

# Table Talk

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



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## *Mr Strobert's Multiple Concerns* by Deborah Conrad

I thought he was a Methodist or something. So did the person reading over my shoulder while I was typing this.

"It's a rumor and a lie!" Strobert said he was always Lutheran. I told him he doesn't preach like a Lutheran. But he persisted. He IS Lutheran. In fact, he graduated from this very seminary in 1973. But where did he learn to preach like that? (In what I've heard called "folk style"?) "If one is involved in the Word and proclamation, it EXCITES you. Whether black, Hispanic, white, it's being able to communicate. It's my style."

Nelson Timothy Strobert was born in Brooklyn, Ny., "a long time ago." It was sometime in the '40s. You figure it out. His parents and his younger sister (the microbiologist of the family) still live there. New York, he said, is "the best and worst there is in the world." Said he learned a world view from childhood. He studied at City University of New York's Hunter College, where he earned a degree in French. Cool. Er, uh, c'est froid (frois? fwa?)

Strobert has just joined the faculty of our seminary; this is his first semester as assistant professor of Christian education. First impressions?

"Deja vu. Having been a student and having come back over the years ... you know the area, but have to become reacquainted with something.

"I think I've seen a commitment on the part of the faculty to scholarship and to the work of the church in preparing people for ministry." The faculty, he said, is "immersed in the life of the church and dedicated to that life."

Strobert is pleased with the diversity found on campus these days, compared to the lack of diversity when he enrolled, fresh out of college. Being in chapel is like being in a congregation, he said, with women and men of all ages, with lots of children. And congregational life, according to Strobert, is the center of what his own doctrine of ministry is all about.

He gets excited about "constantly being able to bring that Word of God into lives (of parishioners)," seeing and telling "how the gospel ... can pierce and challenge their lives."

"The Word is alive today. Jesus is alive today!"

(He began to preach, so I moved to the next question.)

His political agenda (my phrase, not his) is informed by the gospel, Strobert said. What is important is "people living in community, living whole lives."

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# Jordache gives too bleak a look

by Scott M. Douglas

You've seen the ads: cameras provide pans of teens with impossibly unblemished skin while the youngsters ramble on innocuously in what producers take to be high school lingo. The commercials' conclusions tell us that we're being asked to buy jeans, always necessary information given the dialogue's complete lack of connection to the product.

The ads display the same ills as most of this decade's popular culture: corporatized shaping of hipness, lack of meaningful content and specious relation to the real world. Annoying, yes--but ultimately troublesome, no.

But the latest promos for Jordache Jeans have raised the stakes, and they've done so to an intolerable degree. The commercial consists of two young couples walking while one troubled teen recites a litany of problems brought on by the adult world, such as undrinkable water and unbreathable air. One flippant lad even throws in an apparent reference to AIDS (ah yes, high-schoolers, that last bastion of safe sex in a hedonistic adult world). Finally our young would-be activist confronts her male companion, asking whether or not he cares. The recalcitrant boyfriend, undoubtedly toughened after years of philosophical reflection on the world's evils, replies, "Why care if you can't change it?" The ad concludes on an appropriately downbeat note: Jordache Jeans. Because life ... is not.

Gosh. How cute. How neat. How dangerous. Today, when pop culture not only reflects but informs its ever-avid consumers, these ads are nothing short of irresponsible. My generation has reason enough to fear for the future, what with a federal deficit we'll have to pay for, an education system churning out illiterates, a national confusion between entertainment trivia and internationally significant news, a feeling that our lot will be worse than our parents' and, of course, nuclear war on the horizon. With all this, we hardly need cynical Madison Avenuers to supply us with a philosophy that allows apathy in the face of societal dissolution.

Moreover, these problems point all the more to the need to care. I refer not to the "we're gonna change the world" mentality of the '60s. Actions such as those taken on the Johns Hopkins campus on behalf of South African blacks, while certainly admirable, are currently an aberration. We post-baby boomers know all too well that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

But a summer just spent working with high school students convinced me that, despite those at Jordache, most want to improve matters, if not globally, then locally. While most of us feel little affinity for President Reagan, we must acknowledge his shaping of our attitudes. Reagan, after all, is to date the major political figure of our lives, and if his administration has one overriding message it is that government matters. I need only offer debate about the Iran-contra hearings among my coworkers as evidence. Put another way, even if the chance of not being atomically annihilated is only 1 in 100, we had best concentrate on making that 1 percent the best it can be. Far from Jordache's nihilism, we need all the more of this type of encouragement.

Luckily, not all elements of popular culture are at odds with what today's youth needs to hear. R.E.M., one of the most influential bands in America, perhaps says it best on a recent album: "We are young despite the years. We are concerned. We are hope despite the times."

# More than Tolerance

by Nancy L. Weiss

We are a community gathered together on this hill for the sake of Christ. I love this place, and after a summer hiatus I am glad to be here with you to study about our God, his Christ and Christ's Church.

After 10 weeks of living with my CPE group in an atmosphere of respect for one another, including denominational choice, it is very painful to hear in classrooms on this campus, and recall from previous chapel homilies and sermons, slurs and derogatory references toward other denominations. It has been demonstrated in some of my classrooms that it is possible to point out differences between Lutherans of this school's persuasion and other denominations without hurtful phrases and degrading tones of voice. As I interact with persons of Episcopalian, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic backgrounds, it is more and more apparent how hurtful the intentional and unintentional "putdowns" can be.

I doubt that any of us would want to turn away our brothers and sisters in Christ who come to this Lutheran school from different denominational persuasions, but I think we had better realize that our words can be sharper than we intend. I include myself as I ask that we all become more cognizant of how we speak about other denominations, remembering the call to "practice hospitality," "not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think" and Christ's commandment to "love one another as Christ loved us."

We are a community gathered together on this hill for the sake of Christ. For Christ's sake let us speak as community as we gather together.

(continued from page 1)

"I'm not fighting institutions, (but) there are institutions who (work) against that (wholeness)." He said he has a strong interest in the Haitian community, in race issues, in issues of poverty and in education, particularly education of blacks in the United States.

Any other groups he aligns himself with? "I guess I've become a singles advocate. I'm single and I enjoy it."

Strobert said it will take some time before he knows just what to expect - of himself, of the students and of the multi-cultural concerns program, which is one of his primary foci (you all should know what that word means by now). He said he believes the emphasis of the program should be preparing students to do ministry in all kinds of settings. Through it, students should gain "exposure to cultures other than their own, (and) not go with stereotypes." It's important, he said, "that one gets a sense of the pulse of the life of another ethnic community.

"It's not enough, but it becomes a first step. That can be mind-blowing."

For mind-blowing fun, Strobert listens to music - classical and folk; he reads French literature; he enjoys concerts and plays; he wants to go to Haiti. Recently, he put away all that high-brow stuff and saw "Crocodile Dundee". Whew!

What kind of student does he like? One who will "work and gain as much skill as offered at an institution like this"; one who works "to be able to do the ministry he or she has been called to do."

Yeah, yeah. But can he be bought?

He said rather firmly, "No."

Welcome back to seminary Mr. Strobert.

# MUSIC LINE

by David Eck

For some of you, this column is an old friend. For others it is something totally new. Whatever the case, welcome to Music Line!

Each month I hope to bring you news and information about what is happening in the world of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM). I will include record reviews, artist profiles, news from the secular music scene, and much more. And now...on to more exciting news!

Last year was an interesting one for CCM. Encouraged by the success of Amy Grant in the pop charts, record companies began to spew out Christian releases by the dozens. What resulted was a decrease in the quality of albums, and the consumer retaliated by purchasing fewer albums.

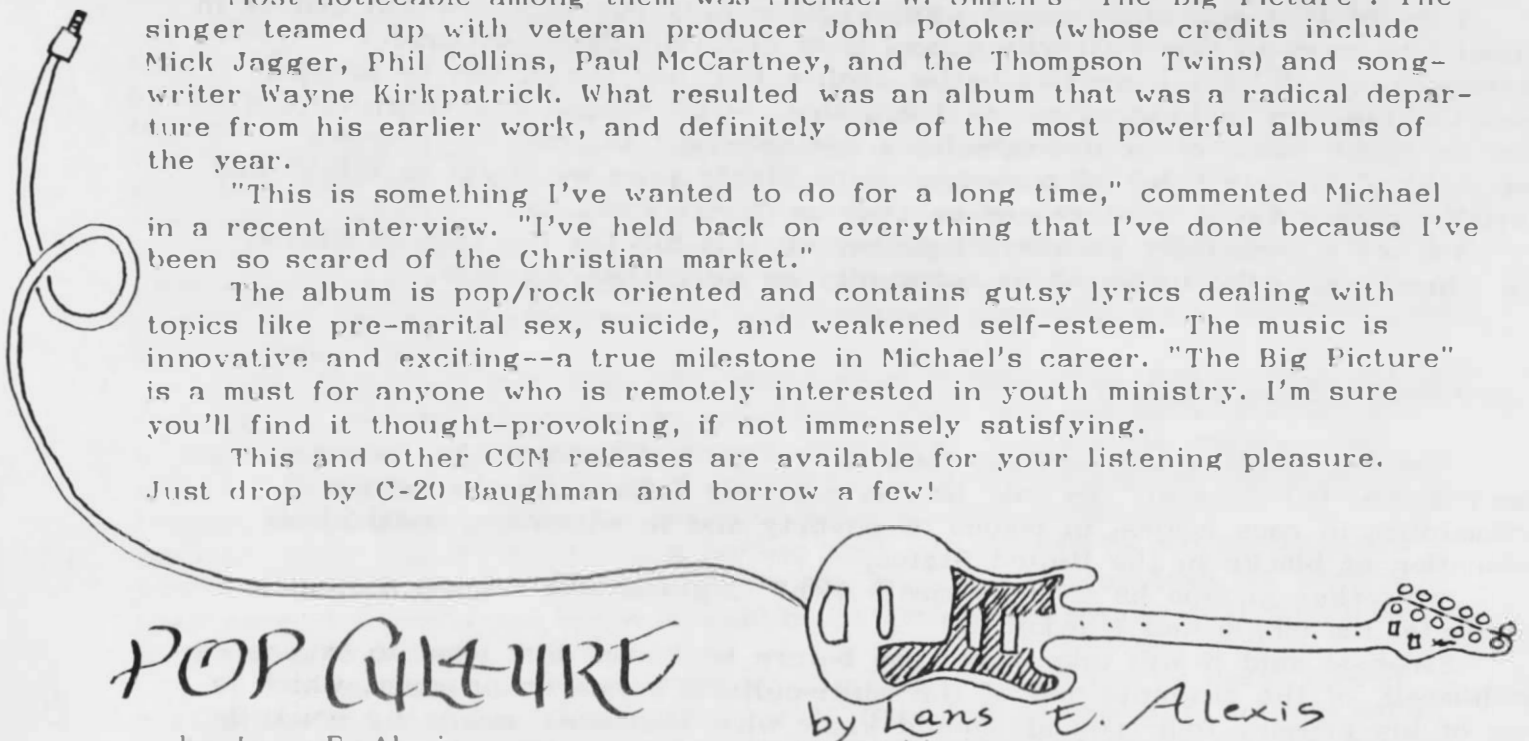
Yet in spite of the decline in quality, there were a few releases in CCM that seemed to rise above the rest.

Most noticeable among them was Michael W. Smith's "The Big Picture". The singer teamed up with veteran producer John Potoker (whose credits include Mick Jagger, Phil Collins, Paul McCartney, and the Thompson Twins) and songwriter Wayne Kirkpatrick. What resulted was an album that was a radical departure from his earlier work, and definitely one of the most powerful albums of the year.

"This is something I've wanted to do for a long time," commented Michael in a recent interview. "I've held back on everything that I've done because I've been so scared of the Christian market."

The album is pop/rock oriented and contains gutsy lyrics dealing with topics like pre-marital sex, suicide, and weakened self-esteem. The music is innovative and exciting--a true milestone in Michael's career. "The Big Picture" is a must for anyone who is remotely interested in youth ministry. I'm sure you'll find it thought-provoking, if not immensely satisfying.

This and other CCM releases are available for your listening pleasure. Just drop by C-20 Baughman and borrow a few!



# POP CULTURE

by Lans E. Alexis

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Let's welcome back that icon of the sophisticated 80's, Po-o-o-o-o-o-p Cultu-u-u-u-ure! Music is his life, movies are his Saturday night, and TV a big fuzzy security blanket.

We're into the column now, and the thing is music. New music. Important new music from culturally acceptable bands that have arrived in the past year. Music you must have. That's a pop imperative.

There are only a few gems from Talking Heads' latest "True Stories". The Heads have backed off from the experimental edge they brought to the music scene earlier this decade. The songs are still fun, interesting and likeable. But isn't it just a bit below these four wildly creative people? In all I've read of what's going on, it appears that David Byrne, leader of the group, has taken his peculiarities into his extra-curricular activities: movies, books, theatre, and solo music. So what he takes to the band are his pop songs, those pieces that the art world considers too homogenized. For the previous album, "Little Creatures", we heard a more folksy, well-considered sound. But the songs on this disc are more forgettable. There are standout pieces here: "Puzzlin' Evidence", "Love For Sale", and "Wild, Wild Life". But the standardness of the music scares me. I wish Byrne had traveled with Paul Simon to Graceland.

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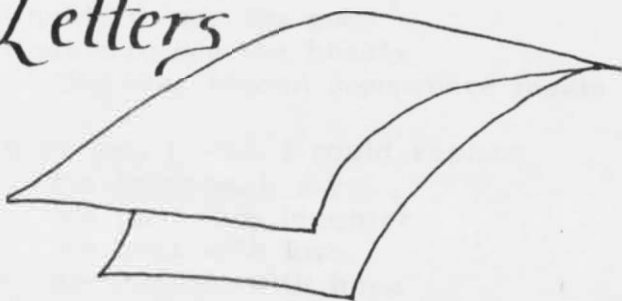
But how about U2, huh? They have got the Edge on the pop scene today! Though Bono and company have been making the Big Statement on their last three albums, this one has a clear and compelling voice, knock you on your butt music, and pure, passionate lyrics. Much has been made of the band members' Christianity, but I'm certainly glad they don't wear it on their sleeves. Because the questions--the what is it all about, God? and here are some answers so far--just shine through. Believe me, Spirit speaks through Bono's words, and She burns him with love. The cross is in there; the Man acquainted with grief, and the hope...well, it's just a little ways ahead of this new Psalmist. "But I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" tells me that he knows where to search. That anthem, along with many other strong, brilliant songs, cover the few songs that aren't a part of my being yet. But I embrace this album like few hymns in the LBW. (Let's turn to number 291, "In God's Country". Please rise.)

In the same vein--a pop personality who lets a Christian sensibility pervade his lyrics--I highly recommend the one man band, World Party. Karl Wallinger, formerly of the Waterboys, is a brilliant singer/song-writer/musician/producer and world caretaker. It's sixties, it's psychedelic, it's all that America can and should have been if we had really given peace a chance. Karl has a very distinctive voice, pulling off an excellent rendition of Dylan's "All I Really Want To Do". The slow ballad, the mid-tempo pop numbers, and the spitting-angry rockers are all convincing, singable, danceable melodies. Subjects include conservation/revolution, running away from the struggle, hope in love, Satan ("Kill the little man within"), farm crises, church attendance and fear of truth (all in one song), nature's parousia, and the best contrition I've heard since Complaine ("It's all mine, it's all mine, it's all mine, it's all mine, it's all my own fault" just screamed out). Got to love a guy who thanks "God, who created all above and below." So get in on the ground floor of the "Private Revolution". Remember, world party next year.

And for off-beat dance joy, see B-52's "Bouncing Off the Satellites". While they may have their serious moments in light of a band member's loss to cancer, they altogether love life--as wierd as they can make it. Standout shake-downs include: "Wig", "Housework", and "Girl from Ipanema Goes to Greenland" (whatta trip). But no, they aren't completely freaked, for this album features "drug-free altered mindscapetalk." Think on this with your feet, and together we'll create a Summer of Love.

What else does Pop Culture need?

*Letters*



*Our First Letter*

from Bob Lewis

To the good people of the seminary, let me bitch.

A class/lecture is not over until the prof gives us the thumb. This refers to the paper rattlers, book glappers and pen clickers. There's no fire.

Does every item of news have to be copied, so that every member of the community has to have his or her own copy? We've got a bulletin board!

Thank you.

# The Question (?) by Alex Crouch

In the second letter to the Corinthians - which, but for its intense subjectivity, could surpass Romans as an epitome of Christianity - St. Paul puts in words the stigmata he bore, and which all Christians should bear: "Who is weak and I am not weak?"

One day in the capital of Western Christendom, Rome, I and several other students were scurrying along the sidewalks, in that tourist haste to pass from one sight to another with minimal contact with distractions in between. We were dodging Romans, the way one does in big cities. There was an obstruction that complicated these maneuvers: a man lay at a crazy angle on the sidewalk, his left arm lying apathetically across his face, a vagrant apparently. An obstruction, yet a minor one, that left Romans and Americans unfazed. Two dogs stood by and licked his face.

When Hegel considered Schleiermacher's dictum that the essence of religion is a feeling of absolute dependence, he scoffed that of all creatures the most religious must be a dog. Maybe like those dogs (unclean animals in Jewish eyes) that nuzzled Lazarus as he died.

Another day, while waiting for an airplane in New York, I strolled through Gramercy Park. I walked beside a man whose shoes flopped open at each stuttering step, a pathetic mimicry of his mouth which hung down silently. And as he jerked along the tears flowed from his eyes and dispersed in the stubble of his jaw.

Often such images, caught in passing, are chiseled powerfully on the heart.

St. Paul adds another to his first rhetorical question: "Who is tripped up and I am not enraged?" This question joins in spirit the blood of numberless Abels in their cry, summed up in the plea quoted by Malachi (with less sympathy than it perhaps deserved): "Where is the God of justice?"

The groans of creation meet God's furious anger and form a cross. On that cross Calvin (and Pascal after him) says Christ bears continually the wrath of God. And God has highly exalted that beaten and punctured body to be the living one, who was dead and is now alive forever, the first and the last. Let Christians pray that their hearts be broken from their crust to lie unprotected on that cross, that as they suffer together with Christ they may be glorified together.

## P O E T R Y

Poetry Made Easy  
By Scott M. Douglas

I didn't yet have a head  
When Ogden Nash said,  
"Candy is dandy,  
But liquor is quicker."

Silver Mine  
by Tim Craven

Photography cannot invent a record of reality  
unless intent, a motive of causality  
can show  
that where the mind can see the eye can go.



# Calendar

## Even More Poetry

Cipher

By David Eck

"I am nothing," so he said.  
His eyes dropped down  
His body hung low as  
He dug into his pocket  
for a cigarette.

I hardly noticed him at first  
a discarded toy  
an old crumpled paper  
tucked away  
far from sight  
A terrible place to be  
for a boy of seventeen.

"I am nothing," so he said.  
And so he was ...  
At least in his eyes  
no hopes, no dreams, no ambitions  
Unable to see the good  
Unable to see the beauty  
that was hidden somewhere inside.

Somehow, I wish I could replace  
his tears with joy  
his pain with laughter  
his hurt with love  
his despair with hope  
But that's not an easy task  
with such a hard case.

"I am nothing," so he said.  
And so he was ...  
At least in his eyes  
God, how can I change that?  
For he is something  
in Your eyes  
and mine.

Get A Job

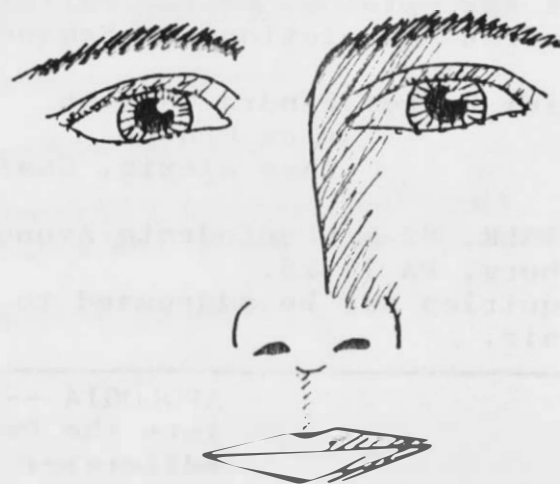
By Tim Craven

I dragged myself out of bed at 3 AM  
on the way to the hospital where a man was dying.  
"What a way to make a living!" I thought,  
"Get me outta here!"  
There are more fun ways to pay the rent.

Until one quiet evening after a peaceful day off  
playing with my little boy a week later  
I thought before I went to bed,  
"What an honor to be called."  
That someone whose husband was dying  
would take the time to call me,  
me, the unshaven stranger.  
It is a privilege I thank God I have.

The sad and searching eyes of the faithful  
tested to the breaking point  
the tears about to fall  
Oh, let those tears just fall!

And who will hold a candle to this face?  
The aging woman, face of stone, eyes of a baby  
Who will touch these people, if at all?  
Yes, what an honor to be called!



And Then I Saw His Picture On The Wall  
by Tim Craven

I went to visit a grieving widow  
and then I saw his picture on the wall  
and dropped my tea a little bit  
His large mustache, his groomed appendage  
seemed to jump off of the picture frame

And then I saw the dog in the corner  
staring with one eye up at the photograph  
as if a little paper man could come and play

And then I saw his picture on the wall  
but in the air the dead man danced upon the doggy's nose  
firing up the widow and encouraging me to leave

He darted like a rainbow  
from the window to the sea  
I think I saw him winking from the tea

So as I go again to call on widows in their grief  
I don't linger at photographs  
Such eulogy is brief!  
For though I know that God has saved a place for you and me,  
I do not like dead dancing men or sugar in my tea.



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All inquiries may be addressed to  
the chair.

SPECIAL ARTS  
AND LETTERS  
AWARD TO  
*Jean Grube*

APOLOGIA -- The editors regret that we ran into the Dreaded Deadline Doom. Neither the editors nor any of our mild-mannered reporters were able to write well-considered, responsible articles about the termination of Judy Schmidt's internship, given its happening on our deadline day. We will accept and respond to any and all submissions pertaining to the issues brought up in this case. We hope to offer a clear venue for any debates. Please put your ethical thinking caps on, and thanks for listening, er--reading.



# Calendar

- 
- October 19 12:15pm Admissions Committee (Board Room)  
4:00pm Student-Faculty Relations Comm. (Board Room)
- 20 CPE Interview Day
- 21 9:00am Friends of Seminary (Refectory)  
6:30pm Quest (Schmucker Lounge)
- 22 8:30am CPE Debriefings  
9:30am "  
10:30am "
- 24 Football Game vs. Mt. St. Mary's
- 28 Martin Luther Colloquium "Luther and Liberation Theology"
- November 2 3:30pm Academic Policies Comm. (Board Room)
- 4 9:00am Community Life (Board Room)  
6:30pm Quest (Schmucker Lounge)
- 7 Football Game at Philadelphia -- the Luther Bowl!!
- 9 1:30pm Field Education Comm. (Board Room)  
3:30pm Faculty Meeting (Board Room)
- 10-11 Maryland Synod Examining Panel
- 11 6:30pm Quest (Schmucker Lounge)
- 16 10:00am Paulssen Steering Comm. (Board Room)  
3:30pm Student Faculty Relations Comm. (Board Room)
- 18 6:30pm Quest (Schmucker Lounge)

The Social Committee  
presents...



The  
Seminary  
Polkafest

featuring  
the sounds  
of the



When:

Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>

Band plays  
from 8-11 pm

Place:

The Refectory  
(pending approval)



Heidelberg POLKA BAND

who will be accompanied by a collection  
of this Seminary's finest students.