



**Another Look at the
Battle of the Sexes**

**Are Music Choices
Really Important?**

**Manuel Lacunza: The
Adventist Connection**

**Coal: How Did It
Originate?**

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OK, OK. I'm the "new kid on the block." Or the "freshman," if you prefer. Both designations will fit, because I have moved many times in my life and have also been a freshman student several times. So how did one Dick Stenbakken wind up as an associate editor of *Dialogue* magazine and, more importantly, what does he know about Adventists in non-Adventist colleges and universities?

Well, I do know a few things about that experience. After attending Adventist schools, members of our family sought advanced degrees that were not available or accessible at our institutions. Among myself, my wife, our son and daughter, we have five graduate degrees from non-Adventist colleges and universities, and one planning to pursue a master's degree in a public university. That doesn't make me an expert, but there are some things I do know:

- I know you are faced with new theories and philosophies that frequently call into question what you've learned at home, in church, and in Adventist schools.
- I know you confront daily challenges to the ethics and morals you have embraced as part of your Adventist heritage.
- I know the opportunities and dangers you, as a committed Christian, encounter on a secular campus.
- I know the pressures of classwork, reports, deadlines, research, and dissertations.
- I know how tough it is to keep quality devotional time and to grow spiritually while trying to balance your class load with work and other commitments.
- I know the joy of sharing your hope and faith with a fellow student or teacher.

I know these things because I've been there. In fact, those are some of the very areas that I want *Dialogue* to continue addressing in future issues. I also know that no editorial staff can approach those issues by themselves and in isolation. That's why this journal is called *Dialogue* and is published in four major languages. It's a place for you to reflect, contribute, question, and probe. No, that's *not* another assignment, but an open invitation to enrich our international conversation.

I'm glad to be part of the editorial team because I believe in who you are and respect your commitment to expanding your intellectual capacity and usefulness. I also believe you can make a valuable and needed contribution to the church and its mission. In addition, this assignment allows me to hear about your ideas, needs, and concerns.

Specifically, we would like to know if there are other Seventh-day Adventists who are either students, faculty, or staff at the college or university where you study or work. For that reason, we have provided a toll-free telephone number in North America, where you can call us with the names of other Adventist students or teachers on your campus. That number is 1-800-ACM-LIST. Call us, and we'll be in touch with them. If you live in other areas of the world, please write to our regional representative, listed on page 2 of this issue. After all, that's what *Dialogue* is all about—two-way communication. We'll be eagerly waiting to hear from you.

Richard O. Stenbakken
Associate Editor

Dialogue 6:1—1994

I Was Expecting It

As a university student, I was expecting my church to produce someday a journal of the caliber of *Dialogue*. How delighted I was to receive and read my first copy! We needed this means of learning from other Adventist students around the world and this biblical approach to current topics, particularly in the scientific fields. Congratulations!

JOSÉ MIGUEL DÍAZ RODRÍGUEZ
Santa Cruz de Tenerife
SPAIN

One of the Best

I am serving as a missionary nurse in the Central Philippines and recently discovered *Dialogue*. The articles are clear and uplifting. I consider it one of the best Adventist journals! May God continue to guide each member of the editorial team as you prepare the content of future issues.

JOYCE MAE LAPLANA
Dueñas, Iloilo, PHILIPPINES

Awaiting the Next Issue

I'm writing from the distant Patagonia to congratulate you for your outstanding journal. I received the first issue and wrote to the regional representative for our division, requesting the following issues, but have yet to receive them. What can I do? We need this kind of publication, precisely because we live far away from major Adventist institutions and large concentrations of members.

HÉCTOR O. LEAL
Comodoro Rivadavia
ARGENTINA

We recommend that you write to the Education Director for your union, making the same request. Don't give up! In the meantime, we will mail to you three recent issues.—The Editors



The Bible and Homosexuality

This letter is not so much a response to Ronald Springett's article ("Homosexuality: A Biblical Perspective," *Dialogue* 5:2), but rather to the issues he raised in it. Briefly, there is *no* condemnation of lesbianism in the Bible, not even in Romans 1:26. This passage refers to a heterosexual woman experimenting with practices common among male homosexuals. Classical culture usually treated male and female homosexuality separately and paralleled them with the two halves of heterosexuality, *not* each other. Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 refer specifically to males; in fact all of Leviticus 18 and 20 are gender specific.

This leads me to raise three specific issues: (1) Can the church come to terms with the lack of a biblical basis for excluding lesbians? (2) Most commentators on homosexuality in the church (including Springett and myself) are male. How can we obtain a balanced viewpoint with such imbalanced input? (3) When a youth finds himself or herself to be homosexual, who does this person turn to for counseling and support? How many of our "lost youth" are these homosexuals who have no place in the church?

JAMES E. MILLER
Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

The editors respond:

To argue in favor of a position using as an argument the silence of the Bible regarding a specific practice is a questionable approach and may lead to wrong conclusions. The Scriptures, for example, do not condemn the use of

tobacco or recreational drugs, and yet Adventists and other Christians—based on inspired counsel regarding our bodies—consider these practices harmful and therefore improper for Christians. In addition, the Old Testament commonly used masculine language to include both genders. In his article, Dr. Springett distinguished clearly between homosexual inclination and practice, stating that only the latter is specifically condemned in the Scriptures. All of us struggle, as Paul so movingly expressed it, with powerful inclinations toward rebellion and evil (Romans 7:21-25). Adventist youth struggling with homosexual tendencies can seek counsel from pastors or teachers in whom they have confidence. They can also ask God to help them to overcome as other Christians have done.

Wish I Could Have Known You Before

Thank you for publishing thought-provoking articles in *Dialogue*. I am from Nepal, and I only wish I had started receiving the magazine when I commenced my nursing training almost three years ago. Up to six months ago I was not even aware that this excellent magazine existed. Please list my name in "Interchange" and let's keep in touch!

GANDHI PANT
Royal Sussex County Hospital
Brighton, ENGLAND

To Encourage and to Challenge

Recently a team of 14 Adventist students from public secondary schools in our conference were involved in a 10-day evangelistic campaign whose main speaker was pastor David Makoye. These students are members of the Adventist Secondary Students Association (ASSA) of Tanzania. As a result of a powerful biblical message and the blessing of God, 70 persons surrendered their lives to Christ through public confession and baptism. Isn't this a

challenge to Adventist college and university students? Even better results could be obtained if they got together, committed their talents to God, and presented Christ before the world!

ROBERT E. M. TUVALO
Campus Ministries and
Education Director
South Nyanza Conference
TANZANIA

More Statistical Information, Please

I am a student pursuing a degree in administration and management at the Adventist Dominican University. My suggestion is that in future issues you include more statistical information and comparative charts regarding the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We need to know more about the challenges we face worldwide, so that we may approach them rationally and well prepared.

APOLINAR RAMÍREZ GARCÍA
Universidad Adventista
Dominicana
San Cristóbal, DOMINICAN
REPUBLIC

Thanks for your suggestion, Apolinar! We have published some articles with statistical information about our church. See, for example, "Seven Adventist Trends: Statistical Profile of a Changing Church" (2:2) and "Global Mission and You" (5:1), which was accompanied by a full color map supplement. We plan to include similar articles in future issues. —The Editors

Letters

We welcome your letters, but limit your comments to 200 words. Address them to: Dialogue Letters, 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring; MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. If selected for this section, your letter may be edited for clarity or space.

Someone has said that the battle of the sexes can never be won because there is too much fraternizing with the enemy. A love-hate relationship marks the role of gender in many societies of the world today. Women protest male harassment, abuse, and violence. Men respond by retreating into their inner selves, the workplace, or the sports field.

In many societies an uncertainty seems to grip men and women as to their roles. On the one hand, women, having won their right to the workplace after being excluded for centuries, feel stressed out from the pressures of trying to be “superwoman”—breadwinner, parent, housekeeper, activist. On the other, the female role shift has forced men to redefine their own. The 1970s witnessed men attempting to develop their feminine side—the “soft male”—to counter the emerging tough women. But women, while demanding and savoring equal rights with men, still want men to be masculine, to “wear the pants in the family,” and be the primary providers.¹ Meanwhile, men seek to recover their masculinity—even as they nurse the wounds inflicted by the feminist movement.² In the midst of such male-female conflicts, a wistful longing for the good old romantic days still occurs: “We used to fall in love, remember?”³

And yet it shouldn’t be surprising that trying to define male-female roles and relationships in the current atmosphere is close to treading a minefield. At the risk of losing an arm or a leg, I wish to share what I have discovered from the biblical “image of God” paradigm. It seems to me that in this paradigm we can see a complementary role for the male and the female. It is also possible that by observing how the members of the Godhead relate to each other, we can understand better the male-female relationships. Since my study leads me to embrace both feminist and traditional values, I expect—like the undecided Civil War soldier who wore pants of blue and coat of grey—to get shot at from both sides. Still, I propose to take the risk in the hope of opening up some new perspectives.

God splits the Adam

Let us begin with Genesis 1:27: “So God created man [Hebrew, *adam*] in his own image, in the image of God he

created him; male and female he created *them*.”* The Hebrew for man is *adam*. The passage, rich in meaning, indicates that God split *adam* into two complementary beings who together would reflect His likeness. God Himself is not a loner, but a loving family. God (Hebrew *Elohim*, plural) says, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). Here’s conversation within the Godhead—three Persons, consulting,

Another Look at the Battle of the Sexes

Male and Female in Biblical Perspective

by
Beatrice S.
Neall

creating, and working together in harmony. God in relationship created the human in relationship. One part of the image of God is this relationship of the male and the female.

At creation, male and female formed a unity. This togetherness in a way reflects the divine image.⁴ On both the divine and human levels, oneness is a kind of relationship in which different persons complement each other, forming a unity.

True, God cannot be considered in terms of gender, but He has shared with the male and the female particular attributes that reside in Him. In His creative activity, when He split Adam into male and female, He divided some of His own special qualities between the two. To the man He gave His power and

strength. To the woman He gave the nurturant, life-giving attributes of His nature.

Little boys revving up toy engines, bigger boys careening down ski slopes or blasting through city streets with sirens screaming remind us that males love speed, noise, excitement, and risk. Yet they but faintly reflect the “*machoness*” of the God who blows up stars as big as solar systems and then shrinks them into deadly black holes that suck up everything in their path. God is awesome in His “maleness.”

Little girls cuddling baby dolls, bigger ones mediating arguments and kissing away bruises remind us that gentleness also images the nature of God. The Bible compares God to the suffering of a woman giving birth (Deuteronomy 32:18; John 16:21, 22) and the tenderness of a mother nurturing her child (Isaiah 49:15; Hosea 11:1-4).⁵ God is soothing, gentle, nurturing in His “femaleness.”

God described all His creations as good, but when He saw the man, He said, “not good”: “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him” (Genesis 2:18). The man was incomplete until God made “a helper suitable for him.” God created woman to be a helper, a counterpart to man. “Helper” or “help” are honorable titles in the Old Testament, applied to God Himself (as in Psalm 46:1). “Helper” indicates that the man and woman were to work together in life’s endeavors. Society is impoverished when a single sex group functions alone, for such singularity reflects only part of the full-spectrum of personhood.⁶ The creative purpose of God in splitting Adam is that men and women may grow together toward unity, an attribute of God Himself. He values harmony, interdependence, and unselfishness.⁷

Complexity in the divine image

Generally history and tradition have partitioned separate roles for males and females. Boys were trained as protectors and providers, encouraging an underlying biological predisposition of males to be dominant and aggressive. Girls were trained to be nurturant and domestic, in harmony with their childbearing role. The husband was to be the head; the wife, the heart.⁸ But God’s creative purpose is not quite so simple. Neither is human nature.

Along with the dominant characteristics of each sex, there also exists a “shadow self” containing elements of the opposite sex. The physiological evidence for this assertion is that each sex secretes small amounts of hormones of the opposite sex. Thus women are capable of aggressiveness, courage, and leadership, and men of tenderness and sensitivity to beauty. The “shadow self” has several functions. It gives males and females overlapping areas of common ground with each other. While total opposites have the most to contribute to each other in a relationship, they also have the most difficulty relating because of their differences. The “shadow self” provides areas of similarity where they can meet.

In addition to the “shadow self” of the opposite gender, human beings have dominant and auxiliary functions through which they perceive reality and make judgments. Some of these functions are gender-related. For instance, most men tend to make decisions based upon logic and objectivity, while most women tend to make decisions based upon feelings, intuition, and the perceived consequences of their choices upon others.⁹ Whatever our dominant and auxiliary functions, we feel more comfortable with the dominant one. Being forced to rely on the auxiliary function produces tension. Thus, if men and women take on roles that are not natural to them, they will feel pressured and stressed. For this reason, many people experience relief in reverting to traditional roles. Discomfort can also result from negative pressure by family and friends when men or women act in non-traditional ways.

Though men and women should first fulfill the tasks belonging to their own gender, the complexity of their nature indicates that they should not be bound by gender stereotypes. Women have become outstanding religious leaders, presidents of corporations, and heads of state. Men have excelled in emotional expression, as in music and poetry, and as empathetic counselors. Human creativity and potential, derived from the image of God, are limitless and unpredictable. Gifts should not be suppressed, but valued and encouraged. God Himself is complex; so is humanity, since we are made in His image.

The impact of sin

The atomic blast of sin split apart “Adam,” and this split had its inevitable impact upon the male-female union. Sin profoundly altered male-female relationships. Selfishness swallowed up love; suspicion swept aside trust; and competitiveness took the place of complementarity. God predicted a changed relationship between men and women. “Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you” (Genesis 3:16). With the entrance of sin came the abuse of love—the female manipulation to get what she wants from the male, and the male use of force to dominate the female. Two-become-one changed into one-become-two. Individuality, separateness, and self-seeking replaced complementarity. The harmonious duet turned into a shouting match.

With sin entered a string of abuses—domination, repression, the seclusion of women, manipulation, seduction, free love, the veiling of the female form or the unveiling and exploitation of it, adultery, pornography, and sexual violence, to name a few.

Sexuality, as a gift from God, was intended to be good. It is diffused through the whole human personality, every cell of the organism being genetically male or female. God gave the gift of sexual expression for two purposes, procreative (“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” [Genesis 1:28, KJV]), and unitive (“they will become one flesh” [Genesis 2:24]). The unitive purpose must be dominant, because it is only within the unity of married love that children can develop and flourish. God designed sexual union for the purpose of completing the mental and spiritual

harmony that a couple sense in each other, producing the greatest ecstasy humans can experience.

Human perversion seeks the ecstasy of sex without the oneness, commitment, and enduring love. Anything short of commitment makes human beings disposable; people are used for a limited time and then discarded. That's why forcing sex on an unwilling subject causes intense humiliation, violation, rejection, and loss of self-worth. For the same reason, sex out of marriage can be devastating to the human psyche. It is one of the great ironies of contemporary life that our society, even as it screams against sexual abuse, pursues sexual excitement outside of marriage.

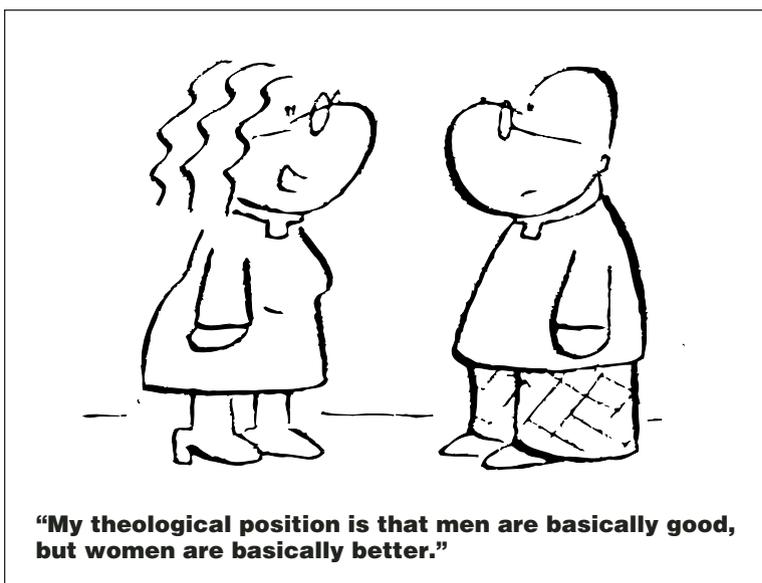
Human relationships in the image of God

Once we understand that sin has diverted the male-female role from the oneness of the divine image toward the divisiveness of the demonic, the issue of restoration of gender equality and role becomes one of returning to the original biblical locus. I believe both sexes can arrive at this locus if they examine relationships within the Godhead, which they were meant to reflect. The process can be both surprising and inspiring. Here are some biblical positions that provide insights for male-female relationships.

1. The Pauline assertion that “the head of the woman is man” (1 Corinthians 11:3) is not very popular today. Women resent the idea of male headship; often the word has been misinterpreted and misused, leading to abuse of women, physical and sexual violence, demeaning of personal worth and dignity, and restrictions that have prevented women from developing and exercising their gifts. But what is often forgotten is that the same apostle also said in the same place that “the head of every man is Christ,” and “the head of Christ is God.” The context of the three statements where headship is mentioned does not permit dominance of one over the other that results in violence, abuse, or denial of self-worth and dignity. The succeeding points

illustrate the true nature of headship.

2. Even though Paul speaks of God being head of Christ, the overwhelming biblical teaching is that the Father and Son are equal in all respects. Similarly, when it comes to humans, Adam and Eve were to exercise equally lordship and dominion over the created order (see Genesis 1:28).
3. Father and Son consult with each other regarding goals and strategies. There is complete openness in all their transactions: “The Father loves the Son and shows him all he does” (John 5:20). They enter fully into each other's plans. Headship in no way indicates either superiority or inferiority of one or the other.
4. Members of the Godhead act jointly with each other (see John 5:19). Statements of Jesus that He did nothing on His own authority (see John 5:19, 30) do not indicate a subordinate position, but suggest that He worked in concert with His Father. The Father likewise worked in harmony with the Son (see John 5:22). In an ideal marriage there are no unilateral decisions. Decisions are made when consensus is reached.
5. The members of the Godhead find fulfillment in doing the will of each other. Jesus' derived great satisfaction from doing the will of His Father (see John 4:34) and accomplishing His rescue mission (see John 17:4). We human beings routinely seek satisfaction through fulfilling our personal needs. Jesus demonstrated the joy that comes from fulfilling the wishes of another.
6. Each affirms the others. The members of the Trinity continually glorify each other (see John 8:54; 13:31; 16:14). Husbands and wives need to learn the art of expressing appreciation. A good marriage is a mutual admiration society.
7. The Godhead is a model support system. The members empower each other in the fulfillment of their shared goals. Jesus in His human weakness was empowered by the Father and the Spirit to succeed in His mission (see John 1:32; 14:10). Our feelings of inadequacy would be soothed if we as men and women affirmed and empowered each other. Neither sex should seek to dominate the other. The tendency of male coercion and female manipulation illustrate the perverse human assumption that power is in short supply and must be fought over. In the Trinity we see the opposite principle: power is abundant and is freely shared.¹⁰
8. Leadership roles are interchangeable. The Father put all things in Jesus' hands (see John 3:35) giving Him rule over this world until the



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war is won; then it will be returned to the Father (see 1 Corinthians 15:24-28). Likewise, in a good marriage, leadership is interchangeable, each partner leading out in his or her areas of expertise.

9. There is oneness in the Godhead, such closeness that the pain of separation is unendurable (see Matthew 27:46). Jesus said, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). There is not only oneness, but *inness*: “I am in the Father, and... the Father is in me” (John 14:10). Love is the force that binds them together. Human beings are invited to experience intimate oneness with the Godhead (17:21). Through union with God husbands and wives can reach sublime heights and depths of love in their relationship with each other. God has given them a unique way to express “*inness*” through the sexual embrace. A couple who are one with God and one with one another experience a level of ecstasy unknown to, and unavailable in, casual sex. Moreover the fibers of love that bind them together build a sturdy nest for the young. Where parents are genuinely in love with each other, children develop secure personalities.

Some argue that the relationship in the Godhead is not a suitable model for humans because of our fallen condition.

They maintain that authoritarian modes (“he will rule over you,” Genesis 3:16) are most appropriate for sinners. But the goal for Christians is to reach “the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). Though we fall short of the divine ideal, we should always keep it before us and strive to reach it.

The Creator endowed us with exciting gifts of gender meant to complement each other. We find fulfillment when we develop these gifts and explore the relationships we were made to experience. There is no limit to human potential as it develops within the divine image. □

Beatrice S. Neall (Ph.D., Andrews University) has served as missionary and college teacher in Southeast Asia and in North America. The author of many articles, she writes from Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A.

Notes and References

*Except as otherwise stated, all Scripture passages are from the New International Version.

1. Willard F. Harley, *His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-proof Marriage* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Fleming F. Revell, 1986), p. 116-117.
2. See Robert Bly, *Iron John: A Book About Men* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), pp. 2, 63.

3. Lance Morrow, “Men: Are They Really That Bad?” *Time*, February 14, 1994, p. 57.
4. V. Norskov Olsen, *The New Relatedness for Man and Woman in Christ: A Mirror of the Divine* (Loma Linda, Calif.: Loma Linda University Center for Christian Bioethics, 1993), p. 49.
5. For more female images of God, see Virginia R. Mollenkott, *The Divine Feminine: The Biblical Imagery of God as Female* (New York: Crossroad, 1987).
6. Donald M. Joy, *Bonding: Relationships in the Image of God* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985), p. 19.
7. W. Peter Blitchington, *Sex Roles and the Christian Family* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1981), p. 51.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 71.
9. Myers-Briggs psychological typing describes a person’s dominant and auxiliary mental processes, and how they relate to gender. See Gordon Lawrence, *People Types and Tiger Stripes: A Practical Guide to Learning Styles* (Gainesville, Fla.: Center for Applications of Psychological Type, 1979), pp. 17, 20.
10. For this concept I am indebted to S. Scott Bartchy’s paper, “Issues of Power and a Theology of the Family” (Consultation on a Theology of the Family, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1984). See also Rollo May, *Love and Will* (New York: Norton, 1969), who identifies five kinds of power, one of which is beneficial—the kind that empowers others.

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Call an airlines office. Enter a supermarket. Stop at a bank. Walk by a teenager's room. You can't escape it. From the soothing to the shattering, from the rock to the rap, from the classical to the popular, music is everywhere. It's almost omnipresent.

But do we have a choice? In this age of explosion in audio/visual technology, can we really choose the music to which we listen? Are there standards that we can apply to our appreciation of music? To our teaching of music? To our practice?

For centuries the debate about music has been on center stage. Musicians, philosophers, and theologians have grappled with questions regarding the effects of different musical styles on human emotions and behavior patterns. Religion has tried to carve a role for music in praise and worship. Educators have not been far behind in the debate.

The Bible traces music's vital role in the Jewish religion and culture as well as in the early Christian church. Observe the variety of music styles and usage found within the biblical tradition: The song of Moses affirms God's triumphal liberating act (Exodus 15). David used music as a therapy for Saul (1 Samuel 16:14-23). Ezra records the bringing of 200 men and women singers from Babylon to help reestablish worship at the new temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 2:65). The Psalms and the Song of Solomon in the sacred canon attest to the value of music in Old Testament times. The apostle Paul's instruction regarding singing shows the value the early church placed on music (1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

Church history continues to record this tradition. Luther and Calvin had strong convictions on the role of music in congregational worship and in the lives of individual believers.¹ From Luther we have received a rich heritage of church music, including the famous Reformation hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

Music is not a concern of church alone. It is also the concern of educators. Allan Bloom states,

Though students do not have books, they most emphatically do have music. Nothing is more singular about this generation than its addiction to music. This is the age of music and the states of soul that

accompany it.... Today, a very large proportion of young people between the ages of ten and twenty live for music. It is their passion; nothing else excites them as it does; they cannot take seriously anything alien to music.... Nothing surrounding them—school, family, church—has anything to do with their musical world.²

Are Music Choices Really Important?

by
Marvin L.
Robertson

Further, English psychiatrist Anthony Storr adds, "Music is so freely available today that we take it for granted and underestimate its power for good or ill."³

It is within this milieu that Seventh-day Adventists seek to establish a philosophy of music that strengthens the

individual's relationship to Christ and the principles of His kingdom.

Music in the Adventist Church

Ellen White wrote extensively about the power of song and music.⁴ Biblical principles together with her published views have provided a core in the development of an Adventist philosophy of music. Her statements on the subject may be summarized as follows:

- Music is a gift of God, designed to inspire and elevate the individual. This gift may be perverted to serve purposes of evil, and as such is a most alluring agency of temptation.
- Music helps in the memorization of God's Word. "There are few means more effective for fixing His words in the memory than repeating them in song."
- Music is "one of the most effective means of impressing the heart with spiritual truth."
- Music is a valuable educational tool in both home and school. Singing draws parents, teachers, and students closer to God and to one another.
- "As a part of religious service, singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer."

Making Choices

As Christians, we are continually confronted with value judgments regarding each musical composition we listen to or perform. The following questions can help us in making these decisions:

1. What is the message of this piece of music?
2. What is its emotional and behavioral impact?
3. What is its cultural context?
4. What is its aesthetic value?
5. What is its appropriateness for worship?
6. What is its worship value?
7. What is its entertainment value?
8. What is its educational value?

- Through music "Heaven's communion begins on earth. We learn here the keynote of its praise."

In 1981 the General Conference published "Guidelines Toward a Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Music."⁵ The pamphlet, based on biblical teachings and statements from Ellen White, provides helpful suggestions on facing issues related to music that arise from time to time. Adventist periodicals continue to address these questions as well.

Dealing with change in music

With those concepts as background, can we find concepts and ideas to help us deal with the ever-changing, challenging, and sometimes chaotic world of music? I think we can. My experience as a musician, educator, and minister of music has led me to develop the following framework of principles from which each individual may make intelligent choices.

1. **Music must glorify God.** Whatever music I choose to listen to or to perform, be it sacred or secular, must be to the glory of God. As a performer I must always strive to give my best. Inaccurate, unprepared performance does not honor God. "Christians who excuse their own mediocrity with pious rationalizations seem guilty of not understanding the extent of God's call on their lives."⁶
2. **Music, per se, does not make one moral or immoral.** That is not to say music does not affect morality! It simply means that musical style preference (classical, folk, gospel, pop, etc.) is not to be equated with one's relationship to God. Just because I prefer Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms does not make me a more moral person than my friend who prefers Steve Green or Sandi Patti. When dealing with aesthetics it might be well to reflect on what Harold Best has said: "The beauty of God is not aesthetic beauty but moral and ethical beauty. The beauty of the

creation is not moral beauty; it is aesthetic beauty, artifactual beauty. Aesthetic beauty lies in the way and the quality with which something is made or said. Truth lies in *what* is said."⁷

3. **Music must yield to the test of appropriateness.** While a bathing suit is appropriate at the beach, it would not be so in the church. The same principle can be applied to music. Not all styles of music are appropriate for all occasions, and some styles may never be appropriate for the Christian. What may be a perfectly legitimate, emotional love-song melody may not be suitable for a worship service. The context is different. Should music in worship focus one's attention to emotional pleasure rather than the praise of God? In our entertainment-driven world, we must be careful to distinguish between entertainment and worship. Worship is what we present to God; entertainment is "a performance or show designed to amuse or divert."⁸
4. **Culture conditions appreciation of music.** The norm for acceptable music varies from country to country and culture to culture. Adventists in each culture must study their own music and decide what does and does not express a positive Christian outlook.
5. **The world of popular music is not all conducive to Christian values.** Today's musical taste-maker worldwide is not the home, church, or school but the commercial interests of radio, television, and film. "Rock music is as unquestioned and unproblematic as the air the students breathe, and very few have any acquaintance at all with classical music."⁹ The global rock-'n'-roll utopia *Music TV* tries to create is an apt illustration of the worldwide nature of the problem we face in confronting new trends in music.
James St. Lawrence and Doris Joyner recently reported on their research on "The Effects of Sexually Violent Rock Music on

Males' Acceptance of Violence Against Women." Describing the results of their study, they wrote:

"The experimental manipulation involved exposure to sexually violent heavy-metal rock music, Christian heavy-metal rock music, or easy-listening classical music.... The results indicated that males with an extrinsic religious orientation [i.e. not motivated by inner conviction] were more accepting of sexist and rape-supportive beliefs. Exposure to heavy-metal rock music, irrespective of lyrical content, increased males' sex-role stereotyping and negative attitudes toward women."¹⁰

Jeffrey Arnett has found that, when compared with boys who do not like heavy metal music, boys who liked heavy metal demonstrated more "reckless behavior" relative to driving, sex, and drug use. They were also less satisfied with their family relationships. Girls who liked heavy metal music were more prone to shoplifting, vandalism, promiscuous sexual behavior, drug use, and lower self esteem than their counterparts who did not like heavy metal music.¹¹

What do these findings mean? For one thing, churches and schools are dreadfully handicapped when trying to reach youth through music. Much of the music teenagers are exposed to is inherently anti-Christian. Even when the words may be appropriate, music cancels them out.

- 6. Music may be used to control a person's emotions and actions without going through rational thought processes.** As Storr points out: "The power of music, especially when combined with other emotive events, can be terrifyingly impressive. At the Nuremberg rally of 1936, the thunderous cheers [sic] of the vast crowd eventually drowned the music of the massed bands which played Hitler in. But the bands were there long before Hitler appeared, preceding his rhetoric with their rhetoric,

preparing the huge gathering for expectations, aiding and abetting Hitler's self-dramatization, making it credible that a *petit bourgeois* failure had turned himself into a Messiah.... There can be no doubt that, by heightening crowd emotions and by ensuring that those emotions peak together rather than separately, music can powerfully contribute to the loss of critical judgement, the blind surrender to the feelings of the moment, which is so dangerously characteristic of crowd behaviour."¹²

- 7. It is legitimate for a Christian to perform and enjoy both sacred and secular music.** As Christians we must take care that the words and the music lift our spirits above the mundane cares of this life.¹³

- 8. Music is not a static art.** The repertoire constantly expands and changes. Harold Best observes:

"The church has for centuries waged one brush war after another over the question of whether or how art and music 'mean'—what it means to borrow styles, forms, process, tunes, techniques, textures, shapes, gestures, and instruments from secular sources.... At the time of the borrowing, the war rages quite bitterly and divisively. Then as time passes, the war dies down. The previously condemned becomes merely questionable, if not outrightly sacred."¹⁴

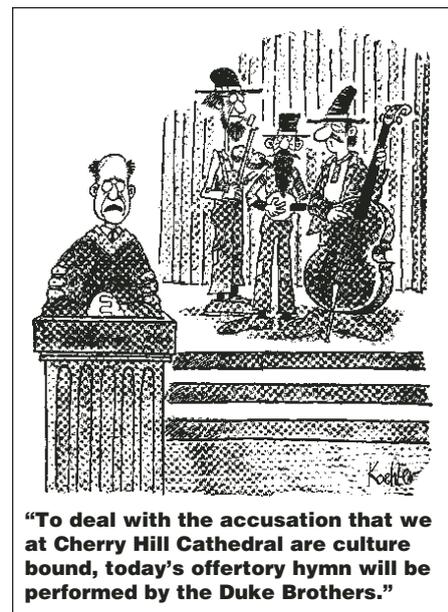
Reflection

Are our value judgments really important in this area? Do our listening habits affect our lives? I believe the answer is a resounding "Yes!" Our choices have eternal consequences. They either lead us toward or away from a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. □

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“Would you let me see the book, please?”

The question has moved from the routine to the classic. Almost every visitor to our university library wants to see “the book.” The library does not have the entire book, but only a handwritten extract with the title, “The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty.” Written by Manuel Lacunza, a Jesuit priest, the manuscript is beautifully composed in 19th century Spanish and is written in artistic calligraphy. Its yellowing pages carry the smell of antiquity. Dated 1820 and written under

To me, a professional historian, an Adventist, and a Chilean like the author, everything about the book is exciting. Who is the real author? What made him write this controversial text? What influence did the book have? Does its content have any validity for us, who live almost two centuries later?

The author

Manuel Lacunza was born to an aristocratic family in Santiago, Chile. Although economically well-to-do, he opted for the religious life and joined the Jesuit order. As a student, he was intelligent, dedicated, sociable, and happy. Early in life, he excelled as a public speaker and eventually became a teacher.²

When in 1768 Carlos III, the Spanish monarch, expelled the Jesuits from Spain and all its colonies, Lacunza and his fellow Jesuits were arrested and taken to Europe. After months of a torturous journey in leaky ships, the prisoners were dropped off in the city of Imola, near Bologna, Italy. There they languished until 1799, when the Spanish crown lifted the restrictions against the Jesuits and allowed them to return to their native lands. Lacunza refused to return. On June 18, 1801, his body was found on the outskirts of Imola, with the cause of his death unknown.³

Lacunza spent the 10-year exile in Imola devoted to reflection and writing. He maintained a steady correspondence with his family and friends in Chile. In his nostalgic letters he imagined himself traveling back to Chile, finding recreation in its scenery. He missed his loved ones and his native food. “Only those,” he wrote, “who have lost it know what Chile is. There isn’t the least compensation here—and that is the pure truth.”⁴ The exile was painful. He identified himself with the lot of his banished brothers: “Everybody looks at us as at a tree totally dry, incapable of reviving or as a corpse buried in oblivion.”⁵

Nevertheless, the suffering was not in vain; he saw in it an opportunity to share in the sufferings of Christ: “Because to serve God in truth, there cannot be anything with a better purpose than the present state in which we find ourselves, that is of humiliation and of carrying our cross.”⁶ Although bitter, the exile was not fruitless. Out of that

Manuel Lacunza: The Adventist Connection

by
Sergio Olivares

the pseudonym of Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra, the manuscript had been apparently copied by Trinitarian Fathers of San Carlos, in Rome, using four possible European sources. One footnote underscores its authenticity: “Nothing has been lost in phrases or concepts of the author, because this is an original Spanish copy of what he himself composed.”¹



solitude and suffering arose his great contribution to the Christian world: “The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty.”

Lacunza’s work

What motivated Lacunza to write this book? His detractors pointed to the psychological frustrations of exile and the later suspension of his religious order. ⁷ Others interpreted it as a conservative Christian reaction to the Enlightenment, especially to Deism, which was in vogue among both Catholics and Protestants. ⁸ Others saw it as a result of Lacunza’s intense personal study of the Bible, particularly the books of Daniel and Revelation, independent from the church fathers or theologians. ⁹

Lacunza himself gives three reasons for writing the book: (1) To prompt the priests to shake the dust from their Bibles; (2) to call the attention of those who were running toward the “abyss of incredulity for lack of knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”; and (3) to help the Jews by providing them with a “full knowledge of their Messiah.”¹⁰

Lacunza’s methodology is of particular interest: Study of the Bible, reflection, and prayer. When he found a point that was difficult to understand, says his recording secretary Fr. Gonzalez Carvajal, he said, “Let us suspend the work while we ask with more insistence for divine illumination.” He is supposed to have stated that “his book was more the result of his knees than of his head.”¹¹ Even Lacunza’s critics acknowledged his deep spirituality and genuine prayer life.¹²

Lacunza’s book is divided into three parts. In the first he outlines his method, in contrast with the traditional systems. It includes a study of the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, arguing in favor of a literal interpretation. Next, he discusses the value of tradition in the interpretation of Scripture, distinguishing between “articles of faith and controversial conjectures.” He goes on to elaborate his basic premise:

“Jesus Christ will return from Heaven to earth when His time comes, at the appropriate time and moment that the Father Himself has placed under His own power. He will come accompanied not only by the angels, but also by the saints previously resurrected—of those, I say, that will be judged worthy of that time



and of the resurrection of the dead. . . . He will not come in a hurry, but more deliberately than is usually thought. He will not only come to judge the dead but also and in the first place the living. Consequently, this judgment of the living and the dead cannot be only one judgment, but rather two very diverse judgments, not only in essence and in manner but also in time. From this we conclude (and this is the main point that deserves attention) that there has to be considerable space of time between the awaited coming of the Lord, and the judgment of the dead or universal resurrection.”¹³

The second part of Lacunza’s work is devoted to an examination and interpretation of the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 and the Antichrist. In the third part Lacunza elaborates on the second coming of Christ, the judgment, the new heaven and New Earth, the new Jerusalem, the millennium, the final judgment, and the eternal happiness of the redeemed.

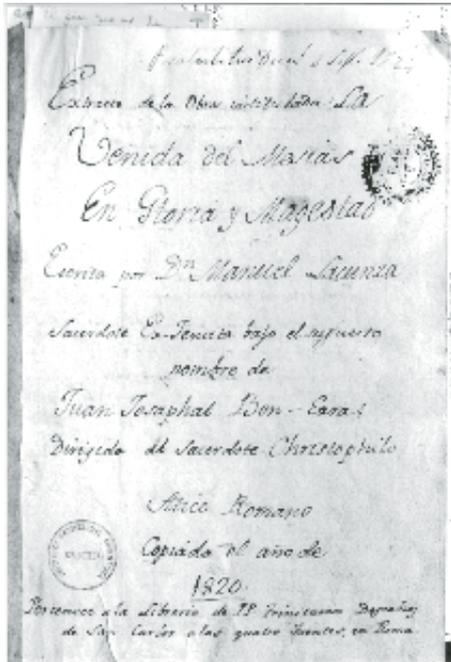
International reactions

Lacunza’s work had an immediate impact. While he was still writing it, partial versions of the text circulated in manuscript form, causing great distress

to the author, because of the misinterpretations that began to appear.¹⁴ As could be expected, the first to see the work and the first to react were his fellow Catholic clergymen. Some applauded him; others denounced both the content and the methodology of his work.

The critics concentrated especially on five areas: (1) The tacit rejection of the church fathers as the primary source of biblical interpretation; (2) the acceptance of a literal interpretation of the Bible as opposed to the traditional allegorical method; (3) his identification of the Antichrist as a moral body; (4) his indirect criticism of the Roman hierarchy by connecting it to the second beast of Revelation 13 and the whore of chapter 17; (5) the projected role of the Jewish people in eschatology. Lacunza also taught an earthly millennium, separated by two resurrections—one for the righteous, the other for the wicked. This teaching aroused much controversy, as the Catholic Church had abandoned the doctrine from the third century onward.¹⁵

Many of Lacunza’s admirers and defenders were fellow Jesuits. ¹⁶ One of them wrote, “About the work of Manuel Lacunza, I believe it was written to bring great glory to our Lord, and for the benefit of the holy Church. . . . Let the Father of lights be infinitely praised, that he has illuminated the author in the understanding of the Holy Scripture.”¹⁷ The reactions of South American writers also deserve mention. One historian praised the work as “the Chilean book that has reached the highest peak as an intelligent effort; in other words, as the work of a mind that has been able to deepen a concept and to present it to the world with the spiritual force necessary to awaken its attention and to penetrate profoundly in the human soul. . . . It is the



Title page of the manuscript copy of Lacunza's work, kept in the library of Chile Adventist University.

Chilean work that has reached the highest celebrity and the only one that has had universal repercussions until the present.”¹⁸

So significant was the book in South American religious history that one of the founding fathers of Argentina, Manuel Belgrano, provided in 1816 his own funds to publish in London a four-volume edition of Lacunza's work. Many Spaniards praised it. Cortés, in his biographical dictionary, considers Lacunza “one of the glories of this century's theology,” who “elevated biblical exegesis to a height that no other

modern author has reached, either in Europe or the Americas.”¹⁹

Félix Torres Amat, renowned translator of the Vulgate version of the Bible into Spanish, recommended Lacunza's work in one of his notes as “worthy of deep reflection, particularly by those who dedicate themselves to the study of the Scriptures, as it gives light to the understanding of many obscure passages.”²⁰

The official Roman Catholic reaction came in 1819, eight years after the first Spanish edition was printed in Cádiz in 1811. On January 15, the Tribunal of the Sacred Office in Madrid ordered that the work be taken out of circulation. Later, in September 1824, Lacunza's work was included by Pope Leo XII in the index of forbidden books, with the terse notation, “in any language.”

However, a work of this caliber could not remain confined to the Spanish and Spanish-American Catholic circles. Through various translations into the main European languages, Lacunza's book was widely read and discussed. Edward Irving, a popular Presbyterian preacher in London, published in 1827 an English version under the title *The Coming of the Messiah*.²¹ However, in his introduction, Irving pointed out how he differed from Lacunza in some areas. Irving interpreted one day in prophecy as one year. He rejected the futurist interpretation of Revelation and held that the Antichrist was an individual.²²

As a result of the wide circulation of Lacunza's writings in Europe, his views were thoroughly discussed during the interdenominational prophetic conferences held in Albury Park, England, in 1826-1830.

The Millerite connection

Across the Atlantic in the 1830s, several of William Miller's associates were acquainted not only with the writings of Irving but also with the prophetic discussions held at Albury Park. Josiah Litch, one of the Millerite

leaders, attributed Irving's interest in Bible prophecies to his reading of Lacunza:

“[His] book fell into the hands of Edward Irving. The eyes of this renowned and eloquent preacher were opened to the glorious truth of the premillennial coming of Christ of which he became an ardent partisan. He began to translate Ben-Ezra, and then to write numerous works on the same topic. During some time, these works produced the same resonance in England which Miller obtained years later in our country.”²³

Thus Lacunza becomes a key link in the chain of interpreters of Bible prophecy who saw human history inexorably leading to the glorious return of Christ. This point was thoroughly demonstrated by Alfred Voucher, an Adventist scholar who for years conducted careful research in the best libraries of Europe and the Americas on the life and work of Lacunza.²⁴

Lacunza and the Adventist interpretation

No study of Lacunza would be complete without pointing out that even though there is a connection between his work, the Millerite movement, and the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there are significant differences between his prophetic interpretation and ours. These differences, which Voucher has pointed out, can be summarized as follows:

We do not share Lacunza's interpretation of the kingdoms of Daniel 2, which fuses Babylon with Medo-Persia. Neither do we accept his twofold identification of Daniel's symbolic “beasts” with spiritual deviations such as heresy, schism, hypocrisy, and idolatry linked with particular kingdoms. Although we come close to Lacunza's concept of the Antichrist as a system or moral body, we do not accept his specific interpretation of the apocalyptic symbols. We also part company with Lacunza in his belief that the Jews as a race will be converted and that they will have a decisive role in the final events, particularly in the millennial reign. According to Voucher's summary evaluation, “the eschatological system of Lacunza, like all human systems, is imperfect and is subject to revision. It contains some outdated elements.”²⁵

How about similarities between our interpretation and that of Lacunza? At least two should be underlined: (1) His categorical position of favoring the biblical text over tradition; and (2) his principal thesis of the coming of the Messiah in glory and majesty accompanied by the resurrection of the righteous, followed by a universal judgment after the millennium.

Curiosity or readiness?

Now, back to the question with which we began this article. “Would you let me see the book, please?” Everyone who visits our university is curious to see Lacunza’s book—to touch it, to feel it, even to smell it. But the book’s message is not about curiosity. Lacunza’s heart burned with a passion for the return of His Lord.

Eschatology must not be relegated to curiosity or to controversy, but to readiness. A thorough study of the Bible must lead to a transformed, committed, and joyful life. Lacunza’s forceful words are ever pertinent: “Jesus Christ will return from Heaven to earth when His time comes, at the appropriate time and moment that the Father Himself has placed under His own power.” Maranatha! □

Sergio Olivares is the president of Chile Adventist Educational Center, in Chillan, Chile.

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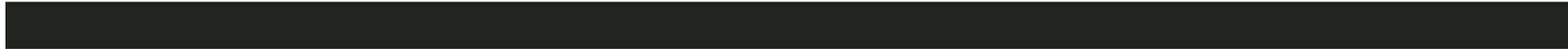
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“We may well call it black diamonds. Every basket is power and civilization.”
— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Call it black diamond. Call it basket of power. Or call it coal. It is one of the most useful natural resources found in the earth. It’s composed of vegetable matter, modified by heat, pressure, catalytic activity, and decay. But how did the vegetable matter originate? The question has long been a point of controversy. The majority of those who

Coal: How Did It Originate?

by
Harold G.
Coffin

have studied coal believe that it is derived from natural organic accumulations such as peat bogs, marshes, and swamps that became buried. A minority suggests that some, if not most, coal developed from plant material transported from elsewhere.

In the 1700s and early 1800s, students of the earth largely held that coal came from plant materials buried during a major catastrophe (Noah’s Flood). These individuals pointed to evidence suggesting that the formation of coal did not resemble any modern processes. They observed that modern bogs, swamps, and similar areas are not comparable to coal seams in lateral extent, depth, and composition.¹

Catastrophic burial or gradual accumulation?

With the rise of uniformitarianism,² scientists began to explain all geological phenomena by observable processes. Charles Lyell, who promoted the uniformitarian principle, visited some of the coal regions, both in Europe and North America.³ He and other researchers noted the association of upright petrified trees with seams of coal. They argued that coal could not be the product of burial during a worldwide catastrophe because the growth of trees associated with coal beds required too much time (Figure 1). This observation and argument were important factors in shifting opinion about the origin of coal from that of rapid accumulation and burial of plant debris to processes of gradual growth, accumulation, and burial.

Whichever view one finds most convincing—catastrophic burial or gradual accumulation—depends somewhat upon the paradigm with which one approaches the subject. Since the author and most of the readers of this article hold a worldview influenced by the Bible, we will concentrate more on evidences that support biblical history. However, some of the arguments for growth and gradual accumulation must be examined also.

Most coal is clearly composed of vegetable matter such as tree trunks, branches, bark, leaves, needles, and macerated plant debris. Carboniferous coals (usually the harder kind) are composed of ferns, club mosses, horse-tails, and other plants not classified with the seed-bearing plants (evergreen and deciduous trees and flowering plants). The softer coals (usually higher in the geological column) are mostly the product of buried evergreen and deciduous trees. Because coal reveals that it is composed of plant remains, the plants must have grown where the coal is now located (*autochthonous*) or they must have been transported to the present location of the coal beds (*allochthonous*).

Questions from coal beds

Perhaps the first obvious question one might ask is, “Does a coal bed resemble a buried peat bog or marsh?” To answer that question we need to know something about bogs and marshes. A peat bog is usually composed

of a special type of moss (*Sphagnum*). There may be other plants associated with the peat, but the dominant plant is Sphagnum moss. A marsh or swamp may have a greater variety of plant types—mostly the kinds of plants that thrive in wet environments. For peat bogs, the answer to the above question is a clear “No.” Most coal is clearly not buried peat.⁴ For a swamp or marsh, the answer is not so clear, especially for the Carboniferous coals. Many of the plant types found in these coal beds are extinct.⁵ We cannot be certain that they preferred a wetland habitat. Study of modern relatives of those plants indicates that most of them were not swamp dwellers. The Cretaceous to Eocene coals were derived mostly from forest trees. Some trees such as the cypress often grow in swamplands today, but many of the others could not survive in such an environment.

Another obvious question is, “Do modern wetland environments provide an adequate model for the great deposits of coal?” For this question the answer is more definite, and was used by early geologists to support their Flood hypothesis. Although a few swamps and marshes cover large areas, for example the Dismal Swamp of Virginia, in the U.S.A., many coal seams are much more extensive. The Pittsburgh bed covers parts of the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, U.S.A., an area of 5,000 square kilometers, and averages a little more than two meters thick. The Appalachian coal basin extends over some 180,000 square kilometers. The extent of minable coal runs into the thousands of millions of tons. The Powder River basin of Wyoming, U.S.A. (30,000 square kilometers) is calculated to have nearly 22 billion tons of minable coal. The Latrobe Valley in Australia is estimated to be able to yield 70 billion tons of coal. The depth or thickness of coal beds is even less comparable with modern organic accumulations.

Problems for accumulation theory

Under more detailed examination, problems for the autochthonous theory arise. Some coals contain animal remains, usually sea animals.⁶ One common example is *Spirorbis*, a small coiled tubeworm less than 5 mm in diameter (Figure 2). The presence of a

sea worm in peat or swamp beds that are considered to be autochthonous does not fit well into a uniformitarian hypothesis. To avoid this problem, *Spirorbis* is said to have lived in a freshwater environment during the Carboniferous period even though it is commonly found throughout the geological column and in modern oceans attached to corals, mollusks, and seaweeds.⁷ Obviously, a marine worm mixed with coal is an argument for the sea being involved in the formation of coal.

Coal often shows detailed preservation of the original organic debris. If coal were the product of plant accumulations in bogs and marshes, some degree of decay would be expected. Sometimes exquisite fossils of fern fronds and leaves are located directly below the root systems of standing petrified trees (Figure 3). If the trees truly grew where they now stand, any organic remains such as leaves or fern fronds would have decayed during the time required for the growth of the trees and before burial and petrification.

One of the strongest arguments for coal being plant debris buried in place comes from the “roots” (*Stigmaria*) of the upright petrified trees associated with the coal. These are giant clubmosses with trunks a meter in diameter and up to 35 meters high. The *Stigmaria*, usually several centimeters in diameter and sometimes many meters in length, support numerous “rootlets” (appendages) that penetrate into the sediments (Figure 4). They can be likened to a giant bottle brush in appearance. The radiation of these appendages into the sediments is considered to be evidence of their being in growth position.⁸

Controversy over the nature of the “roots” of *Stigmaria* has waged ever since the study of coal began, but as yet no clear consensus has developed. Modern clubmosses (small trailing plants seldom over a meter high) have underground creeping rhizomes similar in structure to the *Stigmaria* of the giant clubmosses. But if the *Stigmaria* of these clubmosses are underground creeping rhizomes, where are the true roots? None

have been found with these fossil giants. Perhaps these *Stigmaria* served the function of true roots as well as propagating more shoots.

Although superficially the *Stigmaria* with their spreading appendages look as if they are in their position of growth, certain details suggest otherwise. Usually, the *Stigmaria* are isolated pieces unconnected with the base of any tree. Yet even these pieces show the appendages spreading out into the sediments. The trunks of the large upright petrified clubmosses are hollow and filled with sediments. Occasionally, pieces of *Stigmaria* were washed in with the muds and sands that filled the hollow stumps.⁹ In these cases also, the appendages radiate outward from where they are attached in spiral rows to the *Stigmaria*. Apparently, the appendages were sufficiently stiff to prevent collapse when buried in the mud and sand. Perhaps the shale beds were slurries of mud in which the pieces of *Stigmaria* with appendages were carried. Or the *Stigmaria* and appendages along with fine sediments settled out of a muddy suspension of water. If pieces of severed *Stigmaria* were transported by water or mud, they might show a preferred current alignment. This has been reported at two locations in Nova Scotia, Canada, and in Holland.¹⁰

Although the problem of the *Stigmaria* and radiating appendages cannot be fully solved, a study of *Stigmaria* supports arguments for transport just as well as for growth in position.

Changing plant debris into coal

The process of changing plant debris into coal has been of interest for many years. Laboratory experiments have succeeded in changing plant tissue into coal in a year or less.¹¹ Timbers used in

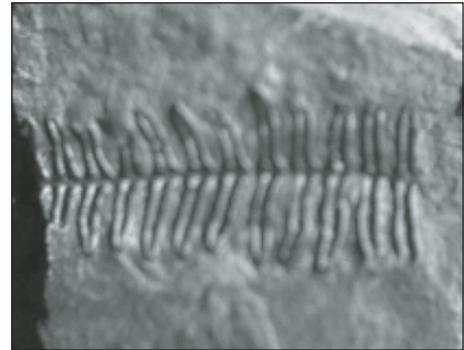


Figure 1. An upright lycopod tree in coal-bearing sediments in Nova Scotia, Canada. For scale, a tape measure is suspended below the tree.

Figure 2. A fossil *Spirorbis* tubeworm from Carboniferous sediments.



Figure 3. A fossil fern frond taken from a stratum lying directly below the bases of upright petrified trees exposed along the sea cliffs near Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia, Canada.



ancient coal mines that have been re-entered in modern times are sometimes coalified. A recent important discovery has been the role of clay as a catalyst for the coalification process.¹² If clay was a necessary ingredient for changing plant material to coal, a worldwide flood would better explain the source of clay than would a uniformitarian wetland environment.

The amount of vegetable matter necessary to produce a meter of coal is estimated to be somewhere between 5 and 20 meters, depending upon the hardness of the coal. Modern accumulations of plant remains (as in a peat bog) are seldom deeper than 10 to 20 meters. According to this formula, a 20-meter-deep bog would produce one to four meters of coal. Many coal seams are much thicker than that. Coal beds 30 meters thick are not uncommon. Some

are more than 100 meters thick, and Australia contains one over 240 meters thick! The accumulation of vegetable matter 1,200 meters or more thick (5 x 240) needed to produce such thick coal deposits is astonishing, even when considered in a Flood model. However, unusual as it may be, a catastrophic accumulation of plant remains in a sinking basin is easier to visualize than the formation of *in situ* bogs of such dimensions.

Successive layers of coal separated by a few centimeters to a few meters of sediment are common. If these beds are autochthonous, the successive development of bogs or marshes one above another over ages of time is required. Bog and marsh environments require special conditions. The repeating of such conditions time after time to produce numerous successive levels of coal in the same location is unrealistic (Figure 5). The geologic processes that brought about the burial of one layer of vegetable matter would likely erase the conditions needed for the production of another bog in the same location.

The repeated transport and deposition of mats of floating plant flotsam and their subsequent burial provides a more

reasonable explanation. Recent research suggests that tides, with their daily rise and fall of water, could be involved in the repeated transport and deposition of suspended plant debris.¹³

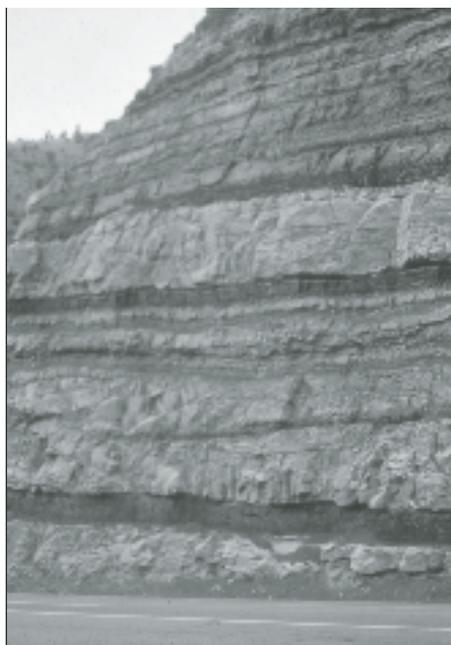
In the Indiana basin, I have observed rhythmic deposits (considered to be the result of tidal action) associated with the typical features of Carboniferous coal-bearing sediments. However, daily tidal fluctuations would deposit mud too rapidly to permit the growth of plants. Their presence in such deposits requires transport. Observations of floating trees reveal that with sufficient time and water many will float and sink upright.¹⁴

The catastrophic burial of plant debris and its subsequent change to coal is not accepted by most coal geologists. However, the dominant “peat bog” theory presents problems that have remained unanswered for more than a hundred years. A Flood model for the formation of coal answers some of these problems and provides a scientifically reasonable explanation for the origin of the vast quantities of coal that exist worldwide. □

Harold G. Coffin (Ph.D., Univ. of Southern California) has served as college biology teacher in Canada and the United States, and as senior research scientist at the Geoscience Research Institute, in Loma Linda, California. He has written scores of articles and several books, including Creation: Accident or Design? (1969), Earth Story (1979), and Origin by Design (1983).

Figure 5. A road cut exposes several successive coal seams near Castlegate, Utah, U.S.A.

Figure 4. A *Stigmaria* (the nearly diagonal line that stretches across the photo) is the source of numerous appendages that extend up and down in this cross-sectional view.



Notes and References

1. Among the first to advance the diluvial origin of fossils and sedimentary strata was Nicolaus Steno (1630-1687). In his time these were novel suggestions. Other notable deluge geologists who followed him were John Woodward (1667-1727), and Jean-Andre Deluc (1727-1817).
2. The uniformitarian interpretation of earth history established especially by James Hutton and Charles Lyell attempts to apply present rates of geological processes to the past. For instance, average rates of erosion and sedimentation seen occurring today were assumed to be satisfactory models for understanding past similar processes.
3. Charles Lyell, "On the Upright Fossil Trees Found at Different Levels in the Coal Strata of Cumberland, Nova Scotia," *Proc. Geol. Soc. London* 4 (1843), pp. 176-178.
4. Wilfrid Francis, *Coal, Its Formation and Composition* (London: Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd., 1961).
5. A. C. Seward, *Fossil Plants* (New York: Hafner Pub. Co., Inc., 1898-1919, 1963).
6. Sergius Mamay and Ellis L. Yochelson, "Occurrence and Significance of Marine Animal Remains in American Coal Balls," *U. S. Geol. Surv. Prof. Papers* 354-I (1961), pp. 193-224.
7. Harold G. Coffin, "A Paleocological Misinterpretation," *Creation Res. Soc. Quart.* 5 (1968), p. 85. Spirorbis (phylum

Annelida) has a trochophore larva. Several other phyla also have species with trochophore larvae. No species with trochophore larvae have been found in fresh water.

8. W. E. Logan, "On the Character of the Beds of Clay Immediately Below the Coal-Seams of S. Wales," *Proc. Geol. Soc. London* 3 (1842), pp. 275-277. This interesting note by Logan was one of the first to point out the abundance of stigmaria and appendages in the underclays below coal seams. Logan proposed that this clay was the soil on which the coal-producing plants originated and the stigmaria and appendages represented roots still *in situ*. Research since then fails to support that these clays are soils. See Leonard G. Schultz, "Petrology of Underclays," *Geol. Soc. Am. Bull.* 69 (1958), pp. 363-402.

9. Richard Brown, "Section of the Lower Coal-Measures of the Sydney Coalfield, in the Island of Cape Breton," *Quart. Jour. Geol. Soc. London*, 6 (1850), p. 127. While doing research in the Nova Scotia, Canada coal beds, I also documented two examples of pieces of stigmaria inside hollow stumps. See Harold G. Coffin, "Research on the Classic Joggins Petrified Trees," *Creation Res. Soc. Annual* (1969), pp. 35-44, 70.
10. N. A. Rupke, "Sedimentary Evidence for the Allochthonous Origin of Stigmaria, Carboniferous, Nova Scotia," *Geol. Soc. Am. Bull.* 80 (1969), pp. 2109-2114; W. F. M. Kimpe and A. A. Thiadens, "On the Occurrence of Coal Raft Above and Rhizome Inclusions in Seam Finefrau B, South Limbourg, Holland," *Proc. Third Inter. Cong. of Sedimentology, Groningen-Wageningen* (1951), pp. 167-173.
11. John Larsen, "From Lignin to Coal in a Year," *Nature* 31 (March 28, 1985), p. 316.
12. R. Hayatsu, et al., "Artificial Coalification Study: Preparation and Characterization of Synthetic Macerals," *Organic Geochemistry* 6 (1984).
13. "Blame it on the Moon," *Scientific American*, February 1989, p. 18.
14. Harold G. Coffin, "The Puzzle of the Petrified Trees," *College and University Dialogue* 4:1 (1992), pp. 11-13, 30-31.

Rachel Nyirabu

Dialogue With the Wife of Tanzania's Ambassador to the U.S.A.



Rachel Nyirabu is more than the spouse of Tanzania's ambassador to the United States. She is a world traveler, a successful career woman, a well-respected citizen of her country, a down-to-earth mom, a friendly hostess, and a humble Christian.

When I walked into her home on the outskirts of Washington, D.C., Mrs. Nyirabu, dressed in a *kitenge* cloth dress and turban, greeted me with a warm hug. She invited me to the sitting room where large plants and African paintings and carvings on ivory painted walls complemented brightly colored sofas and carpets.

Rachel is the first of three daughters born to an Adventist family in Tanzania. While attending college she met her future husband, Charles M. Nyirabu. They have one daughter, Rehema (21), and two sons, Philip (18) and Isaac (15).

At present the family attends the Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist church in Maryland. Currently Mrs. Nyirabu serves as the president of the African Ambassadors' Wives Association in Washington, D.C.

■ *What makes your country special for you?*

Tanzania is my country. There I was born and there I grew up. It is my home. I raised my children there.

As a Tanzanian citizen, I know I am just a visitor in the U.S. and that one day I will return to my country. As a Christian, I also know that this world is a place of temporary sojourn, where I serve others and prepare to live with God in the new earth for all eternity.

■ *While growing up, did you expect to become an ambassador's wife and live abroad?*

No. During those years I had to stay close to my parents. My father was a businessman and farmer. But my mother suffered from asthma, and so we moved

to a larger town where doctors could help her. The move led to a strain in our family finances. When I went to college, I prayed for a good husband who would accept me for what I am and who would value my family as well.

When Charles and I got married we had nothing, but we worked hard. While I served as a secretary and later as supervisor for a railroad company, my husband—who had graduated as an economist—worked in several senior positions for the national government. Later he became the governor of the Central Bank of Tanzania, which oversees all other banks in the country. This position is usually held for one term of five years. But he served for over three terms until he was appointed ambassador to the United States.

■ *Tell us about the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tanzania.*

Tanzania has a population of 26 million. Of this more than a third is

Christian; another third is Muslim; and the rest follow traditional beliefs.

Two German missionaries—W. Ehlers and A. C. Enns—introduced the Adventist message to Tanzania in 1903. They spent their entire lives in my country, and are buried there. Today the Adventist membership stands at about 150,000. In addition, there are 300,000 followers and friends of our church. Both figures together make a total of 450,000. That's less than 2 per cent of the total population. Although Adventism is growing in Tanzania, we face a challenging mission. Trained pastors are few and work under very difficult conditions. Fortunately, most members are devoted to spreading God's message of salvation and hope. Laity, Dorcas groups, Pathfinders, and choirs are very much involved in evangelistic activities. As a result of their work, many people are being baptized, few leave the church, and some who had left are coming back. But our church buildings are few and small in size. Children sit on the floor, and there are no books or teaching materials such as picture rolls for Sabbath school classes.

■ *Who is Jesus to you?*

Jesus died for my sins. He is my Saviour. He is the sole purpose of my existence. As the Son of God, He is the one and only door to heaven. Whoever has faith in Him will have everlasting life. I am thankful to my parents for leading me to discover Jesus while I was young, and I have followed Him ever since.

■ *Is your husband an Adventist?*

In his youth, my husband attended an Adventist church. Then he went to a boarding school where he was baptized into the Anglican Church. After completing school he returned to the Adventist Church, but has not yet been baptized. He comes to church with me every Sabbath and studies and reads a lot. All our children are baptized, and I believe that one of these days my husband too will join the Adventist Church.

■ *I sense that prayer is very important for you.*

I've been praying all my life. God will always help you if you depend on Him. Humble yourself before God and He will lift you up. When I went to college my mother was very sick, and I thought she might die anytime. I almost quit college because of it. I kept praying that God would keep her alive until I graduated; then, until my sisters graduated. Later I prayed she'd live until we all got married; then, until we all had kids. Then I prayed that when she died, at least one of us would be with her, because we were all living in different places. When my mother died, we were all there. God does answer prayers!

■ *Has God helped you in other areas of your life?*

I've prayed for personal strength, so that I may help and lead others. For 20 years I worked at a train station, supervising a group of rough young men. Some people thought that because I'm a quiet and soft-spoken person I could not handle such a difficult assignment. But God answered my prayers. I also had the opportunity of helping people in need. During that time, I sold Christian books to the passengers that came to the railway station and to the people who visited my house. With that money, our Dorcas Society bought food and clothes for the poor, and we were able to buy

uniforms for the children's choir of my church.

Through prayer, God has also given me grace to relate to people. As I love and help them, they begin to sense God's presence in their lives. Recently, two Catholic friends came and asked me to pray for them. God has answered *so many* prayers. He can answer yours, too!

■ *You had a confrontation with cancer.*

When I found out that I had breast cancer, two doctors told me they couldn't operate because the cancer was so advanced. I began to pray earnestly. After a year's treatment with chemotherapy, my condition improved and I have continued in treatment for the past four years. Because of my faith in the Lord during the ordeal, my youngest sister has come back to the Adventist Church.

■ *What activities keep you busy?*

I like working with women's groups. Here I am a member of the Commonwealth Ambassadors' Wives Association, the Christian Embassy, and the African Ambassadors' Wives Association, for which at present I serve as president. I seek God's direction in whatever I do, so that I may be a good witness for Him among people that move in diplomatic circles. I'm also active in my church as a greeter, deaconess, and Sabbath school clerk. In addition, I try to spend quality time with my three children and two nephews for whom I am the guardian. We study the Bible, cook, work on the computer, and do chores together to ensure that our household runs smoothly. I'm also involved in a U.S.-based private voluntary organization that seeks to alleviate poverty, ignorance, and disease in Africa.

■ *Is it hard to be an Adventist in the diplomatic life?*

At first I thought it would be difficult to live my convictions. But I believe that whatever I receive after earnest prayer God wants me to have. So I've been able to maintain my Adventist life-style and also be a supportive

ambassador's wife. People know my commitment to God and my religious convictions. Those who trust in the Lord should not hide their light but hold it out to guide others out of darkness. I encourage them to reflect on God's counsels found in Proverbs 3, Matthew 18:4, Luke 14:11, and 1 Peter 5:1-11.

■ *How do the people you meet view Adventists?*

Some believe we have too many restrictions—we can't wear this or eat that—without realizing the benefits of a truly Christian life-style. When I go to social functions, they ask, "Are you sure you won't drink?" They see me dressed plainly, with no jewelry, and many think that I must be dressing differently at other times. But when they get to know me as I really am, they understand my deep Christian commitment. Some of them become my friends, and we pray and encourage one another.

■ *Do you have opportunities to share your faith?*

I have made a decision to be kind to all people wherever I go. I pray that God will help me to represent Him in all my relationships—at home, at work, while shopping, at church, and in the social life. It encourages me to hear people say, "Rachel is nice. She cares for others."

■ *Can a young Christian achieve success without compromising his or her beliefs?*

To me, having an important position in this world means little. All persons, high and low, are equal before God. He is greater than anybody and anything. If young people trust Him in everything, He will grant them the abilities they need to be useful, to help others, and to represent Him well. □

Interview by Celeste Ryan

Celeste Ryan is the editor of Adventist View, a publication for young adults.

Mario H. Ochoa

Dialogue With the Executive Vice President of ADRA International



Attorney Mario H. Ochoa is the executive vice president of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA), with headquarters at Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. His duties include program and project supervision, staff training coordination, contract implementation, and strategic planning worldwide. Prior to joining the Adventist Church's international relief and development ministry, Ochoa directed ADRA in his native Chile for seven years.

Ochoa was born in Santiago, Chile. He completed his secondary studies in Valdivia and earned his law degree at the University of Concepción. He taught courses in law and administration at Chile Adventist College while managing his own legal practice.

From the start, Ochoa's talents and dedication have allowed him to achieve several "firsts." He was appointed as the first attorney ever to represent the Seventh-day Adventist Church in his homeland. He was also the first ADRA director in Chile, a position he assumed when he was 24 years old, the youngest national director ever in ADRA's history.

While he was teaching in Chile, Mario met and later married Marta Cáceres. The couple have three daughters and a son, with the oldest daughter graduating from high school this spring.

■ *Attorney Ochoa, you were not born in an Adventist home. How did you become an Adventist?*

As a result of the influence of a group of Adventist university students in Concepción. Although I used to attend the Adventist church in my home town occasionally, I had reservations about joining the church because I felt that Protestants were passive on social issues. When I went to Concepción to study law, I was still a Catholic. But there I met Adventist friends who showed me that it is possible to integrate the proclamation of the gospel with serving people's needs. I was impressed by the commitment of these Adventist students to their faith as well as to their social responsibility in a highly politicized university.

■ *Why did you choose to study law?*

From an early age I was very involved in social issues in my commu-

nity. I was aware of the problems that Chile was facing. I saw the misery in both rural and urban areas. The appalling differences between the rich and the poor particularly moved me. I could not understand why I was fortunate to be born in an affluent family while others were so impoverished. I saw in the legal profession an honorable and effective way of addressing injustice and changing social structures in my country. My father, who is also an attorney, was active in defending poor people's rights in my home town. He was also very important in my decision.

■ *Were you encouraged to study law?*

Many people, especially some well-intentioned pastors, thought that to study law was to move in the wrong direction of life that would get one entangled in the unsavory aspects of society. Other Christian friends would point out that to be a successful lawyer is to be a professional liar. But I knew that those concepts were not necessarily true. I was

convinced that there's a balance, and that I could find it if I studied not only my law books, but also my Bible, thus maintaining a living connection with God. I loved law and I knew that I could use law to fight the wrongs and injustices in society.

■ *Were there other factors that motivated you toward a legal career?*

Yes. First of all, I wanted to show that one could be a Christian and also "use one's brain" without being a fanatic. Secondly, I wanted to be a lawyer capable of articulating Christianity in terms that educated, critical minds could understand and find attractive. Thirdly, I felt that a legal perspective could be valuable to my church in Chile.

■ *What was it like going to law school in Chile at that time?*

University life was then dominated by socialists, Marxists, and communists—many of whom were my friends and classmates. They believed that Protestants like me were ignorant, simple-minded people, incapable of deep thought. My classmates did not take

Christian beliefs seriously; in fact, there was a generalized stigma about being a practicing Protestant.

I decided to read all the Marxist and socialist books I could find, so as to become acquainted with their premises and goals. Pretty soon my friends and classmates were surprised that someone could challenge their thought from a biblical perspective. They respected my views because I had studied theirs well and could challenge them knowledgeably.

■ *How would you summarize the ideas espoused by many of your Marxist classmates?*

Marxists believe that most social problems originate in the struggle between social classes. That struggle, in the context of historic materialism, explains the difficulties the poor face in society. They also maintain that social structures are imposed by the dominant class—the rich. Therefore the working class can't be truly liberated until the old structures are demolished and replaced by a new structure based on equality and social justice for all.

Curiously, both Christians and Marxists seek the betterment and empowerment of the individual. However, they differ radically in the motives and the means to achieve such a goal. The Marxist horizon includes only this present life, while biblical Christianity embraces both the present and the future life.

■ *As an Adventist university student, did you face other challenges?*

The most difficult challenge came at the end of my second year of studies. The final exams for six subjects were scheduled for a Sabbath. Unfortunately, I was able to arrange a switch for a different day for only two of the subjects and missed the other four. This meant that I had to repeat them, thus losing a full year of my career. Again, the support of the Adventist students was key in the decision to stand for my convictions, accept the painful results, and eventually serve the church full time.

■ *What did you do after graduation?*

I had been working for the Adventist Church in one way or another since I was 18 years old. Immediately after graduation from law school I was hired as the church's attorney. Then, in January 1974, I was asked to become Chile's ADRA director. This happened only four months

after the military coup d'état. It was an extremely difficult period for groups working for social development and assistance in Chile. I had to walk a very thin line.

■ *What attracted you to work for ADRA?*

The possibility of implementing the practical dimension of the gospel by helping people in need. ADRA's motto, "Changing the world one life at a time," is an exciting objective. ADRA allows Christians and other compassionate people to practice their love for God and for others in a tangible and most rewarding partnership.

■ *Has your legal training and experience helped you in your work for ADRA?*

It has sharpened my understanding of the legal aspects of our activities around the world. It has also allowed me to look at issues more objectively, trying to see the whole picture and evaluate the possible long-term effects of an action before making a decision. The most beneficial result has been the ability to bring a secular perspective to ADRA's religiously-motivated activities and, conversely, a Christian perspective into ADRA's involvement with the secular world.

■ *What features of the Christian message and mission motivate you in your work?*

The challenge of discovering or creating new avenues for carrying the gospel and practicing Christian love. When we are surrounded by self-centered individualism, can we accept others as our equals and serve them with integrity? Biblical Christianity motivates us to do so.

■ *As an ADRA official you are exposed to so much suffering in the world. How do you maintain a positive Christian outlook in the midst of such enormous disasters and suffering?*

These disasters, with their terrible toll of suffering, give us a momentous understanding of the time of the end and of the imminence of Jesus' return. They also give us a chance to serve now as channels of God's loving concern. As true followers of Jesus, we can't remain as passive witnesses to human suffering.

■ *What aspects of your work bring you the most satisfaction?*

The highest reward is to see people's suffering assuaged, lives changing for the better, harmony among individuals and

groups achieved, and men and women moving closer to a deeper understanding of God.

■ *What is ADRA looking for in a volunteer or an employee?*

The range of skills that ADRA looks for is now broader than when the agency was first established. We need the talents of people that have training and degrees in general administrative skills, agriculture, health, mechanical engineering, planning, training, and public relations/communication. We also need grant writers, financial managers, and accountants.

■ *If people reading this interview are interested in serving others through ADRA, what should they do?*

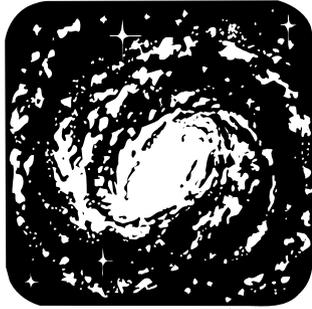
Contact the ADRA director for the country in which they live, or write to Ted Wick at our headquarter's office: ADRA Volunteers, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, U.S.A.

■ *A closing word. What advice would you give to an Adventist young adult who is studying at a non-Adventist college or university?*

Don't face the challenges alone! Seek the support of your Adventist peers or professionals, church elders, pastors. There is nothing more discouraging for a Christian young adult than to struggle with those challenges while lacking the understanding and support of those who share his or her religious convictions. Secondly, organize yourselves. Get together with other Adventist college/university students and agree on practical ways of encouraging one another. If possible, register your group officially at the university. Third, keep things in perspective. There is a rich, full and rewarding life for those who commit themselves to Jesus, no matter how loud or sophisticated the secular criticism may be against that decision. □

Interview by
Tamara L. Boehmke

Tamara L. Boehmke, a graduate of La Sierra University, is the director of news and information for ADRA International, Silver Spring, Maryland.



I have been thinking about the universe lately. The whole thing. After reading some of astronomer Chet Raymo's elegiac prose (*Starry Nights, The Soul of the Night*), I have been craning my neck upward at odd angles when I encounter a rare pool of darkness between Chicago streetlights. Mostly, though, I see the moon, Venus, and the jets' flight path into O'Hare Field, and must take Raymo's word for what lies beyond.

The View From Andromeda

by
Philip
Yancey

Learning about the universe does little for earthly self-esteem. Our sun, powerful enough to turn white skin bronze and to coax oxygen from every plant on earth, ranks fairly low by galactic standards. If the giant star Antares were positioned where our sun is—93 million miles away—Earth would be inside it! And our sun and Antares represent just 2 of 500 billion stars that swim around in the vast, forlorn space of the Milky Way. A dime held out at arm's length would block 15 million stars from view, if our eyes could see with that power.

Only one other galaxy, Andromeda, lies close enough (a mere 2 million light-years away) to see with the naked eye. It

showed up on star charts long before the invention of the telescope, and until recently no one could know that the little blob of light marked the presence of another galaxy, one twice the size of the Milky Way and home to a trillion stars. Or that these next-door neighbors were but two of a hundred billion galaxies likewise swarming with stars.

One reason the night sky stays dark despite the presence of so many luminous bodies is that all the galaxies are hurtling away from each other with astonishing speed. Tomorrow, some galaxies will be 30 million miles farther away. In the time it takes to type this sentence, they'll have receded another 5,100 miles.

The diamond dust highway

I saw the Milky Way in full glory once, while visiting a refugee camp in Somalia, Africa, just below the equator. Our galaxy stretched across the canopy of darkness like a highway paved with diamond dust. Since that night, when I lay with warm sand at my back far from the nearest streetlight, the sky has never seemed as empty and the earth never as large.

I had spent all day interviewing relief workers about the megadisaster of the moment. Bangladesh, Kurdistan, Armenia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Yugoslavia, Rwanda—place names change, but the spectacle of suffering has a dreary sameness: mothers with shriveled, milkless breasts, babies crying and dying, fathers foraging for firewood in a treeless terrain.

After three days hearing tales of human misery, I could not lift my sights beyond that refugee camp situated in an obscure corner of an obscure country on the Horn of Africa.

Until I saw the Milky Way. It abruptly reminded me that the present moment was not the whole of life. History would go on. Tribes, governments, whole civilizations may rise and fall, trailing disaster in their wake, but I



did not dare confine my field of vision to the scenes of suffering around me. I needed to look up, to the stars.

“Can you bind the beautiful Pleiades? Can you loose the cords of Orion? Can you bring forth the constellations in the seasons or lead out the Bear with its cubs? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God’s dominion over the earth?” These questions God asked a man named Job who, obsessed with his own great pain, had confined his vision to the borders of his itchy skin.

Remarkably, God’s reminder seemed to help Job. His skin still itched, but Job got a glimpse of other matters God must attend to in a universe of a hundred billion galaxies.

To me, God’s speech in the book of Job conveys a tone of gruffness. But perhaps that is its most important message: the Lord of the Universe has a right to gruffness when assailed by one tiny human being, notwithstanding the merits of his complaint. We—ministers of the gospel, relief workers in Somalia, descendants of Job—dare not lose sight of The Big Picture, a sight best glimpsed on dark and starry nights.

Looking up

You can almost mark the advancement of a people by noting their interest in stargazing. Each great civilization of the past—Inca, Mogul, Chinese, Egyptian, Greek, Renaissance European—made major breakthroughs in astronomy. There is an irony at work in human history: One by one, civilizations gain the capacity to fathom their own insignificance, then fail to recognize that fact and fade away.

What about us, we launchers of the Viking and Apollo spacecrafts, we makers of the orbiting Hubble observatory and the Very Large Array radio telescopes strewn over 39 miles of New Mexico desert? Do our achievements make us more, or less, humble? More, or less, worshipful?

About the same time I read Chet Raymo, I went to see a film taken by a space-shuttle crew with a special format

Omnimax camera. The lightning storms impressed me most. Viewed from space, lightning flashes on and off in a random pattern of beauty, illuminating cloud cover several hundred miles wide at a burst. It flares, spreads across an expanse, glows, then pales. Most eerily, it makes no sound.

I was struck by the huge difference perspective makes. On Earth, families huddled indoors, cars hid under highway overpasses, animals cowered in the forest, children cried out in the night. Transformers sparked, creeks flooded, dogs howled. But from space we saw only a soft, pleasant glow, enlarging then retreating, an ocean tide of light.

I don’t know the precise scenario for how Armageddon will unfold. But the lightning storm filmed through a

porthole of the space shuttle gave me a glimpse of how the end of the world might look from two perspectives. From Earth (as depicted in the Book of Revelation): 100-pound hailstones, earthquakes, a plague like no other, a star named Wormwood falling from the sky. From Andromeda: a tiny flare like a struck match, silence, and then darkness. That is something similar to what Chet Raymo sees through his telescope when a star explodes in space, lightyears away.

As Job learned, it takes great effort, and considerable faith, to keep The Big Picture in mind. Maybe I’ll wander away from the streetlights more often, and look up. □

Philip Yancey is a free-lance writer in Chicago, Illinois.

The Pit

A traveler fell into a deep pit and couldn’t get out. Several persons came along and saw him struggling in the pit.

The *sensitive* person said: “I feel for you, down there.”

The *reflective* person said: “It’s logical that someone would fall in the pit.”

The *aesthetic* person said: “I can give you ideas on how to decorate your pit.”

The *judgmental* person said: “Only bad people fall into a pit.”

The *analytical* person said: “Help me measure the depth of your pit.”

The *curious* person said: “Tell me how you fell into the pit.”

The *perfectionist* said: “I believe you deserve your pit.”

The *evaluator* said: “Are you paying taxes on this pit?”

The *self-pitying* person said: “You should have seen *my* pit!”

The *specialist in meditation* said: “Just relax and don’t think about the pit.”

The *optimist* said: “Cheer up! Things could be worse.”

The *pessimist* said: “Be prepared. Things *will* get worse!”

JESUS, seeing the man, took him by the hand and lifted him out of the miserable pit.

—Selected

Sharing Faith in a Secular World

by
Jon Paulien

Seventh-day Adventists who study or work in secular contexts are painfully aware that their Christian faith often has very little impact on secular culture. Some Adventists deny responsibility: “Our job is to preach the message just the way it has always been preached. If people don’t get it, it’s their problem.” More and more Adventists, however, realize that we must be sensitive to the culture in which we live if we are to have a significant impact upon it.

Although jarring at times to Adventists who prefer the status quo, fresh approaches to the secular mindset are not unfaithful to the messages of inspiration. Ellen White, for example, insisted: “Lessons must be given to humanity in the language of humanity” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 34). In other words, we cannot expect people to respond to the gospel if we have not made the effort to understand how to reach them.

God Himself meets people where they are. His greatest revelation did not come on shimmering golden plates suspended in the sky, but in a flesh and blood human being who walked and dressed and talked like the people of His time. Paul also underlined the importance of meeting people where they are. To the Jew he became like a Jew, to the weak he became weak: “I have become all things to all men, so that by all possible means I might save some” (1 Corinthians 9:19-23, NIV).

In harmony with this principle of human persuasion, there are four gospel accounts in the New Testament, not just one. Though the gospel is one in principle, there are many ways to share it, and many different types of people who need to hear it. The challenge of the

secular mindset to Adventism is: “Are you willing to do whatever it takes to reach lost people for God?”

The typical secular person is almost totally insulated from the kind of life that most Christians experience. He or she doesn’t attend church, watch Christian television, or engage in spiritual exercises of any kind. Tracts or evangelistic handbills are immediately discarded, and the typical church service is regarded as irrelevant, manipulative, and boring. Thus evangelistic meetings, visitors’ days, literature distribution, religious TV programs, and similar traditional approaches have relatively little impact on the secular community. Secular individuals are rarely reached without extraordinary planning and effort.

The personal touch

Although a comprehensive program for outreach to the secular community cannot be presented in this brief space, a broad outline can be suggested. Secular people are best approached on a one-to-one basis. Friendships are usually a better starting point for outreach than public meetings. An honest, open Christian with a good ability to identify with people, a fresh and creative approach to his or her faith, and a willingness to express that faith in common, everyday language will find it easy to interact with secular people.

The use of well-chosen questions invites the secular person to reveal areas of life where his or her expectations are not being met. Such felt needs provide a point of contact where the secular person is open to information. As secular people find that aspects of Adventist Christian faith meet real needs in their lives, they

become much more open to the broad spectrum of ideas and practices that make up the faith.

There are many felt needs that are generally experienced in the secular community. At least five of these fall into areas where Adventist faith speaks with reasonable clarity and conviction. (1) There is a need for *commitment to something bigger and better than oneself*, something more meaningful than sport idols and film actors or actresses. (2) There is a need for *effective release from the guilt* that arises when people fail to meet their own expectations. (3) There is a need for *deep and genuine relationships*. (4) There is a need to know that life on this earth somehow *fits into a meaningfully ordered universe*. Adventists might call this a need for an eschatology. (5) There is a strong need for *self-help and life-style direction*. These five felt needs intersect with areas of Adventist expertise and interest. As we find answers for ourselves in these areas, we will find ways to help others as well.

It is not necessary to put the peculiarities of Adventist faith in the forefront with secular people; it may, in fact, prove to be quite detrimental. Secular people are not atheists; they are simply too busy to consider religion or have not found the general concept of God to be relevant to the kinds of issues they deal with on a day-to-day basis.

I have found that secular people are attracted to individuals and church groups that have a genuine walk with God, a walk that makes a difference in everyday living. When secular people become convinced that God exists and that He makes a difference in real life, they often embrace faith with remarkable openness. When such people come to faith in an Adventist context, distinctives like the Sabbath, tithing, and the state of the dead are rarely the barriers to commitment that they tend to be for Christians of other faiths.

Since felt needs are as diverse as snowflakes, a broad-based outreach to secular people will require a multiplicity of ministries based on the profusion of gifts available in the Holy Spirit. I like to think in terms of “zero-based evangelism.” You try almost anything once. If it works, refine it. If it doesn’t work, try

something else. Secular outreach offers nearly limitless possibilities for meaningful ministry by creative people. In fact, since secular people are usually reluctant to test out a church setting, at least in the early stages of interest, creative outreaches in the secular campus or the workplace (where thousands of Adventists regularly rub shoulders with secular people) and the neighborhood will normally be more effective than church-based outreaches.

Seeker-friendly churches

Once a personal relationship is established, most secular people will accept an invitation to visit an Adventist church. What kinds of things can Adventist congregations do to become “seeker friendly” without stimulating the kind of in-house resistance that would undo whatever good might result?

I would like to suggest six possibilities. I believe that these would make any Adventist congregation more hospitable, not only to secular people, but also to the many thinking Adventists who are very much a part of the contemporary world.

- 1. Use common everyday language in preaching, singing, and Sabbath school discussions.** There are about 8,000-10,000 basic words shared by everyone in a culture. These common words make up the language that is used in the news media. To express one’s faith in common language is a challenge, but is necessary for communication in a secular world. Jesus was a master at the use of common language, but Adventists have grown accustomed to an in-house lingo that obscures rather than communicates the message in the majority culture.
- 2. Offer spiritual information that is highly relevant to everyday life.** Many of our Bible studies and sermons, for example, would strike the average person on the street as relevant only in some other time and place than the one that they are living in.
- 3. Seek excellence in all church programs.** Secular people are accustomed to high quality in the

media, theme parks, concerts, etc. They are easily turned off when participants in a church service don’t seem to have their heart in it. God deserves the best we can do, and secular people expect the things they do to be worth the time put into them.

- 4. Develop interesting and memorable worship services.** In a media-saturated age, worship will not be effective for most people unless it is visual, fast moving, and attention-grabbing. Worship can be enhanced without introducing drums and elaborate staged dramas (use the children’s story creatively!). Jesus was a master at grabbing attention with a visually gripping story or a rhetorical question.
- 5. Transmit a strong spiritual tone.** Truth is not enough to keep people in church today. Most “backsliders” still believe in the Adventist message; they leave the church because personal issues overwhelm the importance of the message in their experience. Secular people are attracted to churches where the pastor and the people know God personally and are able to teach others to know Him. They are more impressed by relationship with God than by persuasive argument.
- 6. Develop a fundamental commitment to Christian authenticity.** Churches that attract secular people are filled with Christians who have an authentic, honest, genuine experience with God. Such churches do not duck difficult issues, instead they are candid about life’s difficulties and struggles. Of the six points made here, this is, perhaps, the most serious issue for Adventists. Many who have left us feel that Adventists are just going through the motions, that faith is not for real. Secular people won’t go to a church with a “plastic” reputation; if they do go, they won’t stay long.

We should not, in any case, expect secular people to walk in off the street and appreciate a worship service. They need a “door” into the church that is especially designed for them, a “half way house”

where they are given time to “grow” into the faith. In larger churches, such a door could be a specially designed “seeker service” that deals with practical life issues in a contemporary way. In the typical Adventist church, the door could be a small group of caring people who discuss issues of common concern in light of the Scriptural way of life.

Doorway Ministries

In my experience as a pastor in New York City several years ago, I became aware that the network of friendships created by sensitive Adventist outreach in the workplace and in the neighborhood would accomplish little unless these friends could be directed to some such “doorway ministry.” Groups mixing Adventists with those of a secular background gathered to examine topics of mutual interest in the kind of environment where the secular people slowly “grew” into faith. These groups were something of a cross between a “felt-needs” seminar and a “small group” like the 12-step programs create. The Adventists in the groups were encouraged to commit themselves to common language and non-judgmental interaction. The result was a slow but steady growth among secular people of Caucasian descent.

My experience in this secularized city was the basis of a continuing study on the secular mindset and on successful approaches that Christians are using in various parts of the world to bring Christ to unchurched people. I have described those strategies in my book *Present Truth in the Real World* (Pacific Press, 1993).

I am convinced that God is opening doors for creative Adventist outreach in sectors of society that we believed were closed to the gospel a few years ago. The Holy Spirit is anxious to guide and empower us in this special mission. Will you be God’s ambassador in the secular context where you work or study? □

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by
Hudson E.
Kibuuka

Eastern Africa's Success Story



Adventist students from the University of Zimbabwe meeting on the Sabbath in the campus chapel.

God works mysteriously His wonders to perform. That is not just a hymn but an experience in Eastern Africa. Four years ago, two groups of Adventist students felt convinced of the need to share their faith. One group was at the University of Zimbabwe, Harare. The other group was at a high school in Goromonzi, 30 kilometers east of Harare. Both groups began their work independent of each other. They distributed Adventist publications among their fellow students, prayed with them, and had fellowship meetings with them.

The seed began to grow. Soon baptisms followed. These Adventist high school students learned that their counterparts at the University of Zimbabwe were engaged in similar activities and decided to join forces with them. The two groups met often to share their experiences. They assisted local pastors in their churches, particularly in direct evangelism. The students could sing, distribute handbills, visit people in their homes, and help in the meetings. The pastors in turn found that the involvement of the young people not only reduced the financial burden for conducting evangelism, but also gave them a direct witnessing partnership in evangelism.

—something that evangelists anywhere would envy. Students felt a sense of ownership in the church's outreach program, and experienced a blessing that could come in no other way. One direct result of this pastor-student cooperation was that the students themselves are planning to conduct an evangelistic campaign on their own in the Mwanza area within the Goromonzi Church District.

These students are on non-Adventist campuses. They do not witness because they are obligated by the peer pressure of theological students in an Adventist college. They do not witness because it will look good on their résumé for later employment. The students are very busy people, involved in a rigorous academic program, in a non-Adventist milieu. Yet what makes them to share their faith so convincingly and consistently? What leads them to such sacrifice? Precious Chigongwa, a final-year Bachelor of Science student at the University of Zimbabwe, at once dismisses any such notion as sacrifice. "What sacrifice," he asks, "in the face of what Jesus had done and continues to do for us?" "We are the beneficiaries of untold blessings," says Abyssinia Sibanda, a first-year medical student, and Lucy Pratt, a high school student. And they begin to list the blessings: joy, peace, the satisfaction of bringing others to Christ, being better stewards of time and talent.

The Harare Adventist student group has a powerful ally in their witnessing program—Mrs. Jacqueline Vongai Pratt,

featured in *Dialogue* (3:3). Mrs. Pratt is a magistrate and an active church member in Harare. She spends her time and means in providing leadership and assistance to the student witness program. She obtains Bibles and other publications, and makes sure to keep the flag of witness flying high. Mr. and Mrs. Pratt live on a farm in Goromonzi, and their home is always filled with young people. They gather there for praise, fellowship, and to plan outreach activities. They have some good meals, too!

The story of Adventist students working for non-Adventists is not limited to Zimbabwe. There are more than 5,000 Adventists studying in secular campuses throughout the countries of Eastern Africa. As a result of Adventist student witness in Uganda, many young people have made a commitment to Christ. Recently the Ugandan Ministry of Education has authorized Uganda Polytechnic in Kyambogo to allocate land to build an Adventist church. The Zambia University campus hosted last year an Adventist week of prayer. In attendance were 100 Adventist students plus the non-Adventist friends they had invited.

Under God's guidance, Adventist students attending non-Adventist campuses in Eastern Africa have learned to integrate their academic programs with enjoyable social activities and effective evangelistic outreach. □

Born in Uganda, Hudson E. Kibuuka is the education director and Dialogue's regional representative for the Eastern Africa Division.

INTERCHANGE

Readers interested in establishing correspondence with Adventist college and university students or professionals in other parts of the world:

Marcelino de Alencar: 23; male; single; interests: jogging, music, penpals, exchanging postcards and photos; correspondence in English, Portuguese or Spanish. Address: IACS; Caixa Postal 12; CEP 95600000 Taquara, R.S.; BRAZIL.

Gena G. Arcon: 24; female; studying toward a B.S. in Accountancy; hobbies: traveling, sports, reading, meeting new people, horse-back riding; correspondence in English. Address: Mountain View College; 8700 Malaybalay, Bukidnon; PHILIPPINES.

Jerry Arcon: 21; male; studying toward a degree in Management and Business Administration at Rizal Memorial Colleges; interests: horse-back riding, listening to music, exchange of letters; correspondence in English. Address: 52-A Santos Subdivision; 8000 Bangkal; Davao City; PHILIPPINES.

Stephen K. Boit: 21; male; single; studying toward a baccalaureate degree in English; interests: reading, traveling, listening to Bible sermons and Christian songs, penpals; correspondence in English. Address: University of Eastern Africa; M.A. Room 18; P.O. Box 2500, Eldoret; KENYA.

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Caroline Domingo: 26; female; single; holds a B.S. in Business Administration; interests: singing and listening to classical and religious music, travel, camping, making new friends; correspondence in English. Address: Miller Memorial Sanitarium and Hospital; 400 Tres de Abril St.; Cebu City; PHILIPPINES 6000.

Donadel Domingo: 25; female; single; holds a B.S. in Secretarial Administration; interests: exchange of letters, hiking, meeting people, reading biographies, religious concerts; correspondence in English. Address: Lagtang, Talisay; Cebu 6045; PHILIPPINES.

Mery Encinas Dávila: 24; female; single; studying toward a degree in Accounting at the National University of Ucayali; interests: penpals, postcards, collecting foreign stamps and currency; correspondence in Spanish or Portuguese. Address: Jr. Adolfo Morey #377; Pucallpa; PERU.

Shirley Garzon: 25; female; studying toward a baccalaureate degree in Elementary Education at Mountain View College; interests: painting, drawing, reading, cooking, horse-back riding, nature study; correspondence in English. Address: Mountain View College; 8700 Malaybalay, Bukidnon; PHILIPPINES.

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Joan Henry: 45; mother of five children; working as an elementary school teacher; hobbies: reading, writing, poems, visiting prisons and youth correctional centers to encourage and help; correspondence in English or French. Address: c/o Yolanda Christopher; 26 Eastern Main Road; Sangre Chiquito; TRINIDAD.

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Robert B. Simenson: 70; male; divorced but committed to his wife; retired writer and publisher, Christian and health activist; will mail free of charge his monthly newsletter, which contains encouraging and interesting articles selected from various sources; correspondence in English. Address: 2668 18th St.; Rice Lake, WI 54868; U.S.A.

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If you wish to be listed here, send us your name and postal address, indicating your age, sex, marital status, field of studies or professional degree, hobbies or interests, and language(s) in which you would like to correspond. Address your letter to: **Dialogue Interchange**; 12501 Old Columbia Pike; Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; U.S.A. Please write clearly. The journal cannot assume responsibility for the accuracy of the information submitted nor for the content of the correspondence that may ensue.



The author with Ester Misho and Flora Sabatino-Lewis in their home in Korca. Flora holds Daniel Lewis' English Bible, a copy of which miraculously survived anti-religious campaigns in Albania.

It's Sabbath morning. The Adventist church in Tirana, Albania, is filled with worshipers. The congregation has nearly 100 members, but many more have come, mostly high school and university students. Two years ago these youth would not have had an opportunity to hear about Christianity, except perhaps from their grandparents. If religion was spoken of at all, it was only within the context of the Communist rhetoric that "religion is the opiate of the people." The Bible or the Koran was not even seen. Today, people pride themselves in owning a copy.

Before World War II, Albania had three main religious groups: various Islamic sects, Greek Orthodox, and Catholics. With the Communist takeover of the country after World War II, the regime led by Enver Hoxha closed all Christian churches and other places of

discovery that the country did not have sufficient places of worship, or clergy, or religious literature.

As a youngster I remember my father talking about a lone Adventist sister in Christ living in Albania. How we wished then to find out more about her fate. In the late 1960s Albania proclaimed itself the "only atheist state of the world." How could one find out whether faith survived in a country that prohibited religious expression and burned Bibles in public bonfires?

After Adventist leaders made numerous attempts to visit Albania, an opportunity finally came in the spring of 1991. The Ministry of Health invited me to visit Albania and evaluate the possible involvement of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in assisting the government with the country's acute health and social problems. I responded to the invitation. John Arthur of ADRA-TED and I were the first Seventh-day Adventists to visit the country since its isolation nearly 50 years ago. On my agenda was a visit to Korca, a southern city near the Greek border, where lived Flora Sabatino-Lewis, the one about whom my father had talked so much.

Korca, Adventism's entry point

We did go to Korca, but Flora wasn't home. Ester, her daughter was. We sat down in a small, yet comfortable living room. I went to the kitchen table to unpack my travel bag. John occupied the others in animated conversation. In the privacy of the kitchen, I said to Ester in a lowered voice, "Ester, I am a Seventh-day Adventist."

At first, it seemed, she could not believe her ears. Tears flowed freely in our eyes as she kissed me on both cheeks and gave me the strongest and most memorable hug only Adventist believers can experience! "So, missionaries are coming to Albania?" she asked.

From the bag I pulled out two copies of the New Testament and a few copies of Matthew's Gospel in Albanian. When she saw them her eyes brightened, and taking them into her hands she quickly kissed them. Until now unobtainable, the Holy Scriptures were again in her hands. There were more hugs, but we had to dry our eyes and return to the living room. I said, "Soon, Ester, soon missionaries will

Albania: The Miracle Continues

by
Ray Dabrowski



Photos by Ray Dabrowski

Most Albanian Adventists are young. They are proud to own a Bible today and happy to be able to read it in different languages.

worship. Some were completely destroyed, others were turned into sports stadiums, cinemas, workshops, work houses, even a public toilet. Persecution was rampant. Clergy, together with thousands of believers, ended up in prisons, labor camps, or exile to remote parts of the country, their fate often unknown.

Return of religious freedom

Three years ago, with the fall of Communism, religious freedom returned to Albania. With it also came the

come. That's why we are here."

Italian-born Flora Sabatino-Lewis is 78 today. Hers is a dramatic story. In 1943 she married Daniel Lewis, an Albanian from Boston, Massachusetts, and ever since has lived in Korca. Lewis, a pharmacist, had come to Korca in the 1930s after accepting a call from the General Conference to take the Adventist message to Albania. In 1939 the *Review and Herald* reported that five Albanian converts had accepted the good news of the Lord's return and had begun keeping the Sabbath. Six more were ready for baptism.

Daniel Lewis was arrested in 1951, after Hoxha moved to restrict religious organizations throughout the country. Three years later, he died in a labor camp. Flora and her family waited and waited. She recalls how often she raised her head heavenward and asked, "How long will this last? Will a missionary ever come to Korca again?"

Today, a missionary family is serving a 30-member church with more than 100 other people studying the Scriptures. After the 1991 return to democracy, God's miracles in the hearts of the Albanian people have continued.

Meropi's three dreams

During my numerous visits to Albania, I was often surprised to meet individuals whose lives were changed because of the witness of one man. Many remember Daniel Lewis. A few weeks after my first visit to Albania, I was privileged to sit in the home of Meropi Gjika and listened for hours how the Lord had protected His own during the years of persecution in Albania.

Meropi waited nearly 50 for her baptism. She was one of the first Adventist believers in Korca. When Lewis was arrested, she looked after him by sending food and clothing to his prison cell. Against all odds, she kept the faith. She saved her tithe for 46 years and asked me to take it off her hands. She said, "I had three dreams. The first one was to be baptized. The second, to hand over my tithe and offerings to the church. And now, I'm waiting to see a church built here."

In the autumn of 1991 David Currie, the Trans-European Division ministerial association secretary, conducted public meetings on archaeology and the Bible.

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Thousands attended. In May 1992 an Adventist-sponsored international conference on freedom of conscience convened at the University of Tirana. Albania's first democratically elected president, Sali Berisha, took a keen interest in the conference. Attendees represented various religious denominations in Albania.

In the spring of 1992 the first baptism was held on the premises of the former Enver Hoxha Museum with Meropi, her daughter and granddaughter, together with five other believers stepping into the baptismal pool. In October, an Adventist church was organized in Tirana, with its own elders and deacons.

More were baptized, including Ester Misho, Daniel Lewis' daughter. Organized Adventist groups now worship in Shkodra, Elbasan, Durres, Rreshen and Vlora. Three missionary families are serving in the country. Ron Edwards, leader of the Adventist Church in Albania, is anxious not only to see the church well established and places of worship and witness erected, but also to train Albanian pastors.

A promise remembered

Among the Albanian miracles is a story told by Kristaq Treska, one of the original members of Lewis' Bible class, now 68 and attending the Korca church. The story goes back to the labor camp where Lewis continued his witness. He made a lasting impression on one of his fellow prisoners, Tanush Frasheri. The impression led to a promise. Mr. Frasheri is now a state minister in the government of Albania, and he wants to redeem that promise. "My aim," says Mr. Frasheri, "was to find the church that Daniel had started in Albania. I feel that it is my moral duty to fulfil Daniel's dream—to build a church in Korca, the one he wanted to build, but couldn't under Communism."

Mr. Frasheri remembers: "Daniel was a real saint. This is the image that still remains in my mind. He impressed many of us, especially the young. I was 16 then. We learned a lot from him. When someone brought him food from outside, he shared it with the rest of us. We loved him and respected him."

Lewis' crime was his faith in God. "He would not give up his faith. He

ADRA Responds to Albania's Suffering

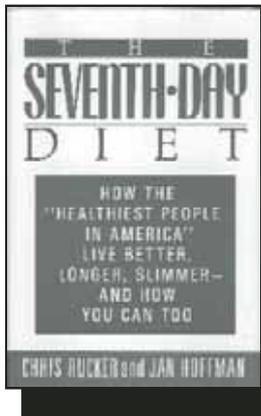
Albania is by far the poorest European country. Communist rule left the country with hardly any infrastructure for development. There are hospitals without beds, bakeries without bread, and fields with hardly any crops. Primarily an agricultural country, Albania cannot feed itself. Its work ethic reflects the fear that whatever you do for yourself will probably be taken away and given to someone else.

Against this background, ADRA made its first contact with Albania. Seventh-day Adventists had no option but step in and do something to help the country rebuild itself. According to John Arthur, TED ADRA director, ADRA has processed so far aid totalling U.S.\$4 million. ADRA together with other British aid agencies carried food stuffs, hospital beds, medicines, and clothes into the country. ADRA's involvement matches the church's interest in education, health, and social issues. The ministry of health and ADRA are involved in a cooperative project to inform the public about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, AIDS, and lack of hygiene.

Today, ADRA is one of the most respected organizations in the country. Recently the Council of Ministers assigned it land in Tirana for a warehouse and a future community center.

would not work on the Sabbath. Daniel said that if he were to die now, he would still confess the Lord," one of his fellow prisoners recalls. A church in his memory will soon be built in Korca. □

Ray Dabrowski, born in Poland, was recently elected communication director of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Previously he had served as director of communication, public affairs, and religious liberty for the Trans-European Division, with offices in England. He also edited the journal Conscience and Liberty.



The Seventh-day Diet, by Chris Rucker and Jan Hoffman (New York: Random House, 1991; 231 pp.; hardbound).

REVIEWED BY DAWN M. MARTIN.

Chris Rucker and Jan Hoffman based this book on the fact that Seventh-day Adventists live longer and healthier lives than the general population, which they credit to their adherence to the counsels of

Ellen White. The authors' purpose is to show that a life-style based on her writings is not exclusively for Adventists, but for all people who wish to enjoy a healthier life. They propose that the readers who follow the recipes, meal plans, and exercise program presented in *The Seventh-day Diet* will achieve their normal weight and a fuller life.

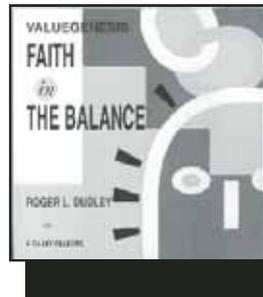
The book is divided into nine chapters. Each addresses a specific subject related to diet or health, and begins with a section outlining the basic facts on the topic. The information given is of a general nature, and is presented in a clear and concise manner. Most chapters include recipes that seem appealing, although no nutritional analysis is given.

The authors include personal experiences from their own families, which enliven and illustrate the major points introduced in the book. They also recommend weekly changes. This allows for an easy transition into a new life-style.

The fact that neither of the authors has had formal training in dietetics or nutrition led this reviewer to approach the book cautiously. For example, they seem caught up with the concept of fasting. They imply that most Adventists fast once a week, and they recommend fasting as a means of rapid weight loss. While this practice may indeed lead to weight reduction, the health hazards involved can counterbalance its expected benefits. In many cases fasting may result in weight gain due to excessive eating following the fast. This risk was not included in the book.

Non-vegetarian readers who wish to become vegetarians will find this book helpful. It was refreshing to read a positive presentation of the benefits of a balanced vegetarian diet. Overall, *The Seventh-day Diet* is well-written and is likely to succeed in inspiring the common reader toward a better, healthier life-style.

Dawn M. Martin is a registered dietitian employed by the San Bernardino County, in Southern California. She is completing a Master of Public Health degree at Loma Linda University.



Valuegenesis: Faith in the Balance, by Roger L. Dudley with V. Bailey Gillespie (Riverside, CA: La Sierra University Press, 1992; 309 pp., paperbound; ISBN 0-944450-11-30).

REVIEWED BY VICTOR A. KORNIJCZUK.

Valuegenesis is the largest research study ever undertaken in North America to assess the attitudes of Seventh-day Adventist young people toward their faith, beliefs, and practices. Sponsored by the North American Division and reported in this book by Roger Dudley of Andrews University and Bailey Gillespie of La Sierra University, the research involved 12,142 students in 6th to 12th grades, 1,892 parents, 383 teachers, 176 principals, and 155 pastors in North America.

Faith in the Balance is a comprehensive report on this landmark study. It is the first in a series of books to be published on the Valuegenesis findings. The book has 16 chapters. The first chapter introduces the reader to the project. In the second and third chapters Dudley presents the more encouraging and more alarming aspects of youth attitudes toward religion. The study found that Adventist young people emphasized the importance of personal religion, were loyal to the church, and believed in the inspiration of the Bible. The study also discovered that Adventist youth had a low score in faith maturity and altruism, tended to be more materialistic, and disagreed with some church standards. Other sections of the books deal with different themes. The book concludes with suggestions to strengthen the role of Seventh-day Adventist families, schools, and local churches—the three environments in which nurture of faith, values, and commitment occurs. Anyone who has anything to do with Adventist young people—teachers, pastors, church and school administrators—will find the book challenging and profitable.

Dudley has a rare gift of giving life to statistical data. Although the book deals mainly with quantitative results and examines them in terms of statistical concepts and resources, it is an interesting and readable volume. Good news and bad news are presented with fairness. Anecdotes add life to the dry bones of numbers. Commentary and implications found throughout the volume connect the scientific findings of the statistician to the caring heart of the pastor. The two merge beautifully as Dudley and Gillespie seek to clarify the meaning of the study for the mission of today. “The great hunger,” says Dudley, “of our young people seems to be for a deeper relationship with God. The challenge for Adventist religious education, whether in church or school, is to meet this need and help our youth establish a personal relationship with Jesus Christ” (p. 229).

Two observations may be made on the overall Valuegenesis project. First, many variables are based on one statement on which the subjects have to express their degree of agreement or disagreement. Some of these statements could have more than one interpretation, like those used in determining students' comprehension of the concept of salvation or in

evaluating the horizontal component of mature faith. Using multiple sentences as alternatives, as in other parts of the questionnaire, perhaps would have been a more appropriate procedure. The peril of relying strictly on a unique meaning of a sentence may be illustrated by looking at how we would judge Paul from his statement in Philippians 2:12, 13. We would label Paul as law-oriented (legalist) if we only take verse 12 where he appeals, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” On the other hand, verse 13 would put him in an opposite position, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do.” By this I do not deny that there is a strong legalistic flavor in our young people’s understanding of salvation, but I wonder if it is possible to determine what exists in the mind of 58 per cent of the children and adolescents surveyed when they disagree with the sentence, “There is nothing I can do to earn salvation.” An interview perhaps would be an appropriate technique to clarify this important issue. Given the size of the sample and the number of variables, an interview technique might not have been possible, but future investigators should keep such an option open.

Second, Valuegenesis surveyed only high school students. I wonder what interesting findings would result if such a study was extended to college students. Often many values are affirmed and stabilized toward the end of adolescence. Certain declining tendencies in 12th grade, which can be explained from the perspective of developmental psychology, may be reversed during college. This is worth thinking about for the future.

Victor A. Korniejczuk, on leave from Universidad Adventista del Plata, in Argentina, is currently completing his doctoral degree in education at Andrews University.



Encuentros by Roberto Badenas
(Madrid: Editorial Safeliz, 1993;
236 pp., paperback).

REVIEWED BY SERGIO E. BECERRA.

Encounter is a big word in theology today. From the doctrine of inspiration to the urgency of conversion, the entire spectrum of theology is colored by various concepts of encounter. In the process of such theological discussion, the most important and meaningful encounter gets left behind: the encounter with

Jesus, the one-to-one relationship with the Lord of life. Roberto Badenas’ *Encuentros* attempts to rectify that omission as he keeps our attention glued to the need for a personal and daily encounter with Jesus.

Badenas is a good craftsman. He approaches his task from the vantage point of knowing his Lord personally, and serving

Him in various positions of ministry. A careful researcher, author, and lecturer, he is currently serving as a teacher and dean of theology at the Institut Adventiste du Saleve, Collonges, France.

Badenas goes straight to the Christ of the gospels and examines how He encountered and changed men and women of His time. He takes the gospel stories and enriches them with fascinating details from the biblical text in its original cultural milieu. As a result, the individuals who met Jesus emerge like people we know, like ourselves—struggling with our problems, dreams, and hopes.

The Christ who emerges from these finely crafted pages is sensitive, compassionate, respectful, and loving—someone anxious to establish an intimate personal dialogue with each human being, offering him or her forgiveness of sins and the beginning of a new life.

By involving readers in these memorable dialogues, Badenas seeks to awaken in them a similar experience. While re-creating these encounters, the author touches—at times provocatively—on key issues in Christian life: the new birth and the work of the Holy Spirit, the possibility of faith in a world of doubt, the way to communicate with God, the price of discipleship, the agony of human suffering, the social responsibility of the believer, and the silence of God.

The author’s discussion of the silence of God is more than theology; it touches the deepest part of our personal lives. For most of us, Badenas argues, “the silence of God is a scandal.” But what does that mean? He explains: “To some, His silence is an excuse that leads to disregard everything but themselves. To others, it serves as an incentive to advance the hypothesis that God does not exist. For those who want to believe, the silence of God is the most difficult challenge to their faith.... Job struggled with it in the midst of his agony...until he discovered that the so-called silence is simply that God does not speak to us as we expect Him to. Our inability to hear Him is the result of our wanting God to be at our service rather than submitting to Him. We find God silent because He refuses to be fashioned in our image and likeness” (pp. 226, 227).

With such careful arguments, the author has provided a meaning and a sense of immediacy to the encounters of gospel characters with Jesus. Each chapter contains numerous bibliographic and explanatory notes that enhance our understanding of the story.

Originally published in Spanish, the book is available in Italian and is under preparation in French. It will appeal to all Christian readers, including university students and professionals. Written in a style that is easy without being superficial, it can also be used to introduce non-believers who are spiritually sensitive to the magnificent beauty and richness of the gospel story.

Sergio E. Becerra is a doctoral student in church history at the University of Strasbourg, in France.

The place was new. The people were strange. The language was a barrier. But there was a song in our hearts that brought us together and kept us together. The song of witnessing for Jesus.

It was January and cold. Greg Hann and I had to make the 450-mile journey from Zakopane to Gdansk in Poland. We knew the train would be crowded, and so we arrived at the station 90 minutes ahead of schedule. Even then we could just squeeze into the hallway on the last car of the train. Fifteen hours of journey ahead, and we had nowhere to

A Song From Poland

by
Michael
Feldbush

sit! But we had company: Forty others were also standing.

The *Student Missionary Call Book* and stories from others had pictured for us the challenge, the excitement, and the adventure of a student missionary rather well. Traveling to new places and meeting new people. Sharing Christ through teaching or preaching. Student missionaries did all of that, didn't they? And so, I made the decision to go to Poland as a student missionary and to teach English there. And besides, I wanted a break from school!

But now, standing in the train in the midst of a throng of other weary travelers, reality quickly set in: Student missionary life can bring *unexpected* challenge and adventure. Greg and I stood most of that night on the train; it was a horribly memorable experience. But God brought something grand out of

it anyway. We were able to talk with people around us. Despite of our poor mastery of Polish, we had fun trying to communicate. Greg pulled a Polish songbook out of his backpack and we attempted to sing.

Intrigued, our new friends asked us what kind of songs these were. Within a few minutes, both of us began explaining our faith in Christ to those standing around us. The young woman I talked to spoke little English, but those near Greg knew almost none. Fortunately, one of the passengers had a Polish New Testament. And so Greg was able to give a 45-minute Bible study—in Polish—about salvation through Jesus. Five months before, we could not have spoken a single word of Polish! I firmly believe that God performed a miracle through Greg that night.

God had a surprise for me

For nine months between 1992 and 1993, I taught conversational English in Gdansk, a city perched on the Baltic Sea in northern Poland. My intentions in becoming a student missionary had been good. I wanted to serve others, witness, and have a good time. I expected to have some memorable experiences and to make a few friends. But God had a tremendous surprise in store for me. What I *expected* from Poland cannot begin to compare with what I actually *received* from my time there. God and Poland taught me anew that I can never judge anything before it happens.

The difference between reality and expectation can be staggering. In traveling to Europe, especially eastern Europe, for the first time, I had virtually no idea what to expect. At the thought of Poland, blurry black-and-white newspaper images of bread lines and bonneted women flooded my mind. I imagined that “over there” in that former Communist country, people wore grey clothes, ate grey food, and had grey smiles on their faces. Having the privilege of visiting Poland and having these misconceptions erased from my mind has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

Poland is a beautiful country of beaches, mountains, forests, and fields. It has thousands of miles of peaceful country roads, as well as cities of hundreds of thousands of warm-hearted people. Poland *did* suffer the unpleasant

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Field day at the Adventist English Language Institute.



The author with one of his English classes.

effects of Communism, and it will take many years to erase them completely and to “catch up” to Western Europe, but the Poles are working valiantly (as they always have) to improve their country.

Ready for the unexpected

One of the things I remember hearing before I went to Poland was that student missionaries should be flexible and ready to deal with the unexpected. That turned out to be good advice. The first day of classes petrified me. How could I teach English when I wasn't trained to be a teacher and couldn't speak Polish? Midway through the year one of our best teachers had to return home due to health problems. We didn't have a full-time translator to assist us in our public relations with the community.

Thankfully, God always has supplies of perseverance, creativity and peace to give us upon request. Many times He assisted us in dealing with an unexpected question or problem. We were able to draw heavily upon Him to sustain us through the year. Week after week at our staff meetings with other student missionaries we shared our cares and concerns with one another and with Him.

The good experiences more than balanced out the stressful ones. The fear of teaching gave way to the challenge of becoming a better and better teacher. English Institute program activities were a highlight of the year. We had events like talent shows, scavenger hunts, field days, picnics, and trips to a local orphanage.

We wanted to fellowship with our students outside of class and give them a

chance to practice their English. On Sunday evenings, we held a Bible study for any student who wished to come. God gave me some special relationships with my students. From being strangers I was afraid of, they became friends I looked forward to being with.

Making friends and sharing faith

I became a close friend of one student in particular. Anna was a medical student. She came a couple of times to the weekly Bible study and was pretty quiet, while listening attentively. One day she opened up to me, questioning why God allows suffering in the world and expressing doubts about His love for her. Meeting her troubling questions was one of the most difficult experiences I have ever faced. I had the opportunity to visit her several times to become better friends and to share my faith and story with her.

Our weekly Bible study concentrated on the life of Jesus, studying it from the Bible and *The Desire of Ages*. We wanted to share with our students the importance of having a personal friendship with Jesus. As a result of the study, God touched the lives of some. In particular, Diana and Gregory. At the end of the year, they told us that they had come to know Jesus as a friend. Of course, we were touched and very happy.

As English teachers we were the “authorities,” able to lead our students through many of the ins and outs of

conversational English. But as Bible teachers, we did not have the same advantage. No one understands God or the things of God completely. When someone asked us questions, we did not always have a ready answer. For example, I could not tell Anna how to find Christ because I did not know her well enough to map out the way. We student missionaries came to the conclusion that our role as witnesses and missionaries is to be like the sower in the parable (see Matthew 13:3-8). We are simply witnesses—people who tell what they have heard and seen and give their personal testimony. We plant seeds. It then becomes the work of the Holy Spirit to water those seeds and nurture them.

That is probably the most important thing I learned as a student missionary: one doesn't have to become officially a missionary to be a missionary. One can sing the song of Jesus anywhere, anytime. □

Michael Feldbush is a junior studying geography at the University of Maryland at College Park, Maryland, U.S.A.

If you are interested in serving as a student missionary or volunteer, contact the Church Ministries/Youth Department director for your division (see address on page 2) or Elder Dick Barron, Adventist Youth Service Coordinator: 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904; U.S.A. Telephone: (301) 680-6149. Fax: (301) 680-6155.

