

# Table Talk



News and Views of the Student Body of The Lutheran  
Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

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February 3, 1965

## AN INVITATION TO OUR WORLD

"But why did you hurt me so!"  
"You'll get no answers out of God."

What shall we say to Job?  
What shall we say to ourselves?  
This is an invitation to enjoyment,  
contemplation and discussion. On  
next Monday evening at 8:30 P.M.,  
members of the Seminary community  
will present a reading of Robert  
Frost's A Masque of Reason. There  
will be a discussion following the  
reading of this short drama in  
which we will attempt to come to  
grips with the drama which the poet  
has presented to us.

Don't be scared! After all a  
masque is supposed to be entertain-  
ing but as allegory also provoca-  
tive. Frost here presents you with  
your, with our, world. The char-  
acters are not unreal; even God is  
presented frankly in the world's  
image of Him. The questions are  
our questions; and the answers,  
they too are ours. What could be  
more reflective? Thus this is an  
invitation to our world.

However, the masque also pre-  
sents some real challenges for the  
theologically orientated man. Is  
there "no connection man can reason  
out/Between his just deserts and  
what he gets?" And what about this  
God pitching his plywood throne?  
He seems strangely familiar. Oh,  
yes! We also have a Devil, we've  
resurrected him, poor neglected  
(soul?). But why do we have to  
bring him back into the picture,  
or was he always there? Well any-  
way we have all those "justifying  
ex-post-facto excuses trumped up...  
for theologians." Thus in a com-  
munity of theological studies, this  
is certainly an invitation to our  
world.

(cont. on p. 2 )

Carl Braaten, Assistant Pro-  
fessor of Systematic Theology at  
Maywood Seminary, has accepted our  
invitation to be spring lecturer.  
He will be on campus March 24 and  
will present two lectures, "A Cri-  
tical Look at the New Hermeneutic"  
and "The Lordship of Christ and  
the Modern Man". The usual format  
will be followed: the first lec-  
ture will be at 10:00, he will  
eat lunch in the refectory, the  
second lecture will be at 2:00,  
and a discussion period will fol-  
low at 3:00.

Thirty-six year old Braaten  
is one of the youngest lecturers  
hosted by the Student-Faculty Lec-  
ture Committee, and has an impres-  
sive and varied background. Born  
in Minnesota, he completed his  
early schooling there at St. Olaf  
College, married in 1951, went on  
to graduate study at the University  
of Minnesota and Luther Seminary,  
and received his doctorate from  
Harvard. He also was a 1951-1952  
Fullbright Scholar at the Univer-  
sity of Paris and spent a year in  
Germany at the University of Hei-  
delberg.

The year 1958 found him back  
in Minnesota as pastor of the Lu-  
theran Church of the Messiah in  
Minneapolis and as part time In-  
structor in Theology at the sem-  
inary at St. Paul. In 1961 he  
went to Maywood Seminary as visit-  
ing professor and by 1962 took his  
present position there.

In addition to his full-time  
teaching position and his family  
responsibilities with four active  
youngsters, Braaten finds time to  
be an avid writer. He is presently

(cont. on p. 3)

## FEATURE EDITORIAL

The cultural vacuum of the Seminary seems to be taking a turn for the better. Discussions have been held since the end of Carol Lang's exhibition and a committee has been set up to coordinate and arrange future displays. Hopefully a new 'one man show' will be up by the beginning of the next quarter. The Chancel Players have been rehearsing and will present their first reading this coming Monday night. Now that these areas are finally moving its time to place another poker in the fire.

Two years ago the Student Body Social Committee arranged an evening of entertainment which they entitled 'A Night of Music'. For those of you who might have been around you will recall that it was a fine beginning of what was hoped to be a tradition. The evening combined talent from both the faculty and the student body. John Clark played selections on the cboe accompanied by Mr. Clippinger. Vocal solos were rendered by Edward Palmer, bass, and Robert Richards, tenor. And of course 'Clip' didn't escape without playing several excellent organ pieces. After the success of the evening, plans were made for a second such night to be presented last year. The idea had been to combine the talents of Mrs. Heikkinen, Mr. Clippinger, and students for another evening of music, this time stressing piano as well as organ. Returning this year I was informed that all the plans never even got off the ground!

So often people tell us that Gettysburg is so far in the woods when it comes to a cultural atmosphere that it isn't even worth trying to do anything about it. I disagree. If the seminary community wants to create a cultural atmosphere let it turn to its own resources and begin there. I am not that familiar with the talent on campus this year, but I am sure it is there. I am sure an excellent evening of religious music could

(cont. in col. 2)

## STAFF OF TABLE TALK

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Feature Ed.  
(from col. 1)

again be arranged if only someone would try. Maybe if some of the steam usually aimed at downing G-burg were channeled into improving G-burg we just might get somewhere. Maybe the Student Body ought to appoint a Cultural Committee or maybe it ought to be done on the faculty-student level, but let's do something!

Just another added thought. That little pet room of mine in the Library would be fine for an evening of stringed music and conversation.

JH

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Our World  
(from p. 1 col. 1)

Finally, we the cast wish to invite you to join us in the truth of our dramatic world. We present for you the work of one of the most perceptive poets of our century in America. We also invite you to share with us in the possibility of creative expression of a man's probing of our world and consideration of the faith. We ask for no show of culture, no avant-garde revolution, no systems to impose upon the evening and the drama, rather we merely extend to you an invitation to our world.

F. R.

EDITOR'S CORNER

Seniors! Excuse me if I mention a dirty word, but now that thesis pressure is off, we would like you to perhaps share your findings with all of us. It was decided at staff meeting to invite any seniors who feel their thesis findings would be of interest to us all to submit a "thesis abstract" so to speak, for publication in Table Talk.

Some theses, of course, would be more suitable for this type of presentation than others, so we leave the initiative up to you. If you think yours could be interestingly presented in this way, get back to that typewriter and give it a try, will you?

R. F. G.

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TODAY -- AT THE COLLEGE

You Are Invited To See  
Two Short Films

"RECLAIMED"

From the Seattle Fair  
Wednesday, February 3  
Continuous Showings  
10:30 a.m.--Noon  
4:00 p.m.--5:30 p.m.  
Sub Ballroom Area

NEXT WEEK

"PARABLE"

From the New York Fair  
Monday, February 8  
Continuous Showings  
10:30 a.m.--Noon  
4:00 p.m.--5:30 p.m.  
Sub Ballroom Area

and

9:00 p.m. followed by discussion

THE IN

(Plank Gym Study Area)

Sponsored By The Chapel Council

Gettysburg College

Branten  
(from p. 1)

Editor-in-Chief of the theological journal, Dialog, and since 1962 has written numerous books and articles. His writings cover a wide range from themes in practical theology to subjects in History and Systematics.

Here is just a sampling of his writings. Articles in theological journals include "Communion Before Confirmation?", "Jesus and the Kerygma in Rudolf Bultmann's Theology", "Modern Interpretation of Nestorius", "The Dynamics of a Responding Church in a Changing World", "Obedient Love in Race Relations", "The Interdependence of Theology", and "Against the Becker Amendment". Books in which he has had a part are Kerygma and History (co-translator and co-editor), The New Community in Christ (contributor), Christ and his Community in the World (author), The So-called Historical Jesus and the Historic Biblical Christ (translator and editor), and Jesus and the Kerygmatic Christ (co-author).

The Seminary community can certainly look forward to an interesting and informative presentation on March 24.

R. F. G.

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WE STAND CORRECTED!

It was completely in error that we neglected to include Fred Reisz's name with his article last week as part of our intern series. Our apologies, Fred, and thanks for a fine article.

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ANOTHER NEW BEING

Name: Mark Alan  
Born: Friday, January 29  
Weight: 6 lbs., 8½ oz.  
Proud Parents: Jim and Pat Mummert

Congratulations!

## ROMAN CATHOLIC SPEAKER

A unique event is scheduled for Thursday evening, February 11, at 7:00 P.M. At this time the Rev. William H. Keeler will participate in a colloquium on the Vatican II Constitution on the Liturgy. This will be the first time in the history of the seminary that a Roman Catholic clergyman has been the speaker at a program here.

Father Keeler is well qualified to speak on this subject. He is Moderator of the Christian Understanding Program of the Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg and pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Marysville. He was ordained a priest in 1955 in Rome and in 1956 was awarded the Licentiate in Sacred Theology by the Pontified Gregorian University there. In 1961 he received the Doctorate in Canon Law from the same University. Father Keeler has accompanied Bishop George Leech, of Harrisburg, to all three sessions of the current Vatican Council. During the first session he was a member of the U.S. Press Panel, which each day briefed English-speaking reporters; during the second and third sessions he served on the staff of the Council Digest, a daily reference service sponsored by the American bishops.

Two priests from the Gettysburg parish will also be in attendance and take part in discussion. The program will be held in Room 206 of the Administration Building.

David Schneider

Due to illness, this week's article in the current intern series has been postponed till next issue.

Max, O. C. M., has taken a week's vacation. "Until next week--  
Be good"

## MATRICULATION

Festival of Conversion of St. Paul  
January 25, 1965

Lesson: Acts 9:1-22

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE ...

There should be an air of excitement around us this morning when the junior members of the Seminary community will solemnly declare,

I promise to give myself to the discipline of theological study in this Seminary, to seek and to wait humbly upon God's gifts of grace, and to strive to become a faithful servant of my Lord.<sup>1</sup>

I say "excitement" because of the challenges established Christendom faces today. Many younger churchmen, to be sure, have reacted to these challenges with a sense of disenchantment, of disgust and even rebellion. There is a brewing revolt in many Protestant churches against bureaucratic authority, ecclesiastical politics and a love for angular individualism. Many a young theologian, conscious of the betrayal of historic traditions in the church, prefers to remain outside the institution.

Alan B. Anderson, a member of the Chicago Inner City Methodist Minister's Fellowship, described his feelings in a clever parable entitled The Box People:<sup>2</sup> "The tribe known as the Box People", he states,

has a long and distinguished history. No one is quite certain when the tribe began building their curious walls of chumminess, and the roof is thatched over with rules. These homes are very secure against all invasions: the walls of chumminess keep unchummy people out, the roof of rules keeps God out, and

(cont. on p. 5)

Matriculation  
(from p. 4)

the floor of niceness keeps everyone out -- including the true selves of the Box People. The Box People call these structures "religions".

Some of you may have visited in one of these boxes. If you have, you will remember how safe and warm it was inside. When you looked up to see your God, it was comforting to see the rules to obey instead. When you looked sideways to see your neighbors, it was reassuring to see only chums. When you looked down to see yourself, it was pleasing to observe only niceness.

Throughout their history, however, the Box People have had a recurring problem: while their "religions" are admirably constructed to keep God and man out, some flaw in the architecture makes the "religions" unable to keep people in. Down through the years there have been escapes from the boxes. These always disturb the Box People; it is quite disconcerting to them that some prefer the dangerous life on the outside.

Many of us, I am sure, could easily identify with the characters in this parable. The church appears to us often as the box from which we want to get out. But if we are out what then? John Osborn, the angry young playwright from Britain has stated an outside view in a declaration entitled, "They Call It Cricket":<sup>3</sup> "During the past 50 years", he writes about the church in Britain,

the Church has repeatedly ducked every moral issue that has been thrown at its head -- poverty, unemployment, fascism, war, the H-Bomb and so on ... After half a century of watching groups of wealthy theologians publicly turning their backs on Jesus, the British public slowly began to realize that the bishops were just playing another word game, like the politicians ... Every day on the radio, the press or TV, the Church hawked around its Jesus figure like a vacuum cleaner, but nobody felt inclined to buy a machine that not only failed to beat, sweep or clean, but actually made a nice mess as well. It has JESUS written on the bag, but the bag contained only the air of another bunch of overpaid liars ... Like so many other English institutions, the Church was beginning to lose its comic value.

Could not the same be said about many American churches? Do Gibson Winter, Peter Berger, Martin Marty and other "sociological Jeremiahs" not say it? There is a "comic value" in all this critique. Moreover, the institutional church should have a "comic value". You cannot live in Christian service with a bitter face and gnashing teeth. God wants our hearty laughter, he wants our disgust and he wants our so-called worldliness! Occasionally, there are men like Osborn graduating from Seminaries: men with a holy fury, true men of God who take up the struggle with life as it is in our world. An amateur poet among Seminary men described such a ministry in a poem entitled, "Shuttlesworth at Shechem":<sup>4</sup>

(cont. on p. 6)

Leaving my musty monastery  
 Where too many years I listened to  
 Pimplly seminarians intone their theological puberty rites:  
 Re-existential confrontation,  
 Simple Occasion, Re-event,  
 Demythologizing the kerygma, as you'd peel a banana,  
 And routinizing the charisma (while you wait),

I heard Fred Shuttlesworth report on Birmingham,  
 In the fervent language of Joshua twenty-four:  
 How existential can you get?  
 The Alabama state cops' electric cattle prodder  
 Is a misplaced concretion on a Christian rump  
 But it's quite an e-vent.  
 The 50 pound fire hose stream may seem to be  
 A Simple Occasion, but there is not minimum space nor  
 Minimum time for comfort...

The Ruach stirs the leaves of the old oak of Shechem,  
 The crowd's hearts and hopes also tremble,  
 But there as big as existential life, Joshua Shuttlesworth  
 Exhorts them --

"AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE"...

Of course, they bombed his home  
 But he and his kids can still sleep in jail  
 In Birmingham or Maryville -- or you name it.  
 Any Dixie-Hilton jail with iron bars  
 Puts out the welcome sign for Shuttlesworth:  
 "AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD!"

The experience of Shuttlesworth, the disgust of Osborn, the satire about the Box People -- all this and much more are warning posts along the road of theological education. You may be tempted to disregard them or to overestimate them. Like a reckless driver you may speed by them, eager to reach your destination: the comfortable parish, the clever theology, the security of the cult or whatever you consider to be your particular "box". Or, like an overcautious and inexperienced driver you may want to stop at each sign, study it carefully, be totally disenchanted and refuse to go on at all. You may not want to take the risk of doing both: to take the signals seriously and still go on to strive for a goal. My advise is that you should take the risk. Like the hero Ulysses in Homer's immortal epic, you have to face Scylla and Charybdis, the legendary dangerous rocks, somewhere off the coast of Sicily threatening every sailor in the form of a sea monster and a ravenous woman. Your challenge is to stay alert in the midst of the siren's call and the threatening cliffs. Scylla and Charybdis wait for you right here on the hill of the Abiding Presence! As an analyst of theological education put it recently in terms of a practical example,

The Seminarian carries certain "plus" burdens which do not necessarily characterize all other types of graduate students... At 9:10 the attributes of God will be characterized in a lecture in Room 9 by Professor Prolegomenon. At 10:10 in the chapel there will be celebrated a service of Holy Communion. One moment the Seminarian is sorting out Isaiahs; the next he is crying out, "Holy, Holy, Holy".

(cont. on p. 7)

Sometimes the campus will be full of theological embarrassment and you do not know where to look for help. Your theological choices will be many and you will look in vain for scientific precision. At other times you may not know where and how to specialize. You will find, as Dean Walter Muelder of the Boston School of Theology stated in an address,<sup>6</sup>

that theological school faculties are so engrossed in their specialties that each faculty member assumes the other is presenting the gospel.

When Saul became Paul in Damascus he was taken under the wings of a certain Ananias who became his friend in the hours of spiritual despair. It is also said in our lesson for this day of St. Paul's Conversion that "Saul increased in strength...and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ". The two Greek words, synechein -- "to confound", and symbibazein -- "to prove" contain a secret of theological education. Synechein means literally "to hold things together" in such a way that they become a weapon in the intellectual struggle with people of other persuasions. Symbibazein means literally "to bring things together" in such a way that you reconcile your enemy by sharp argument, thus "proving" that Jesus was the Christ.

Like Paul, you should have a friend in your Damascus, right here on Campus. And like Paul, you should learn "to hold and to bring things together" in your attempt towards a ministry of reconciliation in this world. I hope you collect the armament to confound the Jews in your Damascus and to prove that Jesus is the Christ. And it is my heartfelt wish that you start right here on the Hill of the Abiding Presence

Amen.

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. Memorandum of Donald R. Heiges to Seminary Community on January 21, 1965.
2. Quoted in Walter D. Wagoner, Bachelor of Divinity (New York: Abingdon Press, 1963), pp. 20-21.
3. John Osborn, Declaration (ed. Tom Maschler; New York: Dutton Co., 1958).
4. John B. Thompson in Pulpit (April 29, 1964), p. 550.
5. Wagoner, op. cit., p. 71.
6. Ibid., p. 153, n. 8.

Professor Eric Gritsch