

Journal of Education & Christian Belief

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Book Reviews

Andrew Wright

Religion, Education and Post-modernity

Reviewer: William K. Kay (p.142)

Douglas V. Henry & Bob R. Agee (eds)

Faithful Learning and the Christian Scholarly Vocation

Reviewer: David I. Smith (p.143)

Braley, J., Layman, J. & White, R. (eds)

Foundations of Christian School Education

Reviewer: Christina Belcher (p.145)

Nicholas Wolterstorff (edited by Gloria Goris Stronks & Clarence W. Joldersma)

Educating for Life: Reflections on Christian Teaching and Learning

Reviewer: John Shortt (p.146)

Nicholas P. Wolterstorff (edited by Clarence W. Joldersma & Gloria Goris Stronks)

Educating for Shalom: Essays on Christian Higher Education

Reviewer: John Shortt (p.146)

Glenn Miles & Josephine-Joy Wright (eds)

Celebrating Children

Reviewer: John Shortt (p.147)

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Editorial

IN THE FIRST article in this issue, Jason Morris, Richard Beck and Albert Smith report on their study looking at the role of spiritual integration in student/institution fit at a Christian university. They found that spiritual integration was an important factor in student retention and they make several recommendations for practice on the basis of this finding. These include the suggestion that faculty should be encouraged and supported in their efforts to incorporate spiritual development into their instructional methods.

This first article is concerned with factors in the retention of students at independent Christian universities in the United States. The next article takes us across the Atlantic to the very different context of school education in England where the subject of religious education is compulsory in state schools. Both Michael Hand and John White, the participants in the dialogue recorded in this article, would like to see radical changes to this situation. However, what each of them wants is very different from the other: Hand would like to see RE retain its present compulsory status but with a radical reform of what is taught so that it is concerned with enabling students to make informed, rational judgments on the truth or falsity of religious propositions whereas White can find no justification for RE being a compulsory subject in the school curriculum because these questions can be dealt with in other subject areas.

As it stands, this article is in the form of a dialogue but we are sure that Hand and White would welcome other voices in the discussion. You may agree with one or other of the dialogists and you may wish to add additional arguments to the cases made. Or you may wish to argue for or against the compulsoriness of religious education in state schools on other grounds. Or you may wish to argue for an altogether different conception of religious education from that which is at issue between Hand and White. If you would like to join the discussion with a letter or an article, please get in touch with us as editors. We would be very pleased to hear from you if you would like to respond to this article (or to any of the other articles in this issue).

The justification for another curriculum subject area – that of art education – is the subject of the third article in this issue. We cross the Atlantic again, this time to British Columbia in Canada, and we move into the educational context of the Christian school from which Tanya Weber questions the hierarchy of a curriculum that either suppresses the visual arts entirely or restricts them to those students who display particular giftedness in them. She calls for a more radical Christian perspective on the curriculum as a whole and on the nature of knowledge and experience and for a fresh appraisal on the part of the Protestant Christian church of the value of the visual arts.

We are back in England again and back with religious education again with the fourth and final article in this issue. Penny Thompson, like Hand and White, would like to see major changes in RE but in a different direction from both of them. She wants a return to the committed teaching of Christianity as an alternative to both the religious indifference which she says is promoted by RE aimed at learning from religions and also the essentialism which it promotes if aimed at learning from religion. She also claims that this is would be in line with the wishes of the majority of parents.

Our review section this time includes books on Christian school and higher education, religious education, Christian scholarship and caring for children at risk. We have also included this time details of the contents of all sixteen issues of this journal that have been published in the eight years since *JECB* first appeared. Abstracts of all the articles published are available on the Association of Christian Teachers' website at www.christian-teachers.org.uk (under '*JECB*').

John Shortt & David I. Smith