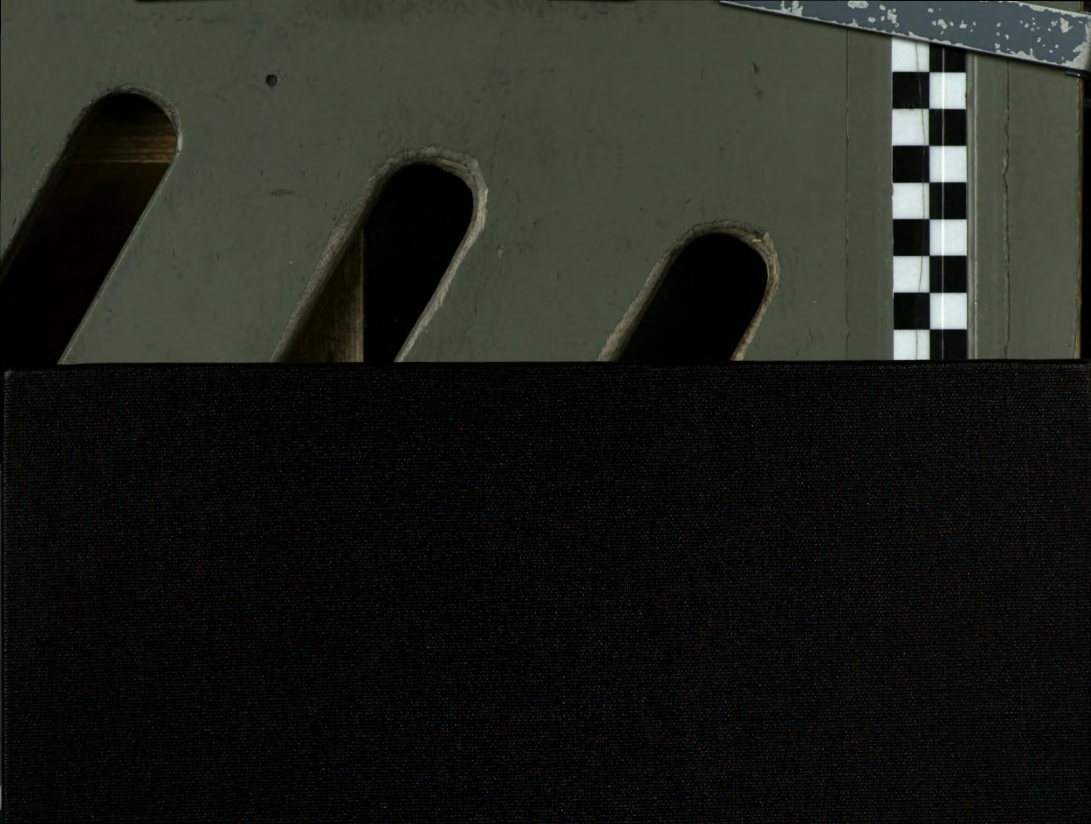

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BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN AND GOD: A STUDY OF AN INTERSECTION OF GENDER AND RELIGION

By

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ABSTRACT

BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN AND GOD: A STUDY OF AN INTERSECTION OF GENDER AND RELIGION

By

Dorothy Weaver

Patriarchy theories suggest that religions with belief systems reflecting a 'masculine' world view; as demonstrated in areas of creation story, hierarchical thinking, emphasis on separation, and conflict orientation; would tend to assign most power to men and to ignore 'feminine' perspectives and communication strategy. A four month research project was undertaken to examine the relationship between belief, gender, and power. The project used both participant observation and interview to explore these factors in a single small, highly active, student religious (Christian) organization. This study found that while both formal structure and theology fit the model of a patriarchal system, more 'feminine' world views and communication patterns could be expressed by re-directing emphasis to informal and unofficial relationships.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

GENDER AND RELIGION

In beginning this project, I discovered that much had been written about the intersection of gender and religion, some of it very passionate. In the United States, however, very little actual research had been done. Many authors theorized that Western religions (particularly Christianity) were set up by men, to benefit men, and from the perspective of a masculine world view (Christ 1980; Daly 1985; Dunfee 1989). Some of these theories seemed, however, to be based on the 'gut feelings' of participants in this religion--a reaction, even, to personal frustration against a system that had failed to meet their needs--and not as a result of organized research. I believe that those living inside a system can be excellent sources of knowledge about the nature of the system. Nevertheless, there comes a time when theories should be tested.

To this end, I undertook to study the relationship of gender, religious ideology, and power. I selected a single religious organization and used it to test certain theories about 'Patriarchy' and women's empowerment. I hoped to gain insight on the following questions: Are the 'masculine' and 'feminine' world views incompatible? If the theology is based largely on the 'masculine' world view, will that lead to the suppression of female members' experience and access to power? How strongly do formal rules about gender

and access to power affect the use of real power? How does world view and ideology affect the ways men and women make decisions?

Not all of these questions were answered completely, even in the context of one rather small population. However, I believe some insight has been gained into the way gender and religion can interact with one another.

METHOD

Data was collected by both participant observation and interview. Participant observation consisted of regular attendance of group gatherings between December 6, 1992 and February 26, 1993. Such gatherings included twice weekly Fellowships, Sunday dinners, prayer breakfasts, and Bible studies. In addition to these regular interactions, I had the privilege of attending special activities such as the Chinese New Year party, Baptisms, and Christmas caroling. I was also allowed to observe meetings of the Hedge Team, Ministry Team, and small group leaders.

Besides participant observation, I had formal interviews with 7 male and 8 female participants. The interviewees varied in age from late teens to early forties, included formal and informal group leaders as well as other participants, and both 'young' and more 'mature' Christians. Interviews were unstructured. The topics discussed were the nature of humanity (particularly gender differences) as ordained by God; appropriate gender behavior; actual behavior of group members; and the individual's perception of the ways gender influences personal interaction.

These topics also arose during informal conversation, and this provided almost as much insight into both real and ideal behavior as did formal interviews.

THE RESEARCHER

At the time of conceptualization and data collection, I was a twenty-three year old women in her second year of graduate study. I grew up in rural Southeastern Kentucky. My community seemed to accept 'traditional gender roles' completely, although my parents (outsiders from New Jersey) had taught me that men and women are the way they are because society makes them that way, and society is not always fair. I received my B.A. (anthropology/sociology) from a very small (rather feminist-minded) liberal arts college in Kentucky. I considered myself a Christian, but was a member of no particular denomination. My religious upbringing was an amiable combination of Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Southern Baptist.

Gender and religion are each incredibly powerful parts of our culture. They touch on what is most important to people and permeate almost every aspect of life. While I was curious about both gender and religion as separate concepts, in combination they had a synergy that riveted me. I first noticed their power when I was a senior in high school. I was feeling a bit feisty after a graduation breakfast given by the local ministerial association. The whole activity had seemed empty and patronizing, and when we returned to the school I vented my bad temper by writing, "what if God is a woman?" on the blackboard. The response amazed me! I expected annoyance and disdain--I had no illusions about either the status of women or of God in my home town--but the statement was met with outright shock and horror. I was going to hell. I had said a terrible thing. How could I be so stupid? Did I know what I had said? I was a little hurt by the outrage of my friends, but mostly I was confused: What was going on? The question followed me into anthropology, where I found a few answers and many more questions. My masters thesis seemed a perfect opportunity to explore some of what happens when gender and religion intersect.

In actually doing research, it was impossible to confine my experience to my intellectual questions. Ideas are not separable from the people who 'have' them. The people who were my 'subjects' also became by friends. I took notes on what they did and said, I asked questions about my topic, and adapted (as best I could) to their communications style. But I also sang, ate, prayed, and exchanged confidences with them. They treated me with great trust, respect, and acceptance, and I tried to return these. A role as anthropologist placed only a few constraints on my behavior: don't say weird anthropological things, don't argue, and don't change the dynamic (that is, let others define situations and my role in them). I did not keep these rules perfectly, however, I seemed to find my duel identity much more problematic than anyone around me did. I accept that research cannot be separated from the person who did it. I understand that the person I am must include my identity as an anthropology student.

I did not expect, when I started, to be very much affected by my informants. I knew that my research would be only a tiny, unimportant part of their lives and a temporary part of mine. I assumed that the most important things I learned would be about anthropology. About this I was wrong.

For most people I have known, religion was a small, integrated part of life: church on Sunday, prayer in difficulty, occasional guilt. However, for many of my informants, religion permeated all aspects of life. Small difficulties were lessons, bad attitudes were challenges, and everything that happened was an opportunity to grow closer to God. They tried to live as they believed God wanted, even though they sometimes failed and often things went badly--even horribly--in their lives. Watching so many people trying again and again, without making excuses for failure or bragging about success, to devote themselves to God and each other taught me more than I ever expected to learn. Their belief and action have been great encouragements to me, and are what I will remember the longest.

THE POPULATION

The subject group is a full time 'campus ministry,' a registered student organization of a large Michigan university. It was selected for the study mainly because of the frequency of both formal and informal activities, which provided ample opportunity for observation. Furthermore, both the formal leadership and general participants were very helpful and interested in the study. I found them to be very frank in their statements, even when they believed what they were saying was not what they thought I wanted to hear.

Almost all participants in the organization are students. This has both positive and negative implications. On the one hand, very few anthropological studies on any topic have been performed on college students (one exception being *Coming of Age in New Jersey* by M. Moffat). There is a great deal of information yet to be examined. Also, a college campus provides an identifiable population--making it possible to avoid some of the complexity and confusion found in America-at-large. Finally, I was only slightly older than most participants (and younger than many). It was thought that if this research was to be done, best it be done now when the physical appearance of the investigator would be most conducive to rapport.

On the other hand, there are difficulties in examining a collegiate organization. Students are a circumscribed, slightly deviant population. By definition, demographics are largely restricted to a very narrow range of age and occupation. Furthermore, the living conditions (dormitory residence, separation from family, insecurity about the future, etc.) are not those of most 'real people' (that is, non-students). It is uncertain to what degree inferences based on them can be generalized to the rest of the population.

SHORTCOMINGS

Now that I have finished the actual research, I can see some of its shortcomings. A few were caused by constraints inherent in the situation, others by my own ignorance. Three are important enough to warrant particular mention.

The first deals with time. While my interaction with the ministry lasted several months and provided a great richness of detail, it did not allow for much data on change over time. While a few participants had been associated with the group for a number of years and were willing to share their observations on change, this is not adequate substitute for first hand experience. This work would have been improved by the inclusion of more information on how both the organization and its individual participants changed over a year or more.

Second, I believe that my communication with male participants was not quite as good as my communication with female participants. This is in no way the fault of my informants. Individuals of both genders seemed eager to help me with my research and to truly enjoy discussing their beliefs. However, building rapport with men was generally harder than building rapport with women. One contributing factor was that it was more difficult to arrange informal contact with male participants because it was considered somewhat inappropriate for a man and woman to be alone together. Mostly, though, my lack of understanding was due to my own limitations. There is much I simply do not know about the way men of my society think and the assumptions they make (though I learned a great deal during the course of this study). While I have collected and presented what male informants told me as faithfully as possible, I do not know what insights or patterns I have missed.

Finally, I wish I had started with a more firm grounding in what psychologists call "human development." Most participants in the group studied were American college

students. It is clear from the developmental theory I did use that religion and life cycle interact in powerful ways (some of which will be discussed later), but I am not certain of the complete nature or extent of this interaction. This intersection is important enough to warrant study as a separate issue.

OVERVIEW

Both existing theory and original research will be used to explore the intersection of gender, power, world view, and theology. Chapter two examines theories of gender which relate to 'masculine' or 'feminine' world view and theology. These theories will be used later when looking at theology and behavior. Chapters three and four provide information on the contexts of general college student reality and of the particular group studied, respectively. Chapter five is a description of Christian theology as normally accepted by group members. Chapter six contains general information on individual participants and their interpersonal interactions. Chapters seven, eight, and nine deal with actual behavior regarding power, leadership, participation, and communication.

CHAPTER 2
GENDER, RELIGION AND THEORIES OF PATRIARCHY

Before describing the actual organization under study, I would like to discuss a few of the more useful theories regarding gender and religion. These perspectives are a part of social theory and not a description of the world view of my informants. The understandings of religion, society, and gender given in this chapter would likely be considered irrelevant (or even inaccurate) by ministry participants because they do not focus on improving one's spiritual life. Anthropologically, however, I believe that they can be effectively used to help organized patterns of belief and behavior for study.

GENDER AND PERCEPTION

Male domination has two faces--the overt domination of women by men and the more subtle domination of men over 'human' ideology. While it is true that women are participating more and with more power in many aspects of American society previously inaccessible to them, most of the contexts within which this participation takes place are still rooted in Patriarchal assumptions. Historically, men have dominated Western culture, and masculine perceptions have defined reality, set policy, and dictated action.

> "Our objective culture is thoroughly male. It is men who have created art and industry, science and commerce, the state and religion. The belief that there is a purely 'human' culture for which the difference between man and woman is irrelevant has its origin in the same premise from which it follows that such a

> culture does not exist--the naive identification of the 'human' with 'man'" (Simmel 1984: 67).

In American society, the male experience is considered the 'normal' one, and that particular perception is believed to represent the objective truth about the nature of the world. In contrast, the world view of women--when noticed at all--is considered abnormal and defective.

Generally speaking, the masculine perspective filters experience through assumptions of separation, hierarchy, and conflict. Separation is the belief that people and things are isolated and independent of one another-- for example, the 'soul' from the 'body,' person from person, culture from nature, and world from God (Gray 1982: 115, 120; Franklin 1988: 48). This may partly originate in the experience of being a man--in American society being male often means not being female. Furthermore, boys, while growing up are expected to break childhood relationships while little girls are allowed to mature "within existing relationships" (Gray 1982: 118). "The male has always said it is important to be autonomous, to be individuated. You grow up by separating yourself from your parents" (Gray 1982: 60).

Masculine assumptions of separation go beyond sharp distinctions of self and other. They also dichotomize aspects of life like "public and private, political and economic, body and mind, head and heart, etc." (Mies 1986: 35).

> Once life is broken down into separate concepts, these are arranged into hierarchies:
>
> "[The] thought-world of patriarchy got into ranking all diversity. We have developed veritable contact lenses through which we look every time we encounter diversity. And we always ask ourselves 'Which of us is better?' Whites look at blacks and ask 'Which of us is better?' Civilized look at 'primitive' and ask 'Which of us is better?....'
>
> "Diversity does not exist to be ranked. But in this patriarchal culture we simply do not know how to deal with diversity without ranking it" (Gray 1982: 101).

The universe is seen as hierarchical, with each 'individual' part placed somewhere in this hierarchy. A thing or person is more or less useful, more or less powerful, more or less moral, more or less good, more or less intelligent, and so on. For example:

> "Humans are above animals in this view of things, and we clearly label them as subhuman. Plants are below animals, because they don't even have the grace to move around as we and the animals do, but are rooted in the soil. And nature in this view is below everything else, completely material with no redeeming signs of spirit at all, consisting of inert rocks, stones, 'dirt,' and what we view as the 'inanimate' world" (Gray 1982: 84).

The world does not neatly fall into these hierarchies: individuals may constantly struggle to place themselves or their ideas/values into higher positions. This conflict can be symbolic or outright violent (Eisenstein 1979: 17; Tannen 1990: 24-25; Thorne 1982: 13). Because of this masculine world view, individual men and groups find themselves in adversarial relationships with women, the natural world, and other men.

While the masculine world view sees separation, hierarchy, and conflict, the feminine world view sees interactions in terms of relationships and connectedness. They understand life as "a community, a struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation," (Tannen 1990: 25). Persons are defined not by their independence but by their relationship to others. Mind and body, culture and nature, world and God are not in opposition to each other.

It is important to note that a man can choose the feminine perspective, and that women are frequently socialized to accept the masculine perspective as the 'real' one.

RELIGION AND PATRIARCHY

Masculine and feminine perspectives are useful concepts when discussing religion. A religion is defined as 'patriarchal' if its symbolism and mandates both support the subordination of women and promote the 'reality' of the masculine world view. Patriarchal religious systems can be identified by looking at the creative principal, the gender (masculine or feminine) world view, and the behavioral norms.

Peggy Reeves Sanday compared data from 150 societies looking for correlation between the source and nature of creative power and the distribution of secular power by

gender. In specific, she examined the genders and actions of deities in creation myths of these societies. She found that there were strong correlation between sex of creator and mode of creation:

> "Female creators originate from within something--such as the earth or water--and create from their bodies. Male, animal, and Supreme Being creators originate from without--such as the sky or another land--and produce people magically. Couple creators, on the other hand, originate from within and without, but they tend to produce by natural processes" (1981: 57).

Sanday found that comparatively high gender equality was associated with societies having creative deities who were female or a male-female couple, while those with male deities were usually heavily male dominated. Furthermore, these two factors, nature of creative force and degree of gender equality, also correlated with world view. Is life seen as safe or dangerous? unified or fragmented? cooperative or competitive? Generally where the creative principal is female or a couple women are not seen as sinful or dangerous (Sanday 1981: 33), nature is not seen as a hostile place that must be controlled (Sanday 1981: 65), and conflict is de-emphasized. Not only are male creation metaphors usually accompanied by male dominance over women; they are more conflict oriented and tend to "reflect on the evil of women, separate humans from the divine, and introduce bloodshed and war" (Sanday 1981: 34).

For example, Carol Ochs uses the Judeo-Christian creation story as an example of the separation characteristic of the masculine world view:

> "One such cosmology, typical of patriarchal religious systems, portrays the creator as artist, and mankind as his work of art. This view is illustrated in the Old Testament. God like a potter, fashions man from clay, views the finished product critically, and declares that is good. The creation, man, is wholly external and removed from the creator, God" (1977: 3).

Masculine creation scripts, then, are compatible with masculine world views (and vice versa). The masculine world view, however, is also often made explicit in the cosmology of patriarchal religions. Separation, hierarchy, and conflict can be justified by the neat separation of the universe into constituent parts and the ranking of these parts into a system where 'higher' parts are more valuable than and have dominion over 'lower' ones (Gray

1982: 84). This may be symbolized directly, as Ochs observes, "In patriarchal religions, God, if he is not in the highest heavens, is a least atop a mountain, such as Olympus or Sinai" (1977: 104). God is often pictured as king, general, head of household (father), etc. Other supernatural beings (lesser gods, angles, demons, spirits, or whatever), societies, people (leaders and followers or males and females), specific animals, objects, and so on are given their place in this hierarchy, although specific placement varies from society to society.

Often religious and social hierarchies support one another.

> "By patriarchy we mean not only the subordination of females to males, but the whole structure of father-ruled society: aristocracy over serfs, masters over slaves, king over subjects, racial overlords over colonized people. Religions that reinforce hierarchical stratification use the Divine as the apex of this system of privileged control" (Reuther 1983: 61).

The power of God acts as a model for human power arrangements.

Patriarchal hierarchy is often characterized by conflict. Individuals may struggle to rise or refuse to accept the domination of those above them (Sanday 1981: 40). There may also be conflict from without, an external threat or evil. The world is defined as 'us' versus 'them' (separation again) with 'us' in opposition to 'them' and trying to defeat 'them.' (Meis 1986: 74-75). Good is in conflict with evil, angels are in conflict with demons, the faithful are in conflict with heretics.

Finally, patriarchal religions will present women as morally and intellectually inferior and lay out specific rules requiring women to be subordinate to men. For example, the Gimi, a society in New Guinea, find women inherently destructive of spirituality. Gillison states, "Gimi men's mundane existence is degraded and their mortal potential is unfulfilled because of the inescapable nearness of women inside the hamlet and of the powerful contamination which female sexuality exudes" (1990: 143-144). The Mundurcu, another male dominated culture, believed that women originally controlled access to sacred power and dominated men. The women were not able to handle their power correctly, however, so men stole it from them (Sanday 1981: 39-40). Such definition of women's

inherent sinfulness or incompetence is often the basis for specific rules excluding women from power positions (Daly 1985: 3).

SHORTCOMINGS AND USES

The most important problem with this set of theories is their globality. The crux of the issue is hooked on a single assumption, one that is assumed to be equally useful (or almost so) cross-culturally: "that women are human beings of quite a different sort from men. Therefore the way they know is quite distinct from the way men know" (Wilson-Kastner 1983: 11-12). Feminine world view and masculine world view are somehow linked to sex, and not assumed to be a product of culture. It presupposes that women and men from all backgrounds are motivated in the same ways. This is false:

> "...Women come only in different classes, races, and cultures: there is no 'women' and no 'woman's experience.' Masculine and feminine are always categories within every class, race and culture, in the sense that women's and men's experiences, desires and interests differ within every class, race, and culture" (Harding 1987: 7).

A theory is not an independent entity objectively describing the workings of some part of the universe--it is a product of the perspective of it's creator. For the most part these theories of Patriarchy were created by White, middle-class, Western women. It is impossible to completely separate "the knower from what he knows" (Smith 1987: 88). The ideas generated by these scientists and feminists may not be generalizable to humanity-at-large, and may not even reflect the perspectives of minority groups within their own cultures.

With this in mind, I still believe the use of patriarchy theories can be productive. Since the group under study is part of one of the cultures Patriarchy theory was developed to examine and has been used in the past to shed light on different aspects of that culture, it seems appropriate to use it as a research tool.

In this work Patriarchy theory will be used to explore the interaction of theology and behavior. It would be expected that a religious belief system emphasizing partiarchial elements such as separtation, hierarchy, conflict, the valuation of men over women, and mores requiring the subordination would be associated with a lack of attention to the feminine world view and the absence of female leadership.

CHAPTER 3
THE ORGANIZATION STUDIED

In order to examine the relationship between religion and gender, I studied a small, highly active religious group. Before analyzing either theology or gender, it is necessary to present a description of this organization, its social context, and its membership.

THE POPULATION

The subject group is a full time 'campus ministry,' a registered student organization of a large Michigan university. This particular group is part of a network with branches on several campuses. Long term plans and budgeting for the different branches is done by a board of directors having both male and female members, with coordination of branch activity supervised by an executive director. Each individual site is run by a full time campus minister, who is responsible for the day to day activity of the branch, including student counseling, content and form of fellowship meetings, looking after the group's student residences, and organizing additional activities to meet the religious and social needs of participants. Different branches are similar in ideology and activity. Several individuals had transferred from one branch to another when they moved and/or graduated if their new location allowed it.

The group which agreed to participate in this research (in this work referred to as the Ministry) has been in place for over 20 years. It has no official membership, but while

I was there it had roughly 75 regular participants, which the campus minister loosely defines as attendance of fellowship at least once every two weeks. This base population included about 60 undergraduate or graduate students attending the university and 15 young adults (age 36 or younger) living in the local community. Most non-students were alumni who started coming to the ministry while they were students. While 85% of the regular participants were White, there had, in the past year or so, been a drive for international and minority recruitment. International students (almost all Asian) made up about 12% of the regular participants. Recruitment of African American students had been less successful--only 4 were regularly attending as of the end of data collection. However this number was growing. During fall semester 2/3 of all participants were female. Although this imbalance stimulated more concentrated recruitment of males, I observed no significant change in the gender ratio.

HISTORY

The first branch of the Ministry was begun in 1969 when a local Christian church, noticing that the university population was not being reached by the local religious community, decided to place a minister on campus. A corporation was set up, a board of directors selected, and a first campus minister found. For the first five years or so, attendance was only about twenty people. The campus minister would walk through the dormitories, looking for students who might be interested in attending Bible studies. As the Ministry became more viable, the campus minister sought support from other churches and private individuals. In 1974 attendance climbed suddenly to more than 100. Then, since it was firmly established on one campus, the Ministry began to branch out to other locations.

It is important to note that for college students, the history of their campus or extra-curricular group, while it may be interesting, has little direct effect on daily life. The involvement of most Ministry participants is four years or less, and their memory is consequently as short. While I was there two or three people had been around long enough to remember what happened seven or ten years ago--conflicts, particularly influential individuals, a wonderful activity, the arrival of a new campus minister, and so on; but most could not take such a long view of things. Participants are young people, living in the present for the future. They are involved in the problems they are having today, the people they know and care about now. A few alumni keep in regular contact, and these are known, at least by name, to most participants. Many, however, know almost nothing about the Ministry's history or past participants. Individuals might express some interest when asked about history, but had taken no initiative to learn about it. Sometimes someone who has been gone for a few years will come to a fellowship or send a letter that is shared with the group. These visitors are made to feel welcome and return letters are often sent (sometimes by persons who never actually met the sender). Such contact, however, is not very common and is most meaningful only to those who actually knew the people involved. The urgency of present relationships and interactions is too great to leave much room for the past.

ORGANIZATION

The campus minister (ordained) is in charge of both the theological and social aspects of the organization. The Ministry Team was developed to provide additional help. This is a committee of regular participants of both genders who have the experience, commitment, spiritual growth, and time to provide special support. The Ministry Team serves as a kind of funnel for new ideas. Any participant, as well as the campus minister,

can suggest a special activity or new program, but it is normally the Ministry team that examines the suggestion's usefulness and feasibility, as well as helps implement an activity or change in policy. The Ministry Team has run the ministry for a few weeks in the campus minister's absence. The Ministry Team also coordinates the activities of the prayer group or Hedge Team.

The campus ministry maintains two residences, one for men (six people) and one for women (five people). Most inhabitants are students, although interns and recent graduates may also live there. Each residence is guided by a Head of House, who coordinates chores and diffuses conflicts.

The ministry usually has a student intern, a theology or ministry student who absorbs some of the work load while learning about student ministry. An intern can provide counseling, teach lessons, and lead bible studies. An intern is not automatically part of the Ministry Team, although at the time of the study, the intern did serve as a member.

A number of roles may be taken by regular participants. The music leader selects most songs used in worship and leads the accompaniment (guitar). International student coordinator is a new position, created to more systematically locate and encourage interested foreign students. A leadership position without formal title but having real responsibility is being in charge of the Ministry's food and overseeing the volunteer cooks for Sunday night dinners. Participants also serve as leaders for smaller subgroups (three to twenty people) that focus on 'Accountability' (personal and spiritual growth) and Bible study.

It is important to note that these positions cannot be fit into a comprehensive organizational chart. There is no rigid hierarchy or bureaucracy. Most of the individuals in the roles listed above--as well as most of the active participants--were friends. I believe that more decisions were the product of interaction between friends than between formal or semi-formal roles.

ACTIVITY

FELLOWSHIP

The ministry meets twice weekly (Sunday and Wednesday) for evening fellowship. Both meetings follow the same general pattern.

Sunday fellowship follows a meal at the women's residence. Dinner is cooked by two or three volunteers and served buffet-style. Costs are defrayed by small donations ($3 or less) collected in a bucket placed on the table. Diners eat in the living room. Twenty to forty people usually attended, so most people sit on the floor.

After dinner, participants convene in the outbuilding behind the women's house. More people attend the Fellowship than the dinner, but it is difficult to say just how many more, because people continue to arrive throughout the meal. The outbuilding is 41' X 19'. The floor is carpeted. There are four couches, but most people sit on the floor. The room can hold about fifty people comfortably. At the front of the room is a white marker board. On either side of it is a low table to hold bread and grape juice for communion. In front of the writing board is an upside-down milk crate with a small pillow on top. This is often used as a seat for individuals addressing the group from 'up front.'

After greeting everyone, giving a brief overview of the night's lesson, and passing the sign-in sheet used to take roll, the campus minister turns the floor over to the music leader. The person sitting next to the light switch (usually the same person) turns the lights down. This is so that the lyrics to the songs, which are printed on transparencies and projected onto the white marker board at the front of the room, can be easily seen. If a specific song is new or especially complex (is a round, has unusual tempo changes, or has echo parts, etc.) the music leader provides brief instructions. Also, if there is a special message in a song that she wants participants to think about she can mention it then. The music leader and from one to three other guitarists provides accompaniment for between

three and six songs. The music helps participants relax, put aside distractions, and 'focus in on God.' I believe it also helps create the spirit of community that is further expanded during Sharing Time and Prayer Requests.

After the first group of songs comes Sharing Time. The lights are turned up and the campus minister, intern, or other regular participant comes to the front of the room and initiates a dialog with the others. Taking the topic of the night's lesson as a starting point, the speaker asks about a specific way the issue affected the lives of those present. People signal their desire to answer by raising their hands, and are called upon by the moderator. If few answers arise or those given are not quite what the moderator has in mind, it is up to the him to rephrase the question or guide the discussion. Sharing Time usually takes seven to ten minutes and ends when no one has anymore to add.

After Sharing Time the lights are dimmed for three or four more songs.

Following the second song set is Prayer Requests. This is usually lead by two people--one sitting or standing in front of the group and calling on people, and the other recording each speaker's name and request on the board. A person wishing to make a request raises his or her hand, and when called upon explains what he or she would like 'lifted up' (given into God's care). Usually the item is a request for help, either for the speaker or for a friend, acquaintance, or relative. Topics lifted up include health, grades, employment, poor attitude, travel and transportation, interpersonal conflict, perceived assault on religious position by secular society, housing, and the spiritual needs of specific non-Christians. The other kind of prayer request is a 'praise' or acknowledgment of a specific blessing or answered prayer. After a request is made, other participants raise their hands to volunteer to 'lift up' that particular item. When no more requests are made, participants rise, stand in a circle, and join hands for prayer, which is lead by the campus minister and/or one or two participants.

After prayer is Communion. This is prefaced with a brief instruction, or 'Communion Meditation,' given by the campus minister, intern, or a male participant. The

length of this lecture is about five minutes, but it varies. It integrates a particular Bible verse(s) and thoughts on the meaning and impact of Communion, or on problem attitudes that should be addressed before taking Communion. This is followed by a short prayer and silence during which participants come to the front of the room. On each side of the writing board is a small table set up for Communion. The host is large and round like a cookie, and participants break pieces from it themselves. Both small, individual cups and a single communal cup are provided.

When no more people come forward, the lesson begins. It is almost always taught by the campus minister, although the intern, spiritually mature male participants, and guests from outside also sometimes teach. The teacher hands out a one page outline which contains the main points of the lesson and identifies the central Bible verses. Most participants take notes on the outline during the lesson. When a biblical passage is used, those participants with Bibles (about 2/3 of the whole) turn to the page, and the teacher might ask for volunteers to read aloud. Lesson topics include improving attitudes, male/female relationships and '(sexual) purity,' baptism, salvation through grace, and relationship of particular passages to daily life. Ideally, the lesson lasts thirty minutes, but in practice it usually lasted forty to forty-five.

After the lesson, participants join hands in a circle to sing one of the shorter, better known songs (the overhead projector is not used at this time). Usually the campus minister asks anyone who might feel the need to make a decision about baptism or change some aspect of their spiritual life to come forward during the song. I recorded few people actually doing this, and four weeks or more could go by between occurrences.

After announcements and a final prayer, the formal fellowship is over, but participants often remain fifteen to thirty minutes talking informally. Topics of these conversations may be unrelated to the ministry, deal with ministry related activities or social relationships, or focus on an individual's religious difficulties or insights.

Wednesday's Fellowship is much like Sunday's, with a few differences. On Wednesday 1) There is no meal served 2) Fewer songs are sung: the total might be as low as five, 3) Songs are usually chosen by the campus minister, who might join the guitar accompaniment and might add brief discussions between individual songs, 4) The collection bucket is passed around after Prayer Requests, and 5) There is no communion.

BAPTISISM

The Ministry performed 14 baptisms between the start of the school year and March 14. The ceremony was usually held in the baptismal of a nearby church, although a local river was also sometimes used. Any Christian can perform a baptism. The person performing the ceremony is selected by the person being baptized, and is usually the campus minister or the participant who has been instructing or ministering to baptizee. Occasionally, two people perform the ceremony together.

Many baptisms are held right after Fellowship so that as many participants as possible can attend. After the regular ceremony is over, participants wanting to watch the baptism carpool to the host church. While those who would be in the water change into clothes they do not mind getting wet, the music leader, with her guitar, leads the others in song (since there is no overhead projector, selections for this tend to be either those songs frequently sung or very short and simple so that most people know the words). When they are ready, the baptizer asks the initiate who Jesus Christ was. There is no formula answer, but responses usually identified Him as the Son of God or a Savior from sin. The initiate then follows the baptizer into the water, which is about waist deep, and stands with his/her right side facing the audience. He/she holds the nose with the right hand and the right wrist with the left hand. The baptizer stands on the initiate's left, facing the observers. Saying, "Because of your confession of Jesus as God's son, I baptize you in the name of God, the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit for the remission of your sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit" (from Acts 2:38), the baptizer lowers the initiate briefly into the water. While

they change into dry clothes, the observers sing. When they are done changing and have returned, the observers cluster around the initiate for a final prayer. Finally, the new Christian is welcomed into the spiritual family with hugs and congratulations.

PRAYER BREAKFASTS

During fall semester some participants began to meet for special breakfasts as an experiment. At first these met at 7:00 a.m. on alternate Fridays. As many as twenty people attended, and food (French toast, yogurt and homemade granola, pancakes, etc.) was prepared by volunteers. During spring semester this activity became more routine. Meetings were held every week, attendance dropped to twelve or less, and the food was consistently cold cereal, milk, orange juice, and toast with cream cheese. While talk tends to be secular and playful while people are actually eating, when participants are done they become more serious. Everyone chooses a section of Sunday's Fellowship (for example, Communion Meditation, Music, attendance, Sharing Time, etc.) to pray for. Then they join hands and take turns praying aloud for their sections. Individuals not wishing to pray aloud for some reason signal the next person by squeezing his or her hand. Breakfast ends shortly before 8:00. Those with cars then transport those without them to early classes or jobs.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

The ministry also meets for special occasions. For example, eleven participants went Christmas caroling outside nearby dorms after fellowship. In January, Chinese New Year was celebrated at the women's residence. It was attended both by (White and Asian) regular participants and other Chinese students (about twenty foreign students attend a special Bible study, but did not usually attend fellowship because of language problems.) A third special activity is All Night Prayer, one of which was in planning during data collection. Finally, twice a year the parent organization holds a weekend retreat. The

retreats are specifically for participants from all branch campuses, but any interested person, student or non, can attend.

SMALL GROUPS

The ministry has organized small group activity for both regular and non-participants. During my observation, a total of six small Bible studies (five to twenty members) existed for both dorms and populations with special needs (i.e. graduate or international students). These were lead by participants.

Another kind of small group is 'Accountability.' Ideally, an Accountability Group is made up of two co-leaders and from two to six members. However some groups only have one leader, and many one-on-one ministries could be considered to be Accountability Groups. Members of an Accountability Group meet weekly to set spiritual, physical, and social goals for themselves. Then, through discussion and emotional support, members help each other meet these goals. Members talk about religious insights and questions, but also share important personal issues and problems. Many groups also include some Bible study. At last count there were 21 accountability groups/one-on-one ministries.

CHAPTER 4
THE MINISTRY AND STUDENT REALITY

THE UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

The Ministry is oriented primarily toward students. The social context shapes the participants' daily lives is that of a large university campus. The world they as students live in is distinctly different from what students call the 'real world' (Moffett 1989: 65). Their assumptions and needs are formed by the particular developmental stage they have reached. The combination of these social and psychological worlds comes together to create a context that guides both individual participants and the Ministry culture.

UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

In American society, higher education is unique in it's structural format, potential interpersonal interactions, and stimulus for personal growth. Each individual facility is also unique. The pattern of daily life for students at this university are different than those of 'main-stream society.' Individuals do not get up in their private residence, commute to work, remain at work for eight hours, and return home to engage in their private lives. The facility is largely residential; for the first year or more most students are required to live in dormitories unless they live nearby with their parents. While size varies a little, dorm rooms are very small, and most are shared by between two and four people. Bathrooms are either small and shared by the occupants of two rooms or large and shared by the occupants of an entire floor. Almost all furniture is provided by the university. There is

very little privacy, very little quiet, and very little room. Dining is communal, scheduled to meet the needs of the kitchen staff, and generally considered unappetizing. Cooking in the rooms (with the exception of microwaves) is prohibited. Classes are not held in a formal location completely separate from personal living; all are within walking distance and some are even held in dormitory buildings. Students spend between twelve and eighteen hours a week in class. These hours are not usually arranged in the classic 'nine-to-five' pattern, but may be scheduled anywhere between eight in the morning and ten at night. Students must also allot time for study, although when and how much is optional. Class time is interspersed with this study, part time jobs, naps, sports, clubs, shopping, computer games, laundry and other bits of personal life. People, too, can not be divided neatly into 'family and friends' and 'co-workers and acquaintances.' The individuals one sleeps with, goes to class with, eats with, works with, and plays with may be the same. Or they might not. These irregularities of schedule and interaction continue even if a student chooses to move off campus in the junior or senior year. The unique requirements of campus life spill over in to all aspects of daily life.

The university also provides a unique situation in regard to the kinds of people with whom one is likely to spend these large amounts of time. The pool of possible acquaintances is at the same time both limited and expanded. It is limited largely to people of the same age and stage of maturity. It is very rare, for example, to see anyone elderly on campus. A few professors are in their late sixties, but they are not generally available for personal interactions. A few undergraduates are older than average. There are graduate students. Professors, administrators, and support staff are seen occasionally. However, while students may interact with the people in these roles, these adults generally have very little impact as *persons.* There is also no major contact with people under the age of eighteen. Students may have younger brothers and sisters, attended combined high-and middle-schools, baby sat, or talked to children in their own neighborhoods, but the campus contains very few children. Those that are present (usually children of graduate students)

are generally confined to the university's apartments, and do not come into frequent contact with the rest of the population.

At the same time there is an increase in the diversity of those within their age group. College is often a person's first intimate experience with people of different backgrounds, values, or ethnicity (Brown and Christiansen 1991; 78-79). On the campus in question, homosexuality, discrimination against minorities, handicapper rights, and women's issues are not theoretical questions one hears about in the news. In the dorm rooms, cafeterias, and classrooms students are in close proximity to people for whom these issues are of important, daily concern. They meet people from other countries who may have an entirely new heritage and set of assumptions. At the university attended by most participants, Caucasians made up 79.9% of the population. 7.1% of students were African-American, 5.9% were international students (from a total of 111 different countries), and the remaining 7.1% was made up of Chicanos, Native Americans, Asian Pacific-Americans, and 'none of the above.' This suggests that at least one-fifth of the people a student came into random contact with (dorm assignments, class composition, etc..) would be of a different ethnic group. This variety in points of view and needs creates an interpersonal situation very different from that which can be found in most of American society.

While dealing with this new variety, students must also negotiate new relationships by new patterns. Roommates are strangers who quickly learn the intimate details of each other's lives. They often have no special loyalty to one another, no common history, no clearly defined existing relationship; but they may be forced by proximity to witness the most private and secret parts of each other's existence. A dorm room is the closest thing to one's own territory, and it must be shared with someone who may use it in ways that one finds annoying or impinging. (Friday 1989: 190). Moving off campus to live with friends presents its own problems. Interaction patterns are not negotiated, as they are at home or even in a dormitory. Cooking, cleaning, shopping, guest etiquette, quiet hours, etc., must be negotiated by the members of the household. Once a system is in place, it takes effort to

maintain it (Wertz 1989: 218-219). Besides the necessity of living arrangements, students must create new relationships of companionship. Success varies: some build strong, supportive networks of friends, and some do not. The process is not easy for anyone, and it may be extremely frustrating and painful. Newman and Newman state that about 25% of college freshmen feel "extremely lonely at some time during any given month" (1987: 1992).

These differences of lifestyle and relationships serve to accentuate the rapid growth and change that occurs at this point in the life cycle. 'Leaving for school' often marks the beginning of a major transition in a young adult's life. They leave behind familiar relationships. Away from parental supervision and support, they take on a greater degree of independence (Newman and Newman 1992: 5-6). During this period, they also build their own values. Adolescents see a world of black/white, good/bad (Bocknek 1980: 77). The university, due to its formal (classes) and informal (diversity in peer groups) nature, introduces shades of gray--and also blue, green, pink, and orange. Before, all reasonable people may have taken the same (perfect, just, and useful) view point, but now there are reasonable people who disagree. Many students begin to experiment with ideals, beliefs, and principals. "In trying to settle their own values and goals, they explore options. They believe passionately in something for a while, and then six months latter believe passionately in something quite different" (Newman and Newman 1992: 39). Others cling more tightly to the ideas they grew up with, and some retreat into moral relativism. At the university in question, the official administration standpoint is that diversity is valuable. Individual students, though, seem less concerned with theoretical diversity than with promoting their own agendas (women's issues, minority rights, sexual freedom, politics, environmentalism, or a particular religious perspective). A relatively small number of students loudly and clearly present their positions through rallies, meetings, letters to the newspaper, informal discussions, etc. Conflict normally remains in the battleground of ideas, however, not with violence or coercion. Within this storm of perspectives and

needs, students must build their own values and define their own priorities. Most students respond by staying out of conflict--they may take a position, but do not make a public issue of it. Their goal is not to reform others, but to avoid other's inflicting their beliefs upon them. Though they may appear to be lost in the petty stresses of campus life (bad food, long lines, bureaucratic mistakes) moral and social issues are usually confronted sooner or later. The response may be loud or quiet, firm or tentative, but the effect is real.

This experience--new lifestyle, new friends, changes in existing relationships, and reformation of values can be very traumatic for students. Without familiar situations and social reinforcement, one's security in identity may start to erode. Unsure what is going on in new situations, isolated from friends and family, worried about the future, and facing a multi-faceted attack on values and assumptions, students may "experience very intense feelings of disorientation or loss" (Brown and Christiansen 1990: 71-72). Individuals may face and work through the grief this uncertainty causes. They may also manifest escape (leaving school, taking drugs, withdraw from educational or social activity, etc.) displaced anger, or over-compensation (heavy partying). All of this is traumatic.

The university ought to be fun. Theoretically, opportunity, empowerment, and responsibility overflow. The future is near and possible and it can be anything. No adult supervision is handy to squelch an irresponsible (and fun) whim. Any club you ever wanted to join is here, and any play you ever wanted to see is likely to pass through eventually. For students, though, reality is not so secure and optimistic. They know that the national economic situation has caused a decline in employment opportunities, and this frightens them (Green 1989: 39). On campus there is enough violence (including rape and occasional racial conflict) to make students distinctly nervous. Some students--though not all--follow international conflicts and crises with concern. They face these stresses during an important transition from child to adult. College life consists of a long and peculiar period of marginality. Alternative values are presented, perhaps for the first time. Identity

is reforming. Family and old friends are far away and new relationships are not necessarily easy to build. This special reality permeates all aspects of life.

GENDER AND THE COLLEGE STUDENT

Men and women do not experience college identically. They enter with different intentions and expectations and have different gender identities. Interestingly, these identities are not quite the same on campus as they are in the wider society.

In 1989 a national survey of college freshmen revealed definite differences between males and females. Men were more likely to be politically conservative and were more concerned with material success. Women tended to place slightly more emphasis on personal growth and community service (Newman and Newman 1992: 43-44). This is to be expected in a society that assigns men to instrumental and women to affective roles.

Ironically, these roles are often not reinforced on campus. Higher education was originally a male domain, and to a large degree, women have had to adapt to what is still, in may ways, foreign territory. As Moffat discovered when studying dorm life at Rutgers University, gender convergence is not necessarily egalitarian:

> "...the price that the women had had to pay for being treated as near equals in the coed dorms was to act like men, to move more in the direction of older male gender patterns than men had moved toward older female patterns" (1989: 47).

This unbalanced convergence is not confined to the dorms of one college campus. At the university attended by most Ministry participants, normal dress for both sexes was jeans and tee-shirts, not skirts and heels. People were more likely to communicate through what Moffat calls "Busting" (aggressive teasing) than friendly affection. Going to bars and increased sexual activity, for example, once only seen as the prerogatives of men, have increasingly been legitimate options for women as well. Though this growth in 'freedom of choice' appears laudable, it may also have brought with it restrictions the women involved find damaging: if freedom to choose to go out and drink becomes pressure to do

so, or the acceptance of sexuality means the denial of more emotionally and spiritually committed relationships, women may feel that they have not gained anything at all.

Campus life is highly patriarchal, but it is a patriarchal system that demands the participation of women. While in the 'real world' women may by excluded from some male hierarchies or expected to have feminine world views (that is emphasize connectedness and interpersonal relationships) in the university women, as students, are daily participants in a hierarchy that includes administration, professors, teaching assistants, resident assistants, upper classmen, freshmen, etc. Though they may not perceive or act in ways identical to male students, the ideal is the same for both genders. Also, relationality may be disguised as conflict ('Busting') or simply deemed inappropriate. Finally, it might be argued that the informal division of campus into special interest groups (Blacks, feminists, handicappers, etc.) and the formal division by major course of study are signs of patriarchal ideology as well.

Gender is an issue on campus, just as it is an issue in the 'real world.' It is not, however, the same kind of issue in both places. Students have had eighteen years or more to learn and create a gendered niche for themselves, but the social rules are not the same within the university's walls.

CAMPUS AND RELIGION

The university has 35-40 religious organizations officially registered or otherwise associated with the school. Most of these are Christian, although the variation includes Hindu, Judaic, and Islamic groups. There are also about 20 churches within close walking distance of campus. Most students do not make much use of these facilities, however. Generally speaking, religion is not an important part of daily life. Groups such as Right to Life, the Gay-Bi-Lesbian Alliance, NOW, and various cultural or minority associations are active and vocal, but religious organizations rarely engage in the more high-profile dialogues. Most religious issues are probably faced individually and privately.

DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY

The angst and pain endured by students as part of the college experience may, in fact, be rooted in deeper developmental processes. Many psychologists believe that identity formation (at least in America) follows a distinct pattern.

Identity, according to Ruthellen Josselson, "is the stable, consistent, and reliable sense of who one is and what one stands for in the world" (1987: 10). In 1966 James Marcia defined four possible statuses of identity development (1966 551-552): Identity achievement" means that the subject has experienced a crisis and selected an identity with regard to ideology and goals. "Identity diffusion" indicates that there is no commitment to ideology or beliefs. "Identity moratorium" means that the subject is currently "in the crisis period with commitments rather vague; he is distinguished from the identity diffusion subject by the appearance of an active struggle to make commitments" (1966 552). The last category is "identity foreclosure," which indicates a subject who has "had no crisis, but is committed to the values and goals to which he was socialized" (1966: 552). According to Marcia, this typology provides an exhaustive and significant set of categories into which all individuals can be placed.

Although identity statuses were originally created to describe male developmental patterns, subsequent studies involving female subjects found that the typology can be applied similarly to both sexes. The implications of identity status appear to differ for men and women, however. Studies correlating identity status with ego development and social adjustment have suggested that specific identity statuses can have different effects on the way one relates to the world for each sex. For example, Hodgson and Fischer studied achievement in particular aspects of personal development (occupation, religion, politics, sex values, and gender roles) and found that all areas to not always develop at the same rates and that while males tended to form achievement identities for intrapersonal spheres (occupation, religious ideology, and political ideology) before interpersonal spheres (sexual

values and gender roles), among females there was much more variation in which the different facets were dealt with (1981: 685). In another study, Ginsburg and Orolofsky suggest that women with moratorium identity may experience greater internal conflict and negative social pressure than men with moratorium identity because of societies beliefs about female 'dependence' and 'passivity' (1981: 299, 306).

According to this perspective, the crisis often experienced by college students are not the result of the stresses created by higher education as an institution, but are the result of natural developmental processes.[1]

MINISTRY PARTICIPANTS AS STUDENTS

The Ministry must be understood as a part of this context. Most Ministry participants are students, or first came to the Ministry as students. This particular relationship to God and each other is their answer to unfamiliar surroundings, loneliness, confusion, bewildering diversity, and value uncertainty. It is an almost consciously achieved identity (even those participants raised as Christians are expected to examine the ways their beliefs apply to their lives), one that represents a choice for a particular view of the world, a particular morality, and a particular style of interpersonal interaction. It is also a rejection of some of the solutions many other students have chosen. It is important to explore what has brought them to this answer.

Their answer to questions of values, goals, and identity is God. Some were raised as Christians and had their beliefs challenged by the secular assumptions of faculty or peers. Others had had little interest in religion, but found alternative perspectives inadequate. Ministry theology was big enough to meet the overwhelming needs these individuals had when trying to define their lives: Is life difficult? Have there been problems you cannot solve by yourself? Don't worry. As bad as things get, it is all part of

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[1]I could find no example, however, of identity development research done on anyone but college students. Since (obviously) not all 18-21 year olds go to college I am not convinced about the universal usefulness of this theory.

God's plan and will be used for his results. Do you doubt your worth? Do you look at your failures and faults and get disgusted? Take peace--God loves you, and will accept you no matter what you do as long as you accept Him. Are you worried about the future or unsure what to do? Give the dominion over your life to God. Things will turn out the way they ought to. Are the arguments both for and against opposing moral positions attractive and plausible? Answer your confusion with the Bible. Not all the answers are easy to live with, especially at first, but you have the comfort of knowing that they are absolutely right.

Participating in the Ministry is also a choice for a particular way of relating to other people. What other people feel, the difficulties they face, the insights they have, and their self images are important. Mutual support is a conscious goal that individuals enjoy striving to meet. Pursuit of this ethic of care is received differently by male and female participants. In some ways it seems more consciously embraced by the men because American male gender roles make relating through emotions and mutual vulnerability very difficult. In interviews, several spoke of the need for things like "love, service, and mercy" very reverently. The ministry may provide one of their first opportunities to express these. Female participants, while more experienced with this context, also seemed to take its existence a little more for granted: they are part of the women's expected role. On a college campus, however, women may not often get the chance to take that role. The ministry may provide a rare chance for them to act like women.

As much as the Ministry represents a 'choice for,' it also represents a 'choice against.' All social problems that make a confused student worry that society is about to collapse are present on the university campus. Suddenly released from direct supervision, under tremendous pressure to perform academically, and confused, many students engage in unusual (even labeled by much of society as deviant) behavior: vandalism, drugs, alcohol abuse, rape, loud partying, 'new-age religion,' casual sex. There is little consensus among the student community as to whether all of these behaviors are actually bad or just different. Some participants were thoroughly socialized to find these behaviors

abhorrent. Others, however, were at some point attracted to one or more of them and turned to the ministry because they found the lifestyle unsatisfying or feared the consequences it might bring later. Most reject the position of moral 'relativism' (what developmental theory calls 'diffusion identity') that many other college students embrace. Instead, they make a decision for a particular world view and morality, one that provides meaning, security, clarity, and love.

CHAPTER 5
THE MINISTRY AND CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

The Ministry is Christian and bases its theology on the Bible (New International Version is preferred by most participants, although some use the New American Standard). Examining the Bible, however, will not provide an understanding of the Ministry's ideology, since the Bible is simply too big and too complex to be completely actualized by any group. As Alvin Schmide points out, it is those aspects of the work that are emphasized and used in daily life that define the nature of theology for all practical purposes (1989: 94-95). People focus on and use aspects of a belief system that meet their needs and are pertinent to the world they perceive they are living in (Kavanagh 1973: 166). Furthermore, participants in the Ministry differentiate themselves from other Christians. While not aligning with (or away from) any particular denomination, participants do emphasize that stating one is a Christian and attending church weekly (as they perceive most others doing) is not enough. A person has to work consistently at developing one's relationship with God.

Information on the beliefs of Ministry participants was gathered in a number of settings; formal Fellowship lessons, casual conversation, interviews, and song lyrics. All understandings of God and the world voiced to me, while similar, were not identical. Participants came from different countries, ethnicities, denominations, and personal histories. Also, there was a wide range in spiritual 'maturity' of respondents. While some participants had clear and detailed positions on certain issues, others had given little

thought to matters beyond the acceptance of Jesus, or had given these matters much examination but had as yet reached no conclusion.

BASIC THEOLOGY

God is all knowing, all powerful, and benevolent. God created the world and the people in it as described in Gen. 1 and 2. God created human beings 'in His image' (that is, like God, except less so and subordinate). While species of animals may change a little over time, evolution, as in the change from a species to another, does not happen. In reference to humans, God first created a man whose purpose was to love God and interact with Him. An attempt to use any of the animals as the man's primary companion and 'suitable helper' apparently failed (Gen. 2:20), so God took one of the man's ribs and made a woman out of it. God and the two people could talk to each other and be together. The man and woman lived in a perfect place and faced no adversity. Participants consider this pre-'Fall' status the optimal arrangement for human existence.

Besides the inhabitants of the Earth, God created other beings: angels. No one knows exactly what angles are, but there are some things that can be said about them. 1) Angels were created before humans, 2) Angels were created differently from humans, 3) They are not quite like spirits of dead people, but they don't have corporeal bodies, 4) Angles do not die, 5) Angels do not have sexes and probably do not reproduce themselves. One of these angles, Satan, thought he was better than God and disobeyed him. This angel was then separated from God and became His antagonist--a demon. (Satan is not God's opposite, because God is still more powerful). Some other Demons followed Satan and also became demons. The Demons' main objective is to thwart God, to challenge His authority. To spite God, they try to keep people from knowing Him. They encourage

people to disobey God and hurt each other. This is visualized as 'spiritual warfare,' literal, daily conflict between good and evil.

Satan started this conflict with the first man and woman:

> "And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." (Gen. 2: 26-17)
>
> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden"?'
>
> The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, "You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you much not touch it, or you will die."'
>
> 'You will surely not die," the serpent said to the woman. 'For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:1-6)

Satan, in the form of a snake, convinced the woman, and she convinced the man. Because people had disobeyed God (sinned), they could no longer be with him--clearly see how wonderful God was, be simply told what God wanted, take part in God's joy. Humans without God are ugly, empty, purposeless, and contaminated by evil. It is impossible for God, who is perfect, to be reconciled with people, who are tainted. So people could no longer live in paradise. They had to live in an imperfect world and cope with problems caused by demons. While God still did sometimes talk to people (Abraham, Moses, etc.), the fellowship that had existed before was gone.

Eventually, however, God did provide a way for people to remove the taint of sin and come back to Him again. Part of God came to earth and became a human being--Jesus Christ. Jesus, being both a human and God's son was in a unique position. First, he could teach people what God wanted them to do. Second, he could accept the punishment for humanity's disobedience and take the sin into himself. This removed the barrier between people and God.

IMAGES IN MUSIC

As Barbara Walker points out, important religious assumptions can be made explicit through song (1987: 30). The lyrics of songs used in formal fellowship were very helpful in defining issues and truths important to participants in the Ministry. The researcher observed 67 songs during formal Fellowship while collecting data. Of these, 19 were used more than once (the most any was used was four). A limited content analysis of these 19 provided additional insight into important themes and imagery.

Songs generally convey six basic kinds of messages: descriptions of the nature of God; examples of what God did; statements about Jesus's death and resurrection; descriptions of human beings; normative instructions for human behavior; and speech actions (i.e. stating one is presently praising or submitting to God). Most songs include more than one kind of message. Within these areas several themes emerge. In 17 of the 19 most commonly used songs, God is referred to as ruler, king, or lord. Twelve of these expand on the authority figure imagery to some extent. In related imagery, nine songs emphasize God's power. At this point, some typical examples of these descriptions of God would be useful.

> Majesty, worship His majesty!
> Unto Jesus be all glory, honor, and praise.
> Majesty, kingdom authority
> Flows from His thrown, unto His own: His anthem raise!
>
> So exalt, lift up on high the name of Jesus.
> Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus the King!
>
> Majesty, worship His majesty!
> Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all kings!
>
> ("Majesty." Jack Hayford.)

Also:

> You are King of creation and King of my life.
> King of the land and the sea.
> You were King of the heavens before there was time,

And King of all Kings you will be.
We bow down and we crown you the king.
We bow down and we crown you the king.
We bow down and we crown you the king.
King of all kings you will be.

(verse 2 "We bow down." Twila Paris.)

Both of the above songs, as well as containing reference to God's power and authority, also contain praise and worship. In fact, ten of the 19 repeated songs contain explicit statements that people should worship/praise God and/or were doing so at that moment.

Eight songs remind participants that they are not independent creatures: humans need God and must submit and put effort into getting closer to him. This message is particularly explicit in the song "More Love."

More love. More power.
(More love)[1] (More Power)
More of you in my life.
(I want more)
More love. More power.
(More love) (More Power)
More of you in my life.

I will worship you with all of my heart.
I will worship you with all of my mind.
I will worship you with all of my strength.
You are the lord.

More love. More power.
(More love) (More power)
More of you in my life.

(Jude De Hierro)

Other prominent themes include God as provider of good things (appearing seven times); God as creator; God as wonderful; God changing the minds or hearts of people (each appearing six times); God helping or strengthening people; God loving people; Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection, and consequent salvation through grace; people must accept/believe in God; and people must submit to God (each appearing five times).

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[1]Words in parenthesis to be sung by women in echo.

Most songs contain images that are overwhelmingly positive and benevolent. Two, however, portray God's relationship to the world as somewhat less than peaceful:

> In heavenly armor, we'll enter the land.
> The battle belongs to the Lord.
> No weapon that's fashioned against us shall stand.
> The battle belongs to the Lord.
>
> (Verse one "The Battle is the Lord's." Jamie Owens-Collins).

Similarly, "Awesome God," a favorite of many participants, include images of separation, conflict, violence, and hierarchy.

> When he rolls up his sleeves He ain't just puttin' on the ritz.
> Our God is an awesome God.
> There is thunder in His footsteps and lightning in His fists.
> Our God is an awesome God.
> The Lord wasn't jokin' when He kicked them out of Eden.
> It wasn't for no reason that He shed His blood.
> His return is very close so you better be believin' that
> Our God is an Awesome God.
>
> CHORUS: Our God is an awesome God.
> He reigns from heaven above.
> With wisdom, power and love.
> Our God is an awesome God.
>
> When the sky was starless in the void of the night
> Our God is an awesome God.
> He spoke into the darkness and created the light.
> Our God is an awesome God.
> Judgment and wrath he poured out on Sodom.
> Mercy and grace he gave us at the cross.
> I hope that we have not too quickly forgotten that
> Our God is an awesome God.
> CHORUS.
>
> (Rich Mullins)

Both clearly depict a conflict between good and evil. The confrontation is explicitly violent, and whether this is understood as metaphorical or physical violence, it is clear that victory will be taken by force.

Such out-group conflict is in stark opposition to the idealized perception of in-group relations, as presented in another song:

> Knit our hearts together like Jonathan and David.

Knit our hearts together like Ruth and Naomi.
Make us one, make us one like the Father and the Son.
There is no division beneath your love.
(This was normally sung two or three times)

("Knit Our Hearts" No citation available.)

This song suggests an intimacy of friendship normally considered rare in American Culture. Furthermore, this intimacy is ideally extended to all Christians, not just to those few one would select for companions.

Musical selections reiterate the beliefs shared by participants. They make explicit assumptions and emotions that otherwise might remain unspoken, and emphasize those areas participants find most important and relevant to their lives.

APPLICATION OF THEOLOGY TO LIFE

For Ministry participants it is not enough simply to be aware of the situation as described above (although this is a first step). For them, "Christianity is not a religion, it is a way of life." Religion is integrated into life by acceptance, the creation of a relationship with God, and appropriate behavior.

The first step is acceptance. Jesus' sacrifice does not automatically confer forgiveness on everyone; people have to choose to receive it. When a person becomes convinced of the basics of sin and redemption through Jesus, it is necessary to acknowledge the identity of Jesus, confess to having sinned, ask forgiveness, and submit to Jesus' sovereignty. The formal ceremony for this is baptism (full submersion). Baptism created forgiveness of sin. People who are baptized become a 'new creation'; sin (past, present, and future) and the separation from God it caused are completely forgiven and forgotten. They have renounced their independence and entered a relationship with God.

Baptism is only the beginning of life as a Christian for participants. It is followed by the development of a relationship with God. This is accomplished by getting to know God better and making changes within the self.

Answers to questions about God and his instructions are found in the Bible. A second resource for building this relationship is prayer. Prayer is for the benefit of humans, not God. In prayer, participants confess sins, give thinks for blessings, submit to God's will, and ask for help. This gives them a chance to reflect on both God and themselves, and gives God a chance to demonstrate power and benevolence by answering prayer. Finally, God is revealed when people praise Him. Praise can be part of prayer, song, or informal human interaction. Through it, participants remind themselves and each other how wonderful God is.

This relationship with God is pursued both publicly and privately. Public settings include Fellowship, Bible studies, Accountability Groups, baptisms, prayer breakfasts, church, one on one ministries, etc., as well as informal conversation before and after Fellowship or in the homes and job sites of participants. Life can be difficult and painful at times, even when one is not trying to make major personality changes. Participants rely heavily on one another for support and understanding. One's personal pain, failure, or difficulty are acceptable topics for discussion. Self disclosure is not normally met with embarrassment or disgust, but with empathy, offers of prayer, offers of material help, and Biblical citations of instruction of comfort.

Many participants also engage God privately in 'quiet times.' Quiet times are ten to sixty minute periods set aside every day for Bible reading, prayer, and reflection. Some participants also memorize Bible verses. Many use this time to try to determine God's will. If a person asks God to show him or her things in life that need to be done or changed, God 'convicts' them, or moves them to take the appropriate course.

Ideally, one's relationship with God changes over time. At baptism a new participant becomes a 'baby Christian,' someone who believes in God and accepts Jesus

into his or her life. By studying and praying, one allows God to make one grow into a 'young Christian.' A young Christian has begun to define the important issues in Christianity and life: What are my particular sins and what can I do about them? What is God's position on things like abortion, homosexuality, war, romantic love, etc.? With what perspective should I face problems? The questions vary from individual to individual. Finally, one moves into the different degrees of 'mature Christian,' someone still growing and improving, but already convicted of God's answers to some of the above questions.

A relationship with God has to be translated into action. While people are saved through 'grace' (that is, a person's sins were forgiven not because of good behavior but because Jesus died), salvation affects a person's personality and behavior.

The Bible contains specific instructions about how Christians should act. Participants attempt to follow these to the best of their understanding. These instructions include the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-17), as well as other rules like do not say destructive things (James 3: 9-12), do not get distracted by earthly things (Col: 32)--the complete list would be amazingly long. Few instructions are understood exactly the same way by all members. Some (perhaps seen as not particularly relevant to modern life) are not mentioned at all. For example, Titus 2:9 states "Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them." Since modern American society lacks institutional slavery this injunction has no literal usefulness. (It may also cause some anxiety as participants wonder if the Bible supported something as awful as slavery, but that is another issue.) Many of the formal religious rules found in the Old Testament (for example the dietary laws given in Lev. 11) are explicitly described as excluded, even though they are recorded in the Bible and some participants thought they contain many very good ideas. It is thought that these laws are too numerous and too complex, making them impossible to follow, easy to misinterpret, and requiring so much effort and time that there would be none left for growth.

Generally, most effort seems to focus on the following three areas: internal attitude, service, and ministry. Attitudes affect behavior. Furthermore, attitudes might get between a person and God. Pride, for example, can cause one to fail to submit to God's will. This is morally wrong and also unwise--since God is in a much better position to make decisions than humans. Finally, too much attachment to earthly pleasures (nice clothes, television, secular music, etc.) or difficulties (money problems, school grades, car trouble) can cause one to loose sight of spiritual issues, which are more important. Quiet times, Accountability Groups, informal conversation, one-on-one ministry, and fellowship sharing times may all be used by participants to air and work through personal attitude problems. Ideally, participants are always engaged in such attitude work. Self control has to be practiced, and even after a problem is thought conquered, slippage may occur. Furthermore, once one bad habit is under control, another might be revealed.

While attitude is focused inward, service is directed outward. A number of participants can quote or give references to Bible verses instructing people to help those in need (for example James 2: 15-17). This includes giving money and time to churches and charities, but is also to be a part of everyday interactions. Participants demonstrate service through volunteering to cook Ministry meals or doing dishes afterward, giving rides to participants without cars, teaching international students how to shop in America, etc. Service includes being polite to everyone, being cheerful, helping people without being asked, and so on. Service involves 'stewardship'--the belief that everything (money, houses, land, resources, food, and even 'Leggos' and comic books) is really owned by God. Therefore, it is up to people to make sure that these things are taken care of and used well. People are not to become attached to possessions and should loan them freely to anyone who asks. Ideally, participants are to serve everybody they come into contact with.

The final basic area of behavior is ministry. Grace can only come from repentance of sin and acceptance of Jesus Christ. With out this, a person is separated from God in life and is doomed to hell afterwards. Therefore, it is important that as many as people as

possible be saved. While a few participants do go in short (ten days to one month) ministry trips to other countries during school breaks, much more emphasis is on teaching people already around them. Theoretically, every non-Christian co-worker, roommate, classmate, and family member is seen as a mission opportunity. However, talking to people who do not want to listen is useless--worse, it might actually push people farther away. The first part of ministry, then, is to get people to ask. Participants see themselves almost as ambassadors for God. They try to always be clean, polite, helpful, patient, and good tempered. As far as I could determine, no regular participants drink or smoke, and only very few use 'foul language.' Many make it a special point to follow all traffic laws, be very friendly, and avoid any situation that might be misconstrued as sexually improper (a women and man should not be left alone together for a long period of time, especially behind a closed door.) They do these things because it is 'moral,' but also because they want non-Christians to see how they live. They want people to ask, 'Why do you act this way?' to see their lifestyle as attractive, or to feel comfortable coming to them to discuss problems.

When participants see someone they know living an immoral or dangerous lifestyle, having problems with stress or conflict, or asking questions about religion, they ask God to give them the opportunity to minister and the words to do it well.

The exact form of ministry varies since it is a product of the individuals and situations involved. Sometimes it is mostly listening. Other times it consists of giving unconditional love and support. God is often suggested as a solution for apparently non-religious problems--for example school stress, illness, interpersonal conflict, romantic problems, or unhappiness. Ministry is one reason for memorization of Bible verses: it is important to be able to document support for what one is saying.

Participants also minister to each other several commented that becoming a Christian does not mean an end to problems. New Christians often need someone

knowledgeable to answer their questions. Such ministry can be one on one, in accountability groups, or in Bible studies.

RELIGION AND GENDER

Public discussions that I witnessed about the nature of women and men (i.e. in lessons or group discussions) were calm, organized, and firm. Private conversations and interviews with individuals, however, showed a surprising diversity in answers and sometimes some tension. This suggests that the issue of gender was more problematic that the collective believed. There was no public conflict on this, however, for three reasons. First, conflict in any form is seen as a potential danger to the Ministry's primary purpose; submission to God's will, worship, and ministry. Gender roles are important, but not vital and should not be a source of divisiveness. Second, support for the official position on gender is taken from several Bible verses. As one informant explained, "you either believe the Bible or you don't, but you can't *argue* with it." Third, discussing the subject would probably not change anyone's mind. Many members are emotionally attached to one another. Few would be willing to endanger supportive relationships for the sake of an argument that would not alter the status quo.

Not everyone interviewed had given much prior thought to the relative roles of men and women. Most seemed more comfortable providing Biblical references on the subject than explaining their own understanding of it. The most commonly sited Biblical passages were Genesis 2 and 3 (containing different creations for men and women and the beginning of sin), 1 Timothy 2:12 "I do not permit a woman to have authority over a man; she must be silent," and Ephesians 5:22-25 and 28-33,

> "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the savior.

> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
>
> "....In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does for the church--for we are members of his body. "for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

Interpretation of these was not uniform. For example, some informants suggested the directive that women "shall not speak" in church may have been meant for a group where the women were too uneducated to teach, or where women were disrupting the service with questions. No one I talked to suggested that women must literally not say anything during religious activities. There was also no consensus as to whether the "men" referred to in these passages indicated all males or just adults.

Most did agree that the Ministry's standard position on women is this:

--Women can not have religious authority over men. They are not responsible for protecting men spiritually and can not create general policy governing men's behavior.

--Women can not formally teach men in a public setting. Teaching is usually defined for this purpose as expounding on or explaining the Bible or as telling people how God wants them to live. (This concept is often symbolized by participants as 'up front,' as in addressing a group from the front of the room.)

--Women can have authority over and publicly teach other women. This, in fact, is strongly encouraged, since it is thought that instruction between members of the same gender is more effective because of shared experiences/perspectives and the absence of sexual tensions.

--Women can teach men privately and informally.

--Everyone, regardless of gender, has the responsibility to 'suggest and rebuke.' If a Christian sees another misbehaving (for example lying, drinking, etc.) he or she must, quietly and without animosity, point out the problem to him or her.

It was not always clear exactly what positions women should and should not hold. For example, while policy forbids women from leading Sharing Time unless she is partnered with a man, some participants of both sexes said they saw nothing wrong with women doing so.

As much attention is given to marital gender role scripts as to religious scripts. All aspects of life are subject to God's will and marriage is included. However, at the time of the study, beliefs about marriage seemed largely academic: of the regular participants, only the campus minister was actually married. There were perhaps three couples within the Ministry. These invested effort into creating a God-centered relationship and careful consideration of and preparation for future steps (i.e. marriage). Most participants seemed less involved in romantic love and physical attractions than other students on campus. The majority of participants considered male-female relationships too important religiously and too dangerous emotionally to engage in them casually. Consequently, interest in couple behavior was largely theoretical. Whether these ideas were put into practical use or not, most participants did agree on several basic points:

--God created men and women as compliments to each other. Marriage is to be monogamous, permanent, and the only acceptable arena for sexual activity.

--Marriage should only take place between growing Christians, that is, those actively trying to improve their relationship with God.

--Partners must love God more than each other. After marriage, they should work at growing together.

--Women must submit to their husbands. This does not mean he makes the decisions and she obeys. They should consult together in all important matters. Where there is disagreement, compromise or synthesis is to be sought. The final responsibility for success or failure, however, is the man's, and if consensus is impossible, the final decision is his.

--There is an exception to the above, if the husband's decision is counter to Biblical directive or the wife's own religious conviction.

Several informants, both male and female, called special attention to Eph. 5:25-32, which states that a husband is required to place his wife's welfare before is own.

The reason claimed as most important for following these rules was that God (through the Bible) said to. Some said that women are more emotional or nurturing than men, and so are less equipt to make decisions or more deserving of protection. Others said that there is no real difference mentally between men and women, and that God had arbitrarily placed men in charge because ultimately *someone* must make the final decisions, or conflict could never end. Speculation on reasons for gender scripts, while interesting, is

not of vital importance to participants. For them, God has made a law and they are going to follow it.

Acceptance of the majority position was not universal. At the time of research, most participants seemed to come from middle-class, Midwestern American backgrounds. In the experience of this group, men were supposed to be present, competent, and dependable. Some had grown up accepting a religious mandate for men to be protectors/providers/authorities. Some had had experience with divorce, which provided a strong, negative image of what would happen when men and women did not act the way they were supposed to.

However, a small but growing number of participants were from foreign countries, marginal American populations, or minorities. One such female informant disagreed with the general consensus that men and women were equal (if different), saying that women, unlike men, were not 'made in God's image.' Another pointed out that while ideally men were responsible for their wives and religious authority, the world was not perfect: there was not always a competent man available to formally lead every Christian group. Besides, if God meant for a man to lead a specific group, he would send one capable of doing it. "In the mean time, I have no problem with women discipling men if there is a need."

One female informant had difficulty accepting women submitting to men under any circumstances. In her experience the majority of women did not need protection, and the men she had known while growing up were incapable of providing it. Most men, while nice enough people, could only rarely be trusted with simple tasks, let alone run a household or religious organization. Her ideal situation had no one in charge: "All my relationships have been we make a compromise on everything...I think it should be equal....It should be balanced. No one should be higher than the other. I mean, 'I told you to do this,' that is what parents say to kids, not adults."

For all men (that I am aware of) and for most women, disagreement on gender roles was not a source of serious personal strain or anguish. As one women stated, "I don't think God minds the details....'I have this group of people and that group of people, they all call me Father.'" A very few women, though, found themselves in a difficult situation. On one hand, they had the beliefs of their friends, the Bible, and religious authority requiring them to submit to men. On the other hand, they had their own experience and culture which said that such submission was dangerous, impractical, or unnecessary. They were aware that their society often abused and oppressed women and that religion had been used as an excuse for that. Their statements reveal some of the frustration that that issue had caused them:

"I feel uncomfortable when [male name] says women should shut up in certain areas....In the Bible when Jesus came and redeemed us all, he gave us equality."

Another admitted:

"I've always been an outspoken person....submitting because he's my husband, that isn't me." She added later, "Yes, I do get mad when they tell me I can't do certain things, because it's my nature.... I haven't found out how to live with it [submission]."

Both male and female informants said that it was usually easier for female participants to share their feelings and vulnerabilities than for male participants to do so. Also, women were believed by some to be more mature and spiritual in college than men. These things gave women a slight spiritual edge. However, women were expected to sit in Fellowship and be taught by men who were sometimes much less spiritually mature than they were. Some admitted this was difficult to do, but they justified it by saying that men had to learn somewhere, after all, so it was best to be patient.

As a collective, the Ministry did not address the internal conflict learning "how to live with it" sometimes caused. For those who accepted the majority understanding of gender roles, no problem existed. The word of God was not open to debate. For the rest, avoiding conflict was more important than the issue in question. Therefore, those who could not accept the majority understanding coped with their frustration and discomfort in

isolation. Since those feelings were never discussed, it is doubtful that the male participants (and some female participants) even knew they existed.

Interestingly, the number of participants from minority and non-Western populations is increasing. If this trend continues gender issues might be pulled into the arena of public discourse.

PATRIARCHY

Is Christianity as generally accepted by participants Patriarchal? To answer that we must look at the ideology in light of the components of Patriarchy: masculine creative principal, assumption of the masculine world view, and overt domination of women by men.

I believe that the Ministry's understanding of the creative narrative qualifies as one of Sanday's masculine scripts. God, pictured as a male or non-gendered supreme being, created people magically--that is, not from his own body or a sexual union (Sanday 1981:57). Creation was followed by disobedience and the introduction of evil and conflict. The world after the fall from paradise is perceived as tainted by danger and opposition. This script for creation is compatible with Patriarchy.

The second aspect of Patriarchal religion is explicit presentation of separation, hierarchy, and conflict in the cosmology. These are present as well. The main 'problem' in the theology is human separation from God. Jesus is the focus of the worship precisely because he is a bridge between sinful humans and perfect God. Much effort goes into getting closer to God. Even after baptism (the symbolic crossing of the breech) separation is still a problem. People do not always see what God wants or submit to God's will.

Separation is further emphasized by images of hierarchy and instructions on dominance. God is often imaged in song, lesson or discussion as a king, lord, or ruler.

God is superior to human beings and has the power to make whatever He wishes happen. He has the right to punish, while humans owe him praise and submission. The cosmic scheme is clearly divided into 'higher' and 'lower.'

Hierarchy is also perceived upon the earth. Individuals are required by religious commands to respect and obey earthly authorities and laws, wives have to submit to their husbands, and children have to submit to their parents. Many participants believe that all Christians should place themselves under the authority of a local church. Earthly authority is further endorsed in that people in positions of power are perceived as having a spiritual mandate to care for and protect those placed under them. Individuals with authority will be held responsible by God for the performance of their duty. Finally, all people are perceived as stewards, caretakers of the material world. They are responsible for using assets wisely, without waste, and for the benefit of others. Hierarchy is clearly demonstrated, both symbolically and in specific behavioral instructions.

The third aspect of the masculine world view is conflict. In-group conflict is studiously avoided, since differences of opinion are considered to have minor importance and cause counterproductive distractions. Out-group conflict is another issue. Participants see themselves constantly engaged in 'spiritual warfare.' The forces of evil are fighting God's authority by separating people from God. They do this by tempting people to sin (engage in sexual impropriety, drunkenness, illegal activity, and cruelty to others, etc.) and by diverting attention from God to the problems and pleasures of the world. Participants fight back by resisting these distractions, praying, and ministering to each other. Participants sometimes picture themselves as soldiers, but all violence is metaphorical. Confrontational conflict is rare, even on the verbal level. I believe, however, that the presence of even symbolic battles is significant.

Separation, hierarchy, and conflict, the three main components of the masculine world view, play important roles in the Ministry's theology.

Finally, specific rules regarding gender roles are also Patriarchal. Women are almost unanimously seen as having been created as 'helpers' for men, not as creatures existing in their own right. While women are seen as valuable and useful, the reasons given for their worth are generally discussed in terms of their value or usefulness *to men.* Some participants also see women as more emotional (less rational) than men or personally blame women for the entry of sin--as well as the separation from God and misery it brings--into the world. Whether these 'inadequacies' are given as explanation or not, women are placed in the formal hierarchy below men. They can not formally teach men, and a wife is required to submit (if no compromise can be reached) to the authority of her husband.

On the other hand, many aspects of the feminine world view are present as well. Side by side with division, hierarchy, and conflict are unity and relationality. While separation from God is one of the central issues in the participants' lives, the ultimate goal is an end to that separation. Many specific lessons emphasized that while the norm in American culture is independence, people are actually dependent on God: it is necessary to give up selfishness and self-sufficiency. In its place one needs to make God the focus of life, trust God to solve all problems, and use God to shore up all weaknesses.

Participants also invest much energy in relationality and unity with each other, as well as with God. Other participants are seen as partners, not competitors. Emotional attachments between participants are strong, and except for some parts of formal worship, the majority of interactions seems devoted to relationship building. Revealing vulnerabilities such as emotional pain, problems, or shortcomings is seen simply as honest communication, not weakness. While such sharing seems to be easier for women than for men, both make concerted attempts to meet this goal.

Such a emphasis on relationality and community is normally associated with the feminine orientation, not with the behavior/ideology complex some feminists call 'Patriarchy.' How, then, did these two supposedly mutually exclusive world views co-

exist? How were the requirements of both met simultaneously? These questions will be further explored later.

CHAPTER 6
MINISTRY PARTICIPANTS

A collective is formed by the interactions of individuals. In order to properly explore the dynamics within the Ministry, it is necessary to examine some specifics. In this chapter I will present some information about the campus minister, discuss some of the values held by participants, and construct come composites to illustrate individual personalities and interactions.

THE CAMPUS MINISTER

The campus minister works between fifty-five and seventy-five hours a week. Besides planning and leading fellowships, he oversees the Ministry's residences and their maintenance, handles the Ministry's day to day operation, and councils students. At the time of research, the present campus minister had been in place for nine years. His original occupation had been engineer. While he enjoyed his work, he was deeply religious and had managed to integrate his spiritual and professional lives. After serving on the board of directors of the Ministry's organization he made a career change and became a full-time campus minister.

Discussing him is difficult; first, because he is in a unique position and can easily be identified, I can write nothing of a confidential nature. Second, I, personally, am finding

it difficult to analytically discuss a friend. Given these limitations, I will attempt to describe the campus minister and relate something of his role in the Ministry's dynamic.

The campus minister present during my observations was very personable: polite, friendly, patient, enthusiastic, and un-self-conscious. Whenever he spoke with me, I received the impression that I was the focus of his attention, and that that specific interaction (no matter how brief) was of great importance to him. As far as I could observe, he invested this kind of energy into all of his interactions with participants and visitors.

His communication style was both more direct and intimate than 'usual' for the surrounding cultural context. He usually greeted people with a handshake (or often even a hug). While there was no opportunity to measure it, he seemed to keep a conversational personal space slightly smaller than the norm. He had an astounding memory for faces and names. All this seemed to encourage more intimate, personal communication. Many participants (and some non-participants) came to him for advice, even though they knew they probably would not get the answer they wanted to hear. Furthermore, he could successfully broach highly sensitive matters such as one's relationship to God or one's beliefs about sexual orientation while keeping the student from feeling judged or too pressured.

While participants respected his opinion and position of religious authority, they did not universally agree with his positions and interpretations of Biblical statements or their applications (for example, some saw nothing wrong with women leading sharing time, and others believed that although it was better to be baptized, if you didn't know any better you could be a Christian without it, and so on). His communications style was received with a nearly uniform positive response. While at least three informants commented that this style was (in light of contemporary gender roles) a bit more effective with women than men, participants of both genders described him in admiring and affectionate terms.

One important point is that most of the people the campus minister worked with are students. He had to target his communication to a highly specialized context. Most participants went home summers. Finals, while not an issue for him personally, were a regularly occurring source of trauma and anxiety for most participants; while providing sympathy, he had to recapture the distracted attention this caused. To relate to their lives, he had to keep up with college sports, campus news, and the petty miseries of life in dorms. Since students are primed to expect note taking, diagrams, and outlines he used these in his teaching. As a 'real world' person deeply involved with the reality of college students, he was in a uniquely marginal position. An the one hand, he was clearly not a student, on the other he was deeply integrated into student life.

PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS AND MORALITY

By recurring attendance, participants demonstrate a choice to align themselves (to some degree, at least) with a particular moral position. During college individuals are forced to confront (or even reorder) their assumptions and values. On a large campus the variety of perspectives may be seen as bewildering or dangerous. In this instance, direct confrontation of conflicting viewpoints is confined to a tiny segment of the student body. Most individuals seem satisfied with a "you keep your values out of my face and I will keep mine out of yours" stance. For most Ministry participants this withdrawal is unacceptable.

While most participants can accept considerable cultural relativism regarding things like food, dress, politeness, and social organization, moral relativism is impossible because for them certain universal rules are provided by the Bible. Some of these include:

1) Homosexuality is wrong because the Bible prohibits it, God created men and women to be compliments to each other as life partners, and sex is to be confined to marriage.

2) Since marriage is a sacred union and has such profound affect on people's lives, romantic interactions are not to be taken casually. Sex is to be confined to marriage (this position is markedly different than the position stated and/or practiced by most students with regard to dating and sex.)

3) Racism is wrong: Everyone was created by God, everyone is equally caught in sin, and everyone is equally saved through Christ.

4) People need to follow God's will, not their own desires.

5) Abortion is wrong because a fetus is a human life from conception, and murder is prohibited.

6) When God places an authority over a person, that authority (civil law, professor, elected official, parent, etc.) must be obeyed, even if one disagrees with the particulars.

7) The most important thing in life is God. The second most important thing is loving other people. This should be the basis of all actions.

Not everyone accepts all these positions or understands them the same way. As a unit the Ministry is not politically active; its purpose is the spiritual growth of the participants, not social change. Also, although they do not conceal their moral positions, participants will not be found on street corners telling passersby that they are in the grip of sin and headed toward hell. Generalized public condemnation has a negative effect, while compassion and one-on-one ministry works very well. Although these positions are not the focus of a lot of obvious energy, they do play a role in the daily lives and minds of the participants.

PARTICIPANTS

Characterizing participants who served as my informants as a group is difficult. Some were 'new Christians,' struggling to define their relationship to God or exulting in new security and joy, or both. Others were more mature in their faith and facing difficult long-term problems (like unemployment, death in the family, extended personal conflict) and clinging to God in search of joy that went beyond their physical circumstances.

Some, like the campus minister, a number of the non-students and a few of the older undergraduates were very Biblically literate. These individuals had memorized entire books of the Bible, studied Biblical history and culture, and were the authorities other participants came to with theological questions. Many were relaxed and friendly, but a few were shy.

In order to convey part of the texture of the individual personalities and relationships involved, I will construct a few composite persons to serve as examples. While each participant was unique in the specifics of his or her life and involvement in the Ministry, some fairly common patterns emerged in interview and discussion. Those patterns can be combined to present hypothetical individuals--not descriptions of specific people who actually existed, but depictions of the sort of people who could exist.

Example 1. The first example is a young woman I shall call Edna. Edna grew up in a small town about fifty miles from the university. Her parents were Lutherans who usually went to church, but were not particularly active there. Edna and her parents were close. They took a concerned interest in her extracurricular activities (band and track team). They were a little authoritarian, however; they set curfew at 10:30 p.m., closely examined her boy friends, and had firm rules about things like drinking alcohol and always telling someone responsible where one was.

Edna missed her family when she left for college, but she found the lack of adult supervision exhilarating. She liked the idea of making small decisions by her self without having her parents as a safety net. In the weeks that followed her arrival, Edna tried all the things she had wondered about in the last few years. She went to fraternity parties. She tried beer. She went out with four or five different men--she didn't have serious feelings about any of them, but they were fun, and the attention they paid her made her feel good. She did not pay a whole lot of attention to her classes, but since they were general

requirements and not part of her major (secondary education) she did not think they were really important anyway.

On a visit home about halfway through the semester, she ran into a friend of her mother's who had attended the same university. The friend suggested Edna try the campus ministry she had attended as a student. A few weeks later Edna attended a Sunday dinner and service. She had nothing better to do, and, anyway the dorms did not serve food on Sunday nights. The lesson at the fellowship was on living what you believe. It jarred Edna--not only was she not 'living what she believed,' she was not even sure she believed in anything. Afterwards, she asked the campus minister for an appointment so they could talk.

When they met in his office on the Thursday of the following week, Edna nearly left as soon as she walked in. She felt empty and silly. What did she have important enough to say? And what would this man--this nice, soft-spoken, patient looking man--think of her when he found out how she had been living? Surely he would see her life as sinful and be disgusted.

The campus minister listened while she told him how lost she suddenly felt. Then he explained that the purpose in life was not all that hard to define: worship God and love other people. He asked if she had been baptized. She had been christened, but that wasn't the same as submersion. He explained that through baptism one could become 'right with God,' and put all her sins (past and future) behind her forever. Edna was immediately convinced that baptism was a good thing to do, but she wanted to get ready first; stop partying, get better study habits, generally get her act together. The campus minister said that that was doing it the hard way. If she got baptized God would help her solve her problems and order her life.

In two weeks Edna had the campus minister baptize her at the church down the street.

A senior chemistry major named Elizabeth invited Edna to join an accountability group she was starting. The group met once a week. For her major goals, Edna decided to have ten minutes of quiet time a day, stop cursing, and stop 'partying.' She did not always keep her commitments, but when she told the others about her failures, they were sympathetic and suggested ways to meet her goals. Knowing that she would have to tell Elizabeth when she missed a quiet time made it easier to remember them. The group also helped each other learn about God and to 'grow.' They read James, which was full of information about how Christians should behave; act on your beliefs, be kind to everybody without favoritism, don't say hurtful things, don't gossip, be persistent when things got rough, pray, don't be distracted from God's will, don't get wrapped up in materialism. Actually doing all these things was hard, but not doing what God wanted would only lead to emptiness, so she kept trying.

For Christmas break her junior year Edna went on a short mission trip arranged by the parent organization. She and eleven other students from different schools spent two weeks in Puerto Rico. They repaired the roof of the mission there, built a new chicken coop, and held a special Bible school for the local children. Edna had never worked so hard before. She had also never done anything that had such obviously useful results. The fourteen days working with her teammates, playing with the children, setting aside an hour a day to think about God made her (and, she noticed, the others as well) feel full and strong. This was God's work. It was real and satisfying, and with God to help her, she could not fail. When she returned to campus, Edna worked at keeping that feeling of purpose and protection and finding ways to extend her religious commitment to all parts of her life.

Example 2. The next composite is Todd. He was a junior majoring in packaging the first time he heard of the Ministry. His parents had been deeply religious all his life (Church of Christ) but Todd, while attending church regularly, did not think of religion as an integral

part of his own daily life. His life was generally 'OK.' He made good grades, was close friends with his roommate, and had a girlfriend he planned to marry.

The fall of his junior year all that seemed to fall apart. His father lost his job and his parents had to move to a new town. His girlfriend left him for someone else. Todd's grades plummeted. Suddenly the world changed from a normal, sensible place whose problems could be coped with to a hostile, unpredictable place where nothing and no one could be relied upon.

A couple of weeks later, Todd was waiting to meet a friend in the student union when a man standing nearby struck up a casual conversation. It turned out that the man was a campus minister for a Christian student group. He knew quite a bit about the kinds of problems (personal and academic) that students faced and showed great sympathy for them. The man said that the group was meeting the following night and invited Todd.

What got Todd's attention during that first fellowship was the singing. Two songs in particular had been about how God could get people through hard times: while life was genuinely hard sometimes, Jesus loved people and would comfort them and make them strong enough to win out in the end. The music really made him think, and when he got back to his room that night, he dug out the Bible his parents had given him for his high school graduation and began to read.

He attended the Ministry's fellowships for the next few weeks. He read his Bible and went to church with a couple of the guys he met at the fellowship. Some of the lessons seemed to deal specifically with his problem---what could you trust in life? What could you hold onto? The answer Todd was getting was God. God loved him. God loved him so much that He had sent His son to die for him even before Todd was born. Although the world had difficulties, God could get him through them, and use those difficulties to make Todd a stronger, better person. God would never leave, and God could solve any problem. As bad as things were, if he just trusted God, everything would be all right.

A new problem surfaced, however. If God was going to take care of Todd, Todd would have to trust Him. In fact, he would have to place his entire life in God's hands and do what God wanted him to do. Well, this was hard! He had trusted his family, his girlfriend, and his society and wound up miserable! How could he make himself turn over his decisions and purpose to someone else?

On the other hand, the rewards seemed worth it. Many Ministry participants seemed to have gotten very good at submission, and they were the most encouraging, peaceful people he had ever met. Sometimes during sharing time someone would mention how hard submission was, how successful they had been in a particular instance, or what good thing happened when God was the one 'running the show.' These reminders convinced Todd that he should try.

He found out that submission was not something you achieve once and then have forever. It always took work. First, one had to learn what God wanted. This involved prayer, reading the Bible, talking with other Christians, and thinking. Then, when the conviction came, it might not be what Todd himself wanted to do. Once he had to end a budding romance because his new girlfriend (while fun to be with) was manipulative and negative and resentful of his spiritual life.

Submission was the biggest issue throughout his contact with the Ministry. Unsure he could manage it without support, when he graduated, Todd asked the campus minister to suggest a church in the new town he was moving to.

Example 3. The final example is Claire. She was a sophomore when she first visited the Ministry. Her parents were not religious--they didn't attend church, pray, or talk about God--and Claire had never given religion a lot of thought. She was invited by Michelle, a classmate, for Sunday dinner and fellowship. Wanting to be better friends with Michelle, Claire went.

What struck Claire most was how friendly and relaxed everyone was. The participants were obviously close to each other, friends. However, this did not seem to lead to an exclusionary elitism. Claire felt honestly welcome. Because of this feeling, she came back several times in the next few weeks. After a while she began to wonder about the religious issues her new friends were investing so much energy in. Claire had wondered if there were a God, and had supposed that if there were, He or She was not terribly involved in the world. In the experiences of the Ministry participants, though, God was very involved. They prayed for things (housing, transportation, health) and got them. When they were unsure, God 'convicted' them of the right choice. God improved their attitudes when they were angry, comforted them when they were sad, disciplined them when they broke his rules.

Was this true? Was this real? Claire started asking Michelle questions: Who exactly was Jesus Christ? Why did he exist? What did baptism do? What made something a sin? When Michelle didn't know the answer to something, she took Claire to Elise, a senior who had been an active Christian since high school. For a while, the three of them spent Saturday afternoons sitting around in Claire's dorm room studying the Bible and trying to pin down exactly what the passages meant and the implications for daily life. Together, they read Genesis 1-3 and looked at the difference between what God had meant His relationship to people to be and what it had become because of human disobedience. They looked up the instructions about baptism (for example, Acts 2:38-39; Eph. 4:5, etc.) They found the passages in the four gospels which described exactly who Jesus Christ was.

After a while Claire began to think that what the Bible said was true. It made sense to her, it appealed to her, and it seemed to give Michelle and Elizabeth a lot of joy. But becoming a Christian meant giving up control of her life to God. It meant doing what God wanted, even when that was heard or unpleasant. In meant committing to quiet times, not getting impatient or angry with people, loaning out her property freely--sure, Michelle said

that if you just worked at changing the inside (that is loving and trusting God and developing a relationship with Jesus Christ) the outer changes would come from that, and yet--it was several months before Claire came to a decision.

In the end, what she did was pray to God that, if He was real and cared, He show her the truth and convict her to become a Christian. The following Sunday Michelle baptized her in a nearby church.

After that Claire got really excited. She bought a reference Bible and read three chapters a day, planning to work her way through the entire New Testament. She attended fellowship two times a week. She shared her new perspective with her non-Christian friends. Things went really well for about two months, but toward the end of February things began to fall apart. The weather was amazingly cold and her boots leaked. Her course work had not been very good, she had no idea what to major in, and her car broke down (a $300 repair--money she did not have). She didn't seem to have the energy to pray, and she stopped her quiet times.

Michelle noticed something was wrong and asked her about it. Claire admitted she had been doing badly. Michelle explained that when you least felt like praying was when you most needed to do it, and that any energy you put toward God came back. They prayed together and then Michelle gave Claire a few special Bible verses to think about.

During prayer requests the next Wednesday Claire explained her problem and asked for help. She worked at her attitude and things improved some after that. She always had to work at growing closer to God, and she was never the kind of person she wanted to be.

Claire graduated last year and took a job in Detroit as a pharmacist. She became a member of a local Church of Christ. Just after Christmas she drove back to campus for a fellowship meeting. Most of the participants remembered her (two or three had even been exchanging letters with her). Claire kept saying that the participants should really treasure their time together, because groups that provided that kind of religious and social support

were rare in the 'real world,' and being Christian when surrounded by secular society was very hard.

These are fairly typical examples of the ways a student might become a Ministry participant. There were not the only patterns, however. Some participants were already Christians as the Ministry defines the term and had actively sought out a group to join. Also, not everyone invited to fellowship becomes a participant. For instance, I can think of a young Buddhist man who was attracted to Christianity, but could not convert because of his family. Or a young atheist woman who stated that while she thought the people at the ministry were very nice, she thought some of their beliefs (like the creation story) were impossible, pointless, and internally inconsistent.

Such short sketches cannot convey the depth of processes that may take weeks or months (or years), and sometimes change one's entire perception of the world. While peace--secure belief in God, acceptance of his will, and joy despite unpleasant or painful circumstances--is the goal, it is not always the normal condition. Sometimes serious loss or difficulties were met with (as far as I could tell) genuine trust and joy. But also, while I was there I saw people who felt guilty for past actions, even though they believed intellectually that God had forgiven them. They saw members of their families suffer from disease or misfortune and they often grieved and got angry. They doubted. They rebelled. They got lazy and forgot to pray. At some time or other, they all failed to meet the standards they accepted. However, they watched one another and were ready to help and sympathize when things got hard.

RELATIONSHIPS

Participants relate to one another on two levels: in the general context of the Ministry and in the context of specific friendships. Those two relationships co-exist simultaneously and may intersect.

The first level is the general culture of the Ministry. The purpose of the Ministry is to the foster spiritual the growth of participants. They consciously try to facilitate this with an atmosphere of openness and safety. They are genuinely glad to see any interested person who walks through the door (even student anthropologists working on master's research). Things too personal or revealing to be discussed elsewhere can be freely shared during Fellowship or special activities. By this custom, twenty-year-olds can talk about their favorite teddy bears; women can talk about how a recent boyfriend manipulated or belittled them; anyone can admit to being rude or uncaring; many state that there is some part of their lives they have been keeping from God and that this is causing a struggle within them. The appropriate (and usual) response is understanding and acceptance. Sometimes this goal is not met (society has not taught them, for instance, the proper response to give when a young man says he still sleeps with a stuffed otter), but they try. This acceptance is extended to people the first time they attend, although it is most gracefully accepted by those who have had months or years to practice. Interestingly, a participant moving to an area near another branch of the Ministry will often transfer his or her attendance, since the welcoming context is consistent throughout the system.

The second level of interaction is that of friendship. Many participants were first invited by friends and many, many friendships form between people frequently attending. Small groups like Accountability or Bible studies and committees like the Ministry and Hedge Teams, where people talk seriously about serious religious and personal topics, are

conductive to intimate friendships. Opportunities for closeness also surface during retreats, all night prayers, and fun activities like concerts. The trust and openness fostered by the general Ministry culture gives these relationships a head start. After a few years an individual might have very strong ties to six, seven or more participants.

Such friendships may be strengthened by the tendency for participants to live together. Individuals who get to know each other through the Ministry sometimes decide to share a house, apartment, or dorm room. Each year eleven participants live in the Ministry's two residences. More than twenty-five regular participants lived together during my study or had at sometime in the past. Many participants stated a preference of living with Christians over non-Christians. They have found that Christians do not tempt one to engage in impure behavior like drinking, cursing, or 'partying.' They understand that when one has a problem the answer one is seeking is a Godly rather than 'worldly' one. Christians can read the Bible together or discuss religious issues that are confusing. Christians tend to 'care' more than non-Christians. Also, some stated that conflicts over chores, food use, noise, etc., are more easily resolved because Christians are more willing to compromise or apologize for the sake of peace and forgiveness. Relationships between housemates are often very close, and this contributes to the general tendency of participants to emotionally bond with each other.

These two contexts combine to create a very non-threatening atmosphere, especially when it is compared to the isolation, confusion, and stress of the university campus where most participants live. These relationships often continue beyond graduation (which causes geographical dispersion).

CHAPTER 7
GENDER AND FORMAL LEADERSHIP

Norms regarding formal behavior of men and women are based on the biblical passages 1 Tim 2:12 and Eph 5:22-33. These are interpreted to mean that women can not have authority over men--that is, they can not hold an official position the duties of which include interpreting Bible verses or giving instructions to men on how to live. Practically speaking, prohibited positions are giving a Fellowship lesson to a group containing men; guiding formal discussion in a group containing men; leading a small group containing men; or regularly mentoring or ministering to a man. Among informants, there was some confusion on whether or not women could set policy for a religious organization. While it was generally agreed that a women should not have the final responsibility for a church, I could get no consensus on how much input was 'too much.' Furthermore, many participants said they thought the ministry did not count as a 'church' in that context.

Activities which are not restricted include addressing a mixed-sex formal group as part of participant interaction if a male leader is present to take responsibility for the gathering or discussion; occasional one on one instructing, teaching or rebuking of a man; leading 'non-instructional' worship, such as music or prayer; formal leadership of any group containing only women; organization of special activities like skits, all night prayer meetings, etc.; and organization and/or implementation of social activities such as meals or movie nights. With the exception of marriage (having negligible impact, practically speaking, since no significant number of participants were married) there are no gender restrictions on secular authority.

FELLOWSHIP

During the Fellowships that are held twice a week there are a number of leadership roles open to participants. These include teaching the lesson, giving the Communion Meditation, moderating Sharing Time, taking prayer requests, leading music, and leading prayer. The lesson, based on one or more Biblical passages, is usually taught by the campus minister, although the intern and other male participants also teach once a month or so. Communion Meditation, which happens only on Sunday, is almost always led by the intern or a male student. It lasts about five minutes and addresses the meaning or implications of Communion and helps get participants into a worshipful state of mind. Sharing Time is not a lecture. The moderator asks a question relating to the night's upcoming lesson to the participants' personal experiences. The moderator calls on people who signal that they wish to speak by raising their hands. He often paraphrases or comments on the responses. The moderator has to be male, but some participants of both sexes said privately that they saw nothing wrong with a women doing it. Anyone can take prayer requests. Usually one or two participants works together--the first calling on people to speak or adopt a particular request and the other writing the name of the speaker and his or her request on the board. The person(s) taking requests sometimes prefaces this activity with a statement or Bible verse, and often comments on some of the problems or praises presented. Music leader is a semi-permanent position, currently held by a woman. The music leader selects the songs used on Sunday (The campus minister selects those sung on Wednesday), sets the pace and style of songs, and then leads the accompaniment on guitar. There might be from one to three other guitarists present. These were always male, but I suspect this was a quirk of demography rather than the result of design. Three or four times during the course of observation the music leader drew attention to the meaning or emphasis of particular songs during the singing times.

Collective prayer is usually held at least four times during a Fellowship: at the beginning, after Prayer Request Time, after the lesson and before leaving. Participants are called upon by the campus minister to lead prayer a little less than half the time. No detailed records on the frequency of oral prayer by gender were kept, but men probably lead prayer slightly more often than women.

A participant or former participant who has had an unusual experience or had recently seen God work in his/her life in special ways might be asked to address the group. The talk may last from five to thirty minutes. During the course of research, three such instances were observed. Two of the speakers were female.

Participants enter these leadership positions in two ways. The first is to be invited by the campus minister (or sometimes the intern). The second is for the participant to request a specific role. The participant might or might not discuss what he or she wants to say with the campus minister. What is said by someone 'up front' is that person's prerogative. However, any participant (including the campus minister) watching who believes that a speaker has said something incorrect or easily misunderstood can ('lovingly' and without hostility or pride) discuss it privately with the speaker later.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

There are two special participant committees in the Ministry, one leading by design, the other by example. The first is the Ministry Team. It meets Sundays after Fellowship (although not every week). At the beginning of research it was composed of six people, none of them students: the campus minister (male), the intern (male), the head of the women's residence (female), a recent graduate of the university (female), the music leader (female), and the international student coordinator (female). Near the end of the observation period a male student was added.

The head of the ministry team is the campus minister. Other members are not included because of pre-existing leadership positions. Instead they are selected by existing Team members on the basis of spiritual maturity and available time.

The Ministry Team has 3 major responsibilities: advising the campus minister on policy and long term plans, guiding specific activities, and coordinating the Hedge Team. Policy and long-term planning include deciding who would be invited to live in the student residences or the best way to promote small groups. Specific activities refers to details like the best way to make first-time guests feel welcome or whether a special poem should be read during Fellowship. In addition, each member of the Ministry Team works with one of the six divisions of the Hedge Team.

Being on the Ministry team does not seem to confer special status or authority on members--many regular participants are only vaguely aware of the Team's existence. Rather, those asked to join already have the respect, trust, and affection of a significant number of those around them. They are perceived as having great faith, knowledge, maturity, or dedication. People come to them for advice, teaching, or comfort. They organize social events or lead small groups. However they are not the only people who are respected or the only ones who arrange activities, but demonstration of spiritual leadership precedes membership.

The Ministry Team is not an equal democracy. The campus minister has final responsibility for decisions. He usually accepts the general consensus, but when he does not, the usual response of the rest of the members is to put even more effort into making the chosen course of action work.

While I was observing the Ministry, the majority of the Ministry Team was female, which reflected the demographics of the Ministry. Women and men are both free to introduce topics and voice opinions. Almost as much emphasis is placed on relationship maintenance as attention to task--special time is set aside during each meeting to discuss and pray for serious personal issues, both those of Team members and of others. There

might also be some light teasing and serious discussion of deep emotional ties between members.

The Ministry Team coordinates the actions of the Hedge Team, or prayer group (they "pray a hedge of protection" around people). The Hedge Team started three and a half years before, when time was set aside during a small (male) Bible study to pray for the Ministry and its members. The prayer grew in importance until those participating (including the campus minister) decided to create a special meeting, find more members, and include women. To be on the Hedge Team, one needs to be a growing Christian who is willing and able to dedicate time and effort to the project.

During research, the objective of the Hedge team was to make sure that all regular participants had someone praying for them. In order to take care of this in an organized way, the Ministry participants were divided into six categories: International students, minorities, freshmen, upperclassmen, graduate students, and non-students/students of other schools. Each member of the Hedge Team volunteered to pray for five people in one of these groups. Hedge Team members choosing each category were coordinated by a member of the Ministry Team (This system came out numerically even when the Ministry Team had six members).

Hedge Team members were urged to keep close track of 'their' people, give them verbal support and encouragement, and pay attention to their attendance. Some Hedge Team members did not inform their people who they were, while others sent their people cards and notes offering help, friendship, and prayer. I do not know if this pattern will continue in the future.

Hedge Team members have no special authority, but they can lead by example. Furthermore, significant influence *can* be exerted through Hedge relationships, although the degree to which this actually happens depends more on the particular people involved than on the formal structure.

SMALL GROUPS

There are two main kinds of small groups: Bible studies and accountability groups. Leaders of these might volunteer or be asked by the campus minister. At the end of research, there were six Bible studies, each containing between four and twenty members (not all of whom were regular Ministry participants). Bible studies meet weekly to discuss scripture and Christian life. Usually there is a single leader who stimulates discussion by asking questions and doing additional research. The topic, a specific book or issue, is generally selected by group consensus. A women can lead a Bible study only if no men attend. Bible studies can be arranged on either residential (for people living in a particular dorm or complex) or social (for international or graduate students) lines. Bible studies are generally more discussion than lecture, although one or two people usually are much more knowledgeable than the others.

Accountability Groups might also include some Bible study, but the focus is on personal and spiritual development. Women and men seem almost equally likely to participate in accountability. At last count there were seven Accountability Groups for more than two people (five female, two male), and fourteen one-on-one ministries (eight all female, four all male, and two mixed). Most members are regular Ministry participants and all leaders are. Normally, Accountability Groups are sex segregated. Two reasons given for this are 1) like gender increases the likelihood of shared experiences and empathy, and 2) distractions could inadvertently be caused by sexual attraction and/or misunderstandings. Larger groups are lead by two people working as a team.

Accountability Groups meet weekly to hold each other accountable for spiritual and personal growth. When joining, each member sets spiritual, physical, and social goals for him-or herself: religious and secular life are not considered independent: success in one area is tied to success on other areas. Spiritual goals include having regular quiet times, memorizing a specific number of Bible verses, or changing an attitude. Social goals might

be getting along better with roommates or communicating better with family. Physical goals might be losing weight, exercising twice a week, or eating more vegetables. Participants then share at least some of these goals with each other, discussing failures and successes. They both suggest practical solutions and provided emotional support and understanding. Particular details are at the discretion of the leader(s), and vary from group to group.

The Ministry was in the midst of expanding the accountability program. Ideally, all participants would have been in a Accountability Group. However, since most Ministry members were female and a number of competent female leaders were available, the campus minister and the Ministry Team made getting all female participants into Accountability Groups the immediate goal. At last count, 39 women were involved in some type of accountability (although some of the one-on-one sets may have been overlooked). Group leaders, especially those who were new at it, met every three or four weeks to discuss progress and share ideas.

RESIDENCES

The Ministry maintains two houses on campus, one for men, holding six people, and one for women, holding five people. The 'Girls' House' is especially central to the Ministry. Fellowships are held in the outbuilding behind it; Sunday dinners and Friday breakfasts, as well as other group activities, are held there; the campus minister's office is on the first floor; and participants sometimes stop by during the day to visit. Participants are also welcome to visit the 'Guys' House,' but few events are held there and traffic is much lighter. Cooking in both houses is communal and chores are shared. One resident of each is the 'Head of House,' the person in charge of scheduling chores and mediating conflicts. The Head of House is answerable to the campus minister, but he generally is not involved in the day to day functioning of the houses.

Persons living in the residences are selected by the campus minister on the advice of the Ministry Team. A resident needs to be a growing Christian committed to forming good relationships with house mates, working at spiritual growth, and participating regularly and vigorously in the Ministry.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

There are a number of other activities, both regular and special occasion what have to be planned and conducted. Sunday dinner is served weekly at the women's residence. Two or three volunteers, usually female, do the actual cooking, but purchasing of group food, cooking procedures and scheduling of cooks is overseen by a female non-student. Starting in the preceding fall, Friday morning prayer breakfasts have also been served at the women's residence. At first they were held every two weeks, but this increased to weekly by the end of observation. No one was officially in charge of those, so organization has fallen by default to the head of the women's residence and the campus minister.

Special occasions are held whenever someone is willing to organize them. For Chinese New Year, the international student coordinator and other participants arranged a party with Chinese food and movies (subtitled in English for the non-Chinese students who came). Before Christmas, a group collected after Fellowship to go caroling to nearby dorms. When research ended, a female participant was in the process of organizing an all-night prayer meeting. Both male and female members organize groups to attend religious concerts.

The key to understanding formal roles seems to be acknowledged authority. The final acknowledged authority rests with men. As long as they do so informally women can

exert much spiritual influence, even over men. However, women can not take final spiritual responsibility for a group containing men. They can not publicly dictate to men how they should live or what they should believe in regard to religion.

Women can (and did) organize worship (that is, activities praising God) and social activities. They are restricted from preaching and from having the final say on policy decisions. Theoretically, these restrictions do not apply to secular institutions or situations (with the exception of marriage, which had its own rules and was a moot issue anyway, since no significant portion of regular participants were actually married). While male-dominated in principal, practical power is distributed in ways more egalitarian than the formal rules would lead one to expect.

CHAPTER 8
THE RELATIONSHIP OF GENDER AND DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION

Actual participation is of two main kinds--that taking place in structured contexts and that taking place outside of them. In both areas women seem to participate more actively than men.

FORMAL CONTEXT

FELLOWSHIP

Participation in formal activities can be measured in two ways: attendance and actual activity. Recording attendance, while apparently a simple task, had some problems. While the campus minister passed a sign-up sheet during each Fellowship and kept detailed records on the attendance of individuals, participants sometimes (although probably rarely) forgot to sign, and the list did not reflect just when a person arrived. The researcher found taking a 'head count' equally imperfect--people in corners were sometimes difficult to see, at any given moment someone might be away in the bathroom, and sometimes a participant was not present for the entire Fellowship. The researcher settled on taking a head count when the participants stood up and joined hands to pray after Prayer Requests. This count seemed to most accurately represent the number of people present during the time of highest participant activity.

In almost all group functions, female attendance was higher than male, usually by a significant number. During fall term (being a student-oriented organization, the Ministry measures time from a collegiate perspective), Aug.-Dec., 1993, the campus minister's records listed men as making up only 36% of those present at Fellowships. In the 12 observations of Fellowships I made, average female attendance was 27 and average male attendance was 13 (rounded to the nearest whole number), or 68% and 32% respectively.

Attendance at other events was even harder to keep track of (people might arrive at anytime during an activity, or even leave to go get someone who needed transportation). Usually, at any given moment most of the people present were female. For example, of the eleven people who went Christmas caroling, only three were male. Attendance at breakfast varied considerably, usually falling between five and twelve participants. These were also usually attended by more women. With the exception of one occasion, which had eight men and seven women, at most breakfasts women outnumbered men two to one. This was not explained by the fact that the breakfasts were held in the women's residence, as not all of the women living there attended, and always some women who did not live there did attend.

I cannot explain this differential attendance rate. On the surface it seems to make little sense, since the formal theology tends to reflect the male world view and positions of formal power are open only to men. It is my understanding, however, that in American religion women's participation rates are usually higher than men's, and that this pattern is borne out on college campuses. Because I was unable to find a supportable explanation for the general social trend, I feel it would be inappropriate to comment on this particular case.

On the other hand, behavior within Ministry contexts is within the scope of this work. It seems significant that women tend to participate more than men when the floor is open during Fellowship. Moderators take comments from participants twice during Fellowship: Sharing Time and Prayer Request Time. In Sharing Time the lesson topic is

related to the personal experience of the participants. Prayer Requests are an opportunity to both bring matters up for special prayer and to let other participants know what difficulties or blessings one was experiencing. Eight observations of Fellowship included details on Sharing Time contributions. Of the 301 contributions recorded, 102 (38%) were by men and 199 (62%) were by women. Out of 149 total prayer requests[1], 34 (23%) were made by men and 115 (77%) were made by women.

Since women outnumber men, it is reasonable to expect them to participate more. However, in Prayer Requests female participation is much higher than attendance can explain. This is further underlined by the fact that in public situations men are more likely to speak than women (Tannen 1990: 75). That women should speak proportionally as much or more than men is highly unusual.

Some participants, both male and female, have noticed this trend. The most commonly given explanation given was that men find it more difficult to talk about personal matters than women do.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Women are also more likely to participate in accountability groups. When research ended there were five multi-person accountability groups for women, but only two for men. While the goal was to have all regular participants in Accountability, effort first went into providing them for women. Explanations for this choice were somewhat vague: You have to start somewhere. Women would be easier to organize than men. Female leaders were available.

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[1]For research purposes, a prayer request began when a participant was called upon by the moderator and ended when the request was assigned to a volunteer who would give the request special attention. A single request, however, might have several parts--for example, a person might pray for his mother's health; a classmate who was an atheist; and help on a particularly hard test

This could be interpreted as an attempt to place female participants more firmly under (male) religious supervision. This seems unlikely to me, not because college women are usually perceived by participants as being more mature and religious than college men (throughout much of Christian history, women have been thought to better embody piety and submission than men while being firmly held under male rule) but because the push to construct women's accountability groups seems to have come as much from the women participating in them as from the Ministry's leadership.

INFORMAL CONTEXTS

A great deal of religious interaction takes place outside of formal contexts. Several times a term, participants gather to watch videos or attend concerts. Two or three might get together to go out for ice cream. After Fellowship, most people do not leave for fifteen to thirty minutes. They spent this time in unstructured conversation.

The topics of these interactions are often religious or highly personal. Frankness and vulnerability seem more acceptable and 'normal' than in external contexts.[2] New participants are asked the usual college-polite questions such as 'What is your major?' and 'Where are you living?' But after a conversation or two questions might become more a serious, 'Where are you spiritually?' The socially correct 'How are you doing?' is usually an actual invitation to discuss social, family, or religious situations, even among individuals who do not know each other well. Participants listen carefully and attentively, and respond with sympathy, a relevant Bible verse, and offers of prayer more often than they respond with advice.

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[2] In one of the few studies of college students, Michael Moffat, while studying Rutgers students during the late 1970's to mid 1980's found that college students *usually* restricted revealing the self or 'real you' to close friends (1989: 42, 91).

CONCLUSION

In voluntary participation, as well as attendance, women are more represented than men. Communication patterns are more oriented toward the 'female perspective.' Women and men both seem unusually willing to share feelings and problems, behaviors that are seen as weaknesses in American society. However, women seem to do so more than men, and this observation was reinforced with statements from informants. This would suggest that while the ideal communication patterns for both men and women may be relational and trusting (feminine), in practice women may find it easier to live up to those ideals.

CHAPTER 9
GENDER AND INFORMAL POWER

Generally speaking, participants see two kinds of interaction: the first is that of formal authority--a person 'up front' taking charge of a structured situation, like Fellowship or a small group meeting. The second kind of interaction is that created by participants not currently acting in a leadership position. These interactions are seen as power-free, not only egalitarian, but basically removed from contexts where ideas like 'authority' and 'submission' are meaningful.

It is a Western prejudice to view 'power' as synonymous with 'formal power' (Sanday 1981: 113). It would be a mistake to underestimate the amount or importance of interactions which take place beside the formal structure.

UNRECOGNIZED POWER IN STRUCTURED SITUATIONS

Women are prohibited from the highest positions of formal authority, but this does not mean they are silent. If a women has a point to make, she can share it, even during the more formal activities. There are several ways participants of both genders can contribute to group interactions without altering the overt structure. First, someone wishing to share a particular song or poem can ask the campus minister for time during the Fellowship. Second, participants can lead group prayer. Third, participants can speak

up when the floor is open for Prayer Request Time or Sharing Time. Fourth, participants may use communication space allocated for worship to integrate a normative message.

Every three or four weeks a participant or group of three or four participants will come across a song or poem or other small activity that they believe will benefit other participants. When a person(s) finds the item particularly informative, enlightening, and/or emotionally moving, the sharer(s) then asks the campus minister for a few minutes to present the item. If the sharer(s) is not sure that the content would be useful, he/she can ask the Ministry Team to review it. However, the researcher saw the campus minister approve such time use without even knowing the name of the song in question.

Sharing Time and Prayer Requests are not just an opportunity to ask for help and relate lesson topics to everyday life: these periods of dialog also provide participants with a chance to share perceptions on theology and behavior. A participant might request prayer for a problem other participants had faced. Sometimes a few minutes are taken by people who have dealt with similar situations and want to offer advice and sympathy.

Sharing Time is even more apt to focus on behavioral norms. People often admit to personal shortcomings during Sharing Time--they have recently been proud, un-submissive to God, impatient with friends, overly negative, apathetic, etc. This is not just an admission of weakness, but a reminder that such mindsets and the behaviors they cause are unacceptable. Sharing Time can also provide positive examples. For instance, on the night when the lesson topic was "God's standards on Relationships" (that is, male/female romantic relationships) the Sharing Time topic was what qualities people wanted in mates. Comments included

F(emale) A desire to grow and be taught

M(ale) Willing to put God first in life

F Loves Jesus more than me

F Can give and receive love

M Honesty

F Not afraid to show emotion

Besides being what participants actually *wanted* from their future mates, these traits were also what the Ministry taught that Christians *should want* from mates. It is reasonable to expect that the participants volunteering these traits believed looking for people possessing them was the moral--as well as desirable--thing to do. Such dialog can disseminate norms as well as reflect them.

Formal roles generally believed to be only associated with worship and organization can sometimes also allow for a kind of subtle teaching. Songs are praises to God. They also put participants in a serious, contemplative state of mind, and include clear messages. Sometimes, just before a particular song, the campus minister or music leader will say that it was chosen for its message. Music provides instruction without formal authority. Because of its marginal position, this method of expression is open to women.

Theoretically, the person(s) taking prayer requests is not in a position of spiritual authority, but the moderator sometimes does comment on the situations brought up. It is acceptable for the moderator to remark on the importance of prayer. Once a (female) moderator went even farther, prefacing Prayer Request Time with a short reading from Ecc. 8 and adding that "study wearies the body" and people needed fellowship every day, even during finals (which were about to start). Again, since there is no formal authority in this context, women are not excluded from speaking.

Finally, public prayer often serves as one forum for the reiteration of norms. The participants pray collectively before every group meal and at least four times during Fellowships. Prayer is led by the campus minister or other participant he designates (the party might either volunteer or be asked). All participants attending a Friday prayer breakfast are given the opportunity to pray aloud after the meal. A considerable amount of time goes into prayer.

At the Ministry, prayer is conceived of as having four parts: praise (speaking about God's love, beauty, wisdom, power, etc.), thanksgiving (thanking God for salvation by grace, good weather, help with class, health, etc.), confession of sin (often pride, anger, lack of attention to God, failure to submit, etc.) and petition (request for help with daily life or spiritual development). Participants believe that God invented prayer to benefit humans. Praying nurtures spiritual growth. This is true even when one is praying alone. When one person prays aloud for a number of others, however, the impact takes on another dimension. Listening to others praise God serves as an external reminder that God should be praised. Thanksgiving can also contain a message: thanking God for what He has done reminds one who did it. Also, something like being grateful for the weather when it is cold, wet, icy, and dark outside reminds listeners that the weather is God's will, and should be accepted with a good attitude. Especially useful in reiterating norms is petition. Specifically asking God to "help us to...." reinforces the importance of the change. Let me give an example. One Sunday over fifty people attended Fellowship, the meeting space was crowded, people were whispering more than usual, and the campus minister had to call for quiet several times before he got everyone's attention. The noise level still continued to be above normal. A female participant leading prayer during the middle of Fellowship asked God to help them become quiet and focused; since there were so many people present it was necessary to put special effort into avoiding distractions. The prayer was an excellent way to convey the message to other participants. First, it brought up the need for a change in behavior in a non-confrontational way--no accusation was made, no culprits singled out, no person directly tried to impose his or her will on another. Second, it placed heavy emphases on the matter--participant concentration was worthy of God's special attention. Third, it placed the burden for solving the problem on God. By implication, anyone causing a distraction would be attempting to thwart God, a sin.

Such normative prayer seems to be an excellent way to convey suggestions for change in behavior or attitude. Since the speaker is not addressing the person(s) to whom the suggestion is aimed, conflict is avoided. Since the authority called upon to enforce the suggestion is supernatural, not personal, argument is not possible, and the relationship of the individuals involved plays a less direct role.

These activities, operating within formal contexts but not formally recognized as a medium for power and influence, are used by both male and female participants. With the exception of prayer leading, which seems to have served this purpose for men and women equally, women are much more likely to use these avenues.

UNRECOGNIZED POWER IN STRUCTURED SITUATIONS

Much interaction also takes place outside of formally structured contexts--just how much is difficult to estimate. Fifteen to thirty minutes is spent in conversation after Fellowship. Sunday dinners last about an hour, most of which is spent in casual conversation. Furthermore, many participants live together. Besides the eleven people occupying the Ministry-owned houses, at least eleven more share houses, apartments, dorm rooms, or dorm floors. In addition, participants tend to seek each other out socially. From all of this arises much opportunity for informal ministry.

Ministry[1] takes place when a participant seeks out a more 'mature' Christian they respect for advice or instruction. A participant might go to a friend or acquaintance who first recruited them, the campus minister, someone who they heard speak during Fellowship, or someone another participant has referred them to. Both theology (see theology chapter) and practical life are topics for ministry. An individual normally

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[1] Accountability groups, permanent one on one ministering, and brief ministry interactions were related on a continuum. Accountability groups were only the most formal form of this, however, and more casual types are examined here.

approaches a potential teacher when struggling with a particular problem, issue, or question, but this sometimes turns into a regularly occurring interaction.

One's complete understanding of religion is not formed by the person who is ministering. Participants also go to lessons, Accountability Groups, Bible studies, church, and so on. They read the Bible and various books on Christian living for themselves. But ministering to someone means giving him or her love and encouragement, interpreting unclear ideas or Bible verses, and challenging him or her to examine new concepts or make changes in attitude and daily life. Ministry often involves strong emotional bonds. It consists not only of teaching theology, but also the sharing of friendship. It is considered very important to spiritual growth.

Normally, women minister to women, and men minister to men. This is to prevent (sexual) distractions and protect the (sexual) reputations of the people involved. Proportionally speaking, male and female members participate in long term one on one ministry about equally. More brief ministry interactions, covering a single topic or two, were harder to get data on. I suspect that sex segregation is less strictly followed if the association is short.

Without formal power, participants can exert considerable influence over each other. Understandings learned from peers can have a profound effect over world view and behavior. Furthermore, the effects of gender on these encounters seems to have been minimal.

BORROWED AUTHORITY

When a participant makes an extra-formal statement, whether the format is spontaneous speech during a Fellowship, music, prayer, or private discussion, the statement is generally considered to have two possible sources. First, a person might

repeat a message learned from the Bible, church, or some Ministry teaching. Second, it might be that God has recently demonstrated an important truth to that person. A specific message might have both sources, for example if the person was somehow moved to share a particular Bible verse to a particular person at a particular time. Either way, the statement has authority theoretically independent of the speaker. As one informant explained, when she felt prompted to speak the imperative was that she *say* what was on her mind, but also "I do it [in the] conviction that it is what he (the person she would say it to) should be listening to." Just as "you can't argue with the Bible" you also can not silence someone through whom you believe God is speaking. There are limits to what a person can say; any public statement that varies too sharply from the truth as it is generally understood likely stimulates a member or two to privately 'rebuke' the speaker later. Interestingly, while several members mentioned women rebuking men, no instance of a man rebuking a women was related.

This 'borrowed' authority appears to provide access to influence theoretically unavailable to most participants, especially women. It may, in fact, be the method used by female participants to negate some of the effects of their exclusion from formal authority.

CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION

According to some theories, males and females, both individually and collectively, view the world differently. The masculine world view is believed to emphasize separation, independence, hierarchy, and conflict; while cooperation, connectedness, and relationality are attributed to the feminine world view. Moreover, these world views are presented as conflicting and mutually exclusive. It is thought that in contemporary American society the masculine world view predominates, and contributes to male domination.

These assumptions are not completely supported by my study of a small college religious organization. The formal theology has both 'masculine' and 'feminine' attributes. While it contains dichotomies of separation (God from world, good from evil, spirit from matter), both divine and Earthly hierarchy, and conflict, it also has unity and relationality as its goal and emphasizes helpfulness and love as the appropriate attitude for people to take toward each other. The actual behavior of Ministry members also contains elements of both systems. Official theological leadership positions are restricted to males, but women also hold much unofficial power. Informal interactions and programs such as accountability promote sharing of vulnerabilities, relationality, and affection. Proportionally, men often participate in these as much as women, even if they are not always as adept at doing so.

How, then, have these two systems managed to integrate to such a degree? Collision of values appears to be avoided in three ways: assignment of certain values to

certain situations, interpreting gender proscriptions in the most limited way, and by assigning authority away from the actual actors involved.

First, cognitive dissonance is avoided by confining certain assumptions to certain situations. The only valid conflict is 'spiritual warfare,' a quiet struggle against demons who use subtle problems and temptations to hurt and confuse people. While one has to hate evil, one can not hate people, even if they are committing evil. Furthermore, peace within the group is an important concern. Differences of opinion and personal incompatibility are actively suppressed because they cause distractions and might lead to damaged relationships. While a kind of conflict with out-groups is acceptable (to change non-Christian's minds or reform the general culture), within the group members are expected to freely share feelings and be safe from all levels of attacks.

While patriarchal religions tend to restrict female power, female Ministry members have access to a great deal of unrecognized influence. The participants manage this by interpreting "God's instructions" (which they can not argue with) in the most limited way possible. 1 Timothy 2:12 ("I do not permit a woman to teach or hold authority over a man; she must be silent") is believed to refer only to formal authority over men--particularly final, sole, official authority. This leaves a tremendous amount of territory open. The power and influence women have is real, but it is not defined as 'power.' Possibly, this places their power beyond the reach of formal authority: you cannot restrict or supervise something you do not see as existing in the first place. Additionally, for men and women both, true authority comes from God, and not the physical person speaking. Neither men nor women act in religious contexts unless they believe that they are being guided by God. Statements regarding religion are received as though they came from that source. An individual might choose to share a Bible verse to help with a particular problem or question (fear, loneliness, doubt, etc.), discuss a way God has recently affected his or her life, contribute a poem or song, offer a rebuke, or lead by example; but always God is the ultimate source of the message. The only credit the speaker receives is a hug and a "you

have been such an encouragement to me." This ability to 'borrow' authority is not restricted by gender, so that both men and women have equal access to this informal and spontaneous power. In fact, women seem to use it more often, perhaps to make up for their exclusion from the formal contexts (lessons, Communion Meditation, etc.) men do have access to.

Finally, the fact that both masculine and feminine perspectives co-exist may make the ministry especially attractive for women as women. On college campuses, women may be treated with increasing equality, but often this is tied to their participation in traditional masculine behavior. Furthermore, as Ginsburg and Orlofski suggest, women tend to confront issues of interpersonal maturity earlier than men (1981: 306). For them, relationality is often a priority. In the ministry, it is all right to recognize emotions, communication is not assumed to be competitive, personal power and prestige are not valid primary goals. For male participants, this may be seen as a chance to enter a new world of interactions focused on affection and sharing. For women, however, it may offer a rare chance to 'act like women,' to take part in interactions they are already skilled at and recognize as valuable.

Opportunities for leadership are not equally available to both women and men. Men have exclusive rights to the highest formal positions, including the one that wields the most official and real power: campus minister. However, both 'masculine' and 'feminine' perspectives coexist within the organization, and the amount of power and freedom available to women is greater than a theoretical examination of the theology and formal structure would indicate.

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