

Issues for Teaching and Learning Theology in a Publicly Funded University

Robyn Horner

Abstract:¹ *The discipline of theology is often considered to play a pivotal role in the transmission of values in a Catholic University. Nevertheless, a number of issues are raised by this belief. What are values? What kinds of values are at stake in the teaching and learning of theology? And given that theology can be defined as "faith seeking understanding," do the values that identify a university as Catholic conflict with the values that also identify it as public? In this article, these questions are raised with regard to the specific mission of Australian Catholic University, and its training of teachers of Religious Education in Catholic Schools.*

Key Words: Catholic values; public values; tertiary education; student formation; Schwartz – Value Theory; theological education

In order to examine ways in which theology can contribute to a values-based professional education, some re-clarification — both of what values are, and of the tasks of theology — is necessary. This is especially important given the widespread confusion of values either with morals or with particular religious attitudes or beliefs, and because theology is often understood to be the locus for the promotion of specifically “religious” values. Within the context of Australian Catholic University (ACU), a lack of clarity regarding these issues is reflected in two closely-related sets of possible or perceived tensions: a tension between what it means to be a public university and what it means to be Catholic university; and a tension between theology as an academic research discipline and theology as a means of religious formation. With regard to professional development for specific areas such as teaching in Catholic schools or pastoral counselling in Church agencies, this second tension emerges in a very particular way in the apparent and generally misunderstood conflict between respect for the personal beliefs of students, and the nature of the beliefs explored in their required study of Catholic theology.² In this brief paper I propose to use the value theory proposed by Shalom H. Schwartz as a starting point for working through these tensions.

¹ This article was initially prepared as a paper for the Australian Catholic University Internal Forum *On Values-Based Professional Education*, June 12, 2003. My thanks to Mr. Bosco Rowland, for his assistance with Schwartz's value theory; Dr. James McLaren, for his comments on an earlier draft of this document, and Dr. Frances Baker, for her assistance with material on conscience.

² Of course, it might also emerge in the preparation of hospital personnel, but that area is beyond the scope of this paper.

WHAT ARE VALUES? USING SCHWARTZ'S VALUE THEORY AS A MEANS OF CLARIFICATION

Schwartz's work on values has been developed within the field of psychology, where it has also been specifically related to the construct of religiosity. His value theory is well accepted and has been empirically validated in over forty countries.³ For the purposes of this article, where the focus is not psychological but essentially philosophical, and where the method is not quantitative but clearly qualitative, I will draw implications from four foundational aspects of his work: his development of a definition of values; his categorisation of value-types; his articulation of the relationships between those value-types; and his findings to do with the relationship between religion or spirituality and values.

Schwartz basically defines values as "... desirable, transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives."⁴ In other words, values are motivational principles, and have less to do with how people *should* behave than simply what they need or want out of life.⁵ In this sense, Schwartz considers values to be related to three fundamental and universal goals: "biological needs, requisites of coordinated social interaction, and demands of group survival and functioning."⁶ Using a sophisticated technique known as Smallest Space Analysis, he then categorises values into ten motivational domains, which can be described using the following chart:⁷

Motivational Domain	Definition	Representative Values	
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over	Social Power Authority	Wealth

³ See, for example, Sonia Roccas and Shalom H. Schwartz, "Church-State Relations and the Association of Religiosity and Values: A Study of Catholics in Six Countries," *Cross-Cultural Research* 31.4 (1997): 356-375; Shalom H. Schwartz, "Are There Any Universal Aspects in the Structure and Contents of Human Values?" *Journal of Social Issues* 50 (1994): 19-45; "A Theory of Cultural Values and Some Implications for Work," *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 48 (1999): 23-47; "Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries," *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25 (1992): 1-65; "Value Priorities and Behaviour: Applying a Theory of Integrated Value Systems," *The Ontario Symposium: the Psychology of Values*, eds. J. M. Olson and M. P. Zanna, vol. 8 (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc, 1996) 1-24; Shalom H. Schwartz and W. Bilsky, "Toward a Psychological Structure of Human Values," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53 (1987): 550-62; "Toward a Psychological Structure of Human Values: Extensions and Cross-Cultural Replications," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58 (1990): 878-91; Shalom H. Schwartz and S. Huismans, "Value Priorities in Four Western Religions," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 58 (1995): 88-107; Shalom H. Schwartz and L. Sagiv, "Identifying Culture Specifics in the Content and Structure of Values," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 26 (1995): 92-116. For a useful overview of value theories and Schwartz, see Meg J. Rohan, "A Rose by any Name? The Values Construct," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 4.3 (2000): 255-77.

⁴ Schwartz, "Value Priorities," 2.

⁵ Rohan, "A Rose," 264.

⁶ Schwartz, "Value Priorities," 2.

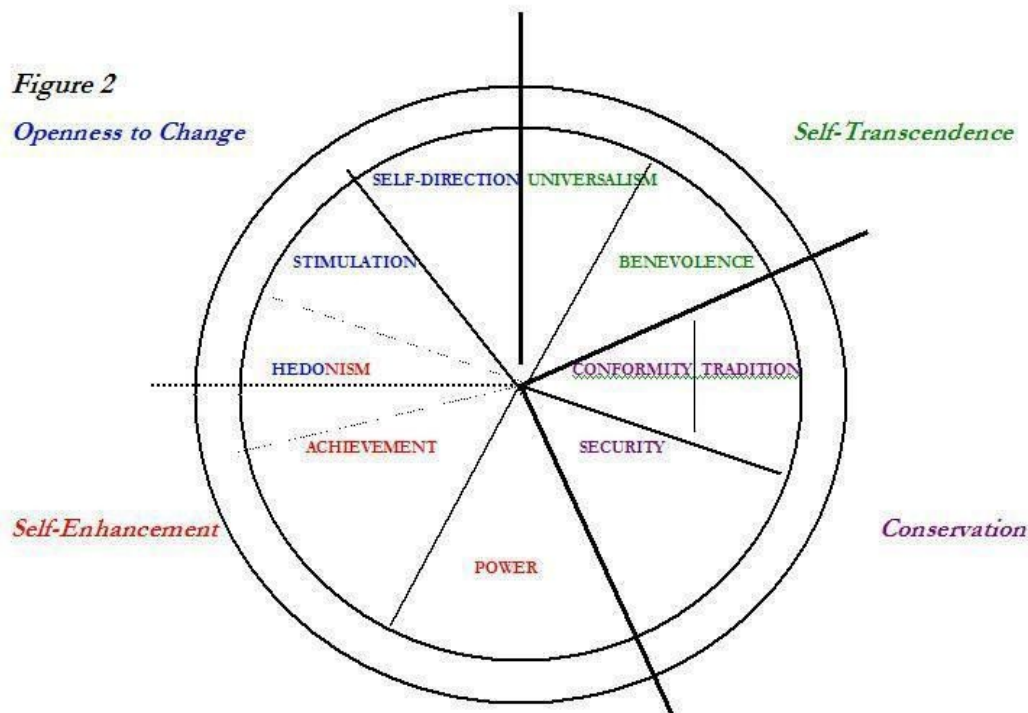
⁷ The technique of Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) is described by Schwartz and Lilach Sagiv in the following manner: "To assess the findings in a sample, an SSA of the intercorrelations among the 56 original values in the survey must be performed. The SSA provides a two-dimensional spatial representation (map) of relations among values.... Each value is represented as a point. The more positive the empirical correlation between any two values, the closer together the pair of points that represents them." They then describe how the values are divided into regions. Schwartz and Sagiv, "Identifying Culture-Specifics," 96-97. Figures 1 and 2 are constructed on the basis of Rohan, "A Rose," 261-262 and Schwartz, "Value Priorities," 3, 5.

	people and resources.		
Achievement	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.	Success Capability	Ambition Influence
Hedonism	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.	Pleasure	Enjoying Life
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.	Daring A Varied Life	An Exciting Life
Self-Direction	Independent thought and action-choosing, creating, exploring.	Creativity Freedom Independence	Curiosity Choosing Own Goals
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.	Broadmindedness Wisdom Social Justice Equality	A World at Peace A World of Beauty Unity with Nature Protecting the Environment
Benevolence	Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact.	Helpfulness Honesty Forgiveness	Loyalty Responsibility
Tradition	Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.	Humility Acceptance of my Portion in Life	Devotion Respect for Tradition Moderation
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.	Politeness Obedience	Self-discipline Honor of Parents and Elders
Security	Safety, harmony and stability of society, of	Family Security National Security	Cleanliness Reciprocation of

	relationships, and of self.	Social Order	Favors
--	-----------------------------	--------------	--------

Figure 1

On the basis of the Smallest Space Analysis the domains and values are grouped and interrelated according to the following structure:



Schwartz: Theoretical model of relations among ten motivational types of value

This diagram shows the domains and their values divided into four sections (the border between the self-enhancement and the openness to change sections is porous), each reflecting two generally opposing sets of what Schwartz calls "higher order" value types: openness to change, which is opposed to conservation; and self-transcendence, which is opposed to self-enhancement.⁸ The domains and their values are related to one another in the following ways: any single domain might (but will not always) be associated with another domain adjacent to it; however, this association tends to decrease as we move further around the circle away from that domain. So, for example, moving clockwise from values represented in the security domain, these might be held together with values in the power domain, and perhaps also with those from achievement. It is possible, though less likely, that they will be held together with values in the hedonism domain. However, as

⁸ Schwartz, "Value Priorities," 4-5: "Two major value conflicts that structure value systems have been found in over 95% of samples I have studied in 41 countries (Schwartz, 1994). This enables us to conceptualize the total structure of value systems as organized on two basic dimensions. Each ... is a polar opposition between two higher order value types." Meg Rohan, in her work on Schwartz, renames these higher order types with labels she judges to be less open to evaluative discrimination: focus on opportunity is opposed to focus on organization; and focus on social context outcomes is opposed to focus on individual outcomes. Rohan, "A Rose," 260: "Use of these [new] labels not only may avoid evaluative misinterpretation (e.g., it may seem that openness to change is somehow better than conservation) but also may direct attention to the myriad of ways in which these motivations can be expressed."

indicated by the general oppositional pairs of higher order value types, domains completely opposed on the circle are unlikely to be held simultaneously by the one person.⁹ Values falling within the security domain are usually completely opposed to those in the stimulation domain, or taking another example, values in the conformity/tradition domain to those in the hedonism domain.

In a 1995 report linking the results of two studies that related value priorities to religiosity, Schwartz and Sipke Huismans found a positive correlation between religiosity and the motivational domains of tradition and conformity. In other words, high scores on religiosity tended to be associated with high scores on tradition and conformity. So, for example, people who scored highly on religiosity tended to have values such as humility, acceptance of one's portion in life, devotion, respect for tradition, and moderation, as well as politeness, obedience, self-discipline, and honour of parents and elders. The studies also showed weaker but still positive correlations between religiosity and the domains of benevolence and security. Religiosity was therefore also, but less strongly, associated with values such as helpfulness, honesty, forgiving-ness, loyalty, and responsibility, as well as family security, national security, social order, cleanliness, and reciprocation of favours. In general, religious individuals tended not to hold values from the hedonism domain, such as pleasure, or enjoying life, or the stimulation domain (daring, a varied life, or an exciting life). Given the institutional and or cultural profiles of some religious traditions, the high correlation of religiosity with tradition and conformity is perhaps easy to understand, as are the positive correlations with benevolence and security. What is perhaps surprising, nevertheless, is the negative correlation between religiosity and some of the values within the domain of universalism: broadmindedness, wisdom, social justice, equality, a world at peace, a world of beauty, unity with nature, and protecting the environment. The researchers note this negative correlation, suggesting that " ... the findings support the view that the particularism of religions ... reduces the importance attributed to concern for *all* others...", or further, that " ... the emphasis of Universalism values on using own judgment and on accepting diversity may make it difficult for persons guided strongly by Universalism values to develop or maintain a commitment to established religions, because the latter emphasize acceptance of authoritative truth by the whole religious community."¹⁰ Importantly, the authors also note the potential limitations of measuring the religiosity construct.¹¹ These limitations relate to whether a uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional view of religiosity is taken, to the context in which the study is undertaken, and consequently to whether or not the prophetic, mystical or spiritual aspects of religiosity can be taken into account.¹²

⁹ Rohan, "A Rose," 261-62; Schwartz, "Value Priorities," 6.

¹⁰ Schwartz and Huismans, "Value Priorities and Religiosity," 102. The authors earlier hypothesise that "The correspondence of the selflessness of Universalism values with religious teachings, especially in the prophetic tradition, might yield a positive association with religiosity. On the other hand, a negative association might follow from other aspects of religion. Despite universalistic goals and rhetoric (Burt 1957), religions often inculcate a particularistic outlook that directs selflessness to members of the in-group (Glock, 1973; O'Dea 1966; Wuthnow 1991), whereas Universalism values emphasize concern for *all* people and nature" (93).

¹¹ In the two studies discussed in the article, religiosity was measured differently: in the first study, it was measured by graded responses to the question, "how religious, if at all, do you consider yourself to be?" (97); and in the second study, it was measured according to the common strategy of frequency of church attendance (100).

¹² On the relevance of context, see Roccas and Schwartz, "Church-State Relations." With regard to the prophetic, mystical, or spiritual, see Schwartz and Huismans, "Value Priorities and Religiosity," 93, 96-97, 100, 104-05. See also Schwartz, "Universals," 1-65.

Schwartz initially hypothesised that spirituality would manifest itself as a separate motivational domain, a hypothesis which was not supported by the research.¹³ Nevertheless, he found that spiritual values can be located within the motivational domains of benevolence, universalism, and tradition.¹⁴ This becomes important in the present context because some of the values in the universalism domain—particularly wisdom, social justice, equality, and a world at peace—are biblical values explicitly affirmed by Catholicism. If positive correlations between universalism and religiosity do not emerge, it may be because they need to be approached through the prism of spirituality, and or a multidimensional measure of religiosity.¹⁵ Two additional points must be noted. First, Schwartz's theory has chiefly been explored only in relation to western religious traditions (Jewish and Christian, with studies including a range of individual Christian denominations).¹⁶ Second, it must be kept in mind that these religious traditions are grouped together not in terms of beliefs but in terms of values. There is no attempt to suggest that having shared values equates with having shared beliefs.¹⁷

Schwartz's conceptualisation of values is a helpful tool for coming to an understanding of how values relate to each other through the motivational domains. His research into the relationship between values and religiosity is evidently an exploration of the values held by religious people, rather than a study of the values explicitly espoused by religious traditions and accessible through the study of religious texts. Nevertheless, this aspect of his work is useful in that it gives us a window onto the sorts of values that might be brought to the teaching or learning of religion as theology. The relationship between the values of those engaged with theology and the expressed values of the tradition under consideration, where they differ significantly, will be addressed as the need arises. However, I would argue that for the most part, a textual analysis of the expressed values of Catholicism would show them to be similarly located within the domains of universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security.¹⁸ These domains are shaded in Figure 3, below. I would further argue that tensions sometimes emerge between values in these domains, tensions which reflect legitimately competing goods. In my application of Schwartz's theory, I will use the word "tension" to indicate a possible degree of dissonance between values that can still, nonetheless, be simultaneously maintained, in distinction

¹³ Schwartz, "Universals," 10-11, 23-26, 36, 38-39.

¹⁴ Schwartz suggests two reasons for this: "First, people may find meaning through the pursuit of other types of values. A spiritual life, meaning in life, unity with nature, and inner harmony emerged frequently in the regions of benevolence and universalism values. Detachment and acceptance of my portion in life appeared frequently in tradition regions, suggesting that tradition provides an alternative source of meaning. Second, rather than a single, universal spirituality type, there may be a number of distinct types of spirituality, each consisting of a different subset of specific values." Schwartz, "Universals," 38.

¹⁵ This may be because of the limitations of the constructs of religiosity, or it may be, as the authors suggest, because some aspects of universalism conflict with the tradition and conformity values. Initial research on the potential distinctions between religiosity and spirituality and their relationships with Schwartz's value theory has been proposed in Bosco Rowland, "The Relationship between Schwartz's Value Types and a Transcendent Spirituality," Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology, Monash University, 2001.

¹⁶ Jews, Roman Catholics, Calvinist Protestants, Greek Orthodox, and Lutherans. See Schwartz and Huismans, "Value Priorities and Religiosity," 88-107.

¹⁷ Much of the material on inter-religious dialogue focuses on the common element of values and the ethical positions that flow from these values. See, for example, the work of Paul Knitter on global responsibility as it is outlined in Brennan R. Hill, Paul Knitter, and William Madges, *Faith, Religion and Theology*, rev. and exp. ed. (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2000). The advantage of drawing on this work is that the dialogue includes Islam as well as traditions such as Hinduism and Buddhism.

¹⁸ Such an analysis is beyond the scope of this article. It would, however, form a useful theoretical expansion of the study.

from values that are opposed outright. These positions will form the basis of subsequent discussion.

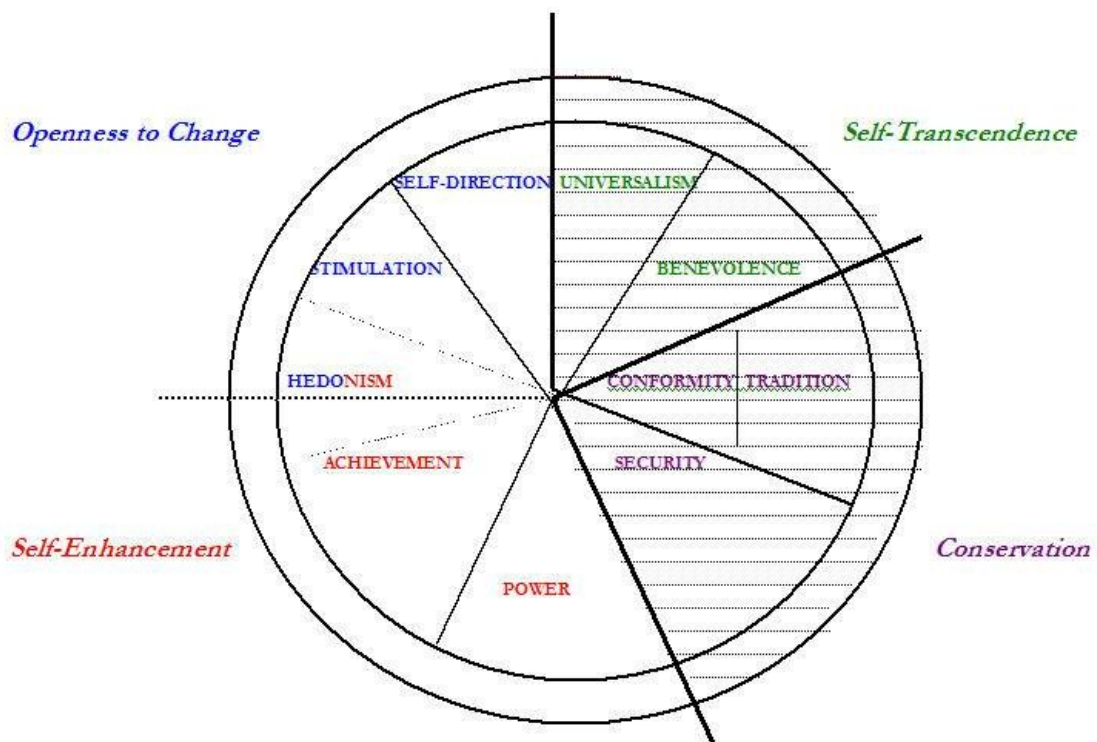


Figure 3



Religious and Spiritual Values

CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND VALUES

In the twelfth century theology was famously defined by Anselm in the *Proslogium* as “faith seeking understanding.” This definition is further specified in a now classic text by the contemporary Anglican theologian, John Macquarrie, who maintains that: “theology may be defined as the study which, through participation in and reflection upon a religious faith, seeks to express the content of this faith in the clearest and most coherent language available.”¹⁹ This view of theology takes into account a number of factors. It situates theology within the life of practice of the religious faith concerned (“through participation in ... a religious faith”). In other words, theology is undertaken from inside a religious tradition, and has implications for the ongoing participation of the believer in faith. At the same time, theology is not simply a blind repetition of religious dogmas. Instead, to engage in theology requires that the believer not only reflect upon faith, but attempt to express the content of that faith clearly and coherently. Macquarrie goes on to say that theology in this way subjects faith to thought, and this is thought which is often descriptive and interpretative, but which may also be critical.²⁰ Here I might broaden Macquarrie's

¹⁹ John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, Rev. ed. (London: SCM, 1977) 1.

²⁰ Macquarrie, *Principles* 2.

definition a little more by suggesting, in line with Catholic theologians as different as Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner, that the task of theology is such that it must be undertaken anew by every generation.²¹ For faith to be expressed clearly and coherently requires that historical, cultural, philosophical, linguistic and other contexts be repeatedly and seriously taken into account. In other words, theology is essentially a hermeneutical activity.²²

As a religious or spiritual activity, theology could be expected to reflect those values associated with religiosity and spirituality. Nevertheless, as a critical, intellectual activity, theology might also be expected to stand in critical relation to these values, and I suggest that this happens in three ways. Theologians might incorporate values from other motivational domains that are sometimes considered in tension with religious or spiritual values. Alternatively, different theologians might incorporate values that are within the self-transcendence and conservation sections but that are nevertheless still in tension with each other. Giving an example involving both instances, theology might be undertaken by persons with values in the self-direction domain (such as freedom, independence, and curiosity), the universalism domain (such as broadmindedness, or wisdom) or the benevolence domain (such as honesty), any or all of which might potentially be in tension with values in the conformity domain (such as obedience).²³ From a different angle, theologians might nevertheless also “stand guard,” as it were, of what are considered to be authentically religious or spiritual values. Given that values in the security domain might easily become associated with values in the power domain, for example, part of the role of theologians might be to identify and correct this slippage. Too great an emphasis on values from the self-direction domain could similarly be seen to damage the emphasis on faith as a communal concern.²⁴ It seems to me that where legitimately religious or spiritual values are seen to be competing, it is the task of theology to ensure that the tension that is produced between them is a creative one.

²¹ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Presence and Thought: An Essay on the Religious Philosophy of Gregory of Nyssa*, trans. Marc Sebanc (San Francisco: Ignatius Press/Communio Books, 1995) 12; Karl Rahner, “The Development of Dogma,” trans. Cornelius Ernst, *Theological Investigations*, vol. I (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1969) 39-77.

²² That theology is hermeneutics is underlined by John Paul II in his comment: “... theology seeks an understanding of revealed truth whose authentic interpretation is entrusted to the Bishops of the Church....” John Paul II, *Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities (Ex Corde Ecclesiae)*, 1990, Available: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15-81990_ex-corde-ecclesiae_en.html, 21 April 2003. In other words, there is an explicit recognition that revelation requires interpretation, and authority in this activity is given to the bishops who, in turn, dialogue with theologians. See Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) 139-158.

²³ This has become a particular issue for theology in the example of the debate over the role of conscience. The history and scope of this debate is set out very clearly in Linda Hogan, *Confronting the Truth: Conscience in the Catholic Tradition* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2000). Hogan maintains that there are two competing paradigms within the Catholic Church: one that maintains that conscience is “the most fundamental and directly personal way that the individual apprehends moral goodness and truth,” and therefore that which “must always be obeyed,” and another maintaining that “conscience will be in agreement with church teaching.” Hogan, *Confronting the Truth* 2. The values underlying these positions at their best might include freedom (self-direction), wisdom (universalism) and honesty (benevolence) in the former instance, and obedience (conformity), respect for tradition, and humility (tradition) in the latter. Interestingly enough, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* explicitly affirms the freedom of conscience of persons within a Catholic university (See Part II: General Norms, Article 2, §4).

²⁴ Continuing with the example of conscience, it is possible that proponents of each position might also be motivated by other values. The person arguing for the priority of conscience might also be motivated by the desire for daring (stimulation) or independence (self-direction). Similarly the person arguing for the absolute submission of conscience to Church teaching might be motivated by the desire for social order (security) or authority (power).

Broadmindedness and wisdom, for example, are not to be sacrificed to devotion, respect for tradition, or obedience, but to be held in positive tension with them. It is this kind of creative tension that might be exhibited in the working out of questions to do with liberation theology. The values embedded in the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching (social justice, equality, helpfulness, honesty, and responsibility), so strongly a part of the proclamation of Christian faith in the writings of John Paul II, can stand in a positive rather than a negative tension with the values embedded in a call to adherence to Catholic dogma (humility, devotion, respect for tradition, moderation, obedience, self-discipline, honour of those in authority, and social order), which is also a strong marker of his pontificate. These sets of values do not necessarily cancel one another out, but instead focus theological attention on the question of balance. Similarly, it is possible to provide historical examples where the Church has been seen to shift in its emphasis on one or the other of the self-transcendence-conservation sections. Vatican II would probably be characterised as a moment in Church history where the emphasis was on values of self-transcendence. Fifty years earlier, however, during the period known as the “modernist crisis,” the focus of the Church was on values of conservation. That two such different moments can emerge from the same Church tradition suggests less that these value-sets are necessarily in competition with one another to constitute authentic identity, than that the inherent tension between values that represent competing goods is itself part of that identity. In this way, the Church would reflect something of the complexity of the polarities that constitute human existence as a whole.²⁵ It would, further, be naturally expected that theology would reflect something of this tension, and, in fact, it is partly owing to this tension that theological research can be undertaken at all.

Potential Value Tensions in the Australian Catholic University Context

In the introduction I spoke of the need to clarify both the nature of values and the nature of theology, given, I observed, the confusion in society generally of values either with morals or with particular religious attitudes or beliefs, and because theology is often understood to be the locus for the promotion of specifically “religious” values. It should be clear that values and morals are to be understood very differently: what motivates a person to act may have nothing to do with that person's understanding of or desire to act in accordance with what is judged to be (morally) good. It should also be clear that having values as such does not determine a person as religious. To explore the realm of values with students, as particular issues arise, may be a helpful exercise in values-clarification, but it is not yet to identify any particular values as more worthy, or more supportive of the religious affiliation of the University, than any others. And if theology is to be seen as the locus for the promotion of specifically “religious” values, then the inherent tensions in competing religious values need to be articulated and explored, if theology is to be any more than one-dimensional. In the introduction I also spoke of a lack of clarity in these matters being potentially reflected in two closely-related sets of tensions: between what it means to be a public university and what it means to be Catholic; and between theology as a means of religious formation and theology as an academic research discipline, particularly as this emerges in regard to the preparation for the professions that ACU undertakes. It is to each of these areas that I now turn.

²⁵ See chapter three of Macquarrie, *Principles*.

(i) To be a Public University and to be a Catholic University

Quite recently the Vice-Chancellor of ACU, Professor Peter Sheehan, delivered a paper entitled "On Being a Public and a Catholic University at One and the Same Time."²⁶ This is not the first attempt by those within the University to articulate and explain the possible and perceived tensions between these aspects of the University's identity, and I am quite sure that the question will continue to be explored for some years to come. With that noted, as well as with the Vatican document *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* in mind, what I offer here should be read as a small contribution to ongoing discussion regarding that issue.²⁷

ACU's mission statement contains within it commitments to a number of values, some expressed more clearly as values than others. These include commitments to "quality in teaching, research, and service," "free inquiry," "academic integrity," attendance "to all that is of concern to human beings," the bringing of "a spiritual perspective" to higher education, making "a specific contribution to its local, national and international communities," being explicit about engaging "the social, ethical, and religious dimensions of the questions it faces," being "guided by a fundamental concern for justice and equity, and ... the dignity of all human beings," and providing excellence in higher education "for its entire diversified and dispersed student body." If I may re-express these values in the terms of Schwartz's analysis, with the caution that they are slightly modified by the fact of their being corporate and not just individual aims, the University is committed to values of: success, capability, and influence (from the achievement domain), reflected in the pursuit of quality and excellence; creativity, freedom, independence, curiosity, and the choosing of one's own goals (from the self-direction domain), reflected in the pursuit of free inquiry and academic integrity; broadmindedness, wisdom, social justice, equality (from the universalism domain), reflected in attention to all that is of concern to human beings, being guided by a fundamental concern for justice and equity and the dignity of all, and bringing a spiritual perspective to higher education; helpfulness, and responsibility (from the benevolence domain), reflected in making a specific contribution to its local, national and international communities; and respect for tradition (from the tradition domain), reflected in being explicit about engaging the social, ethical, and religious dimensions of the questions it faces, particularly in terms of its inspiration in the Catholic intellectual and social traditions. For the ease of the reader, I have set these values out in tabular form below.

Motivational Domain	University's Values	Schwartz's Values
Achievement	pursuit of quality excellence	success capability influence
Self-direction	pursuit of free inquiry academic integrity	creativity freedom independence curiosity choosing of own goals

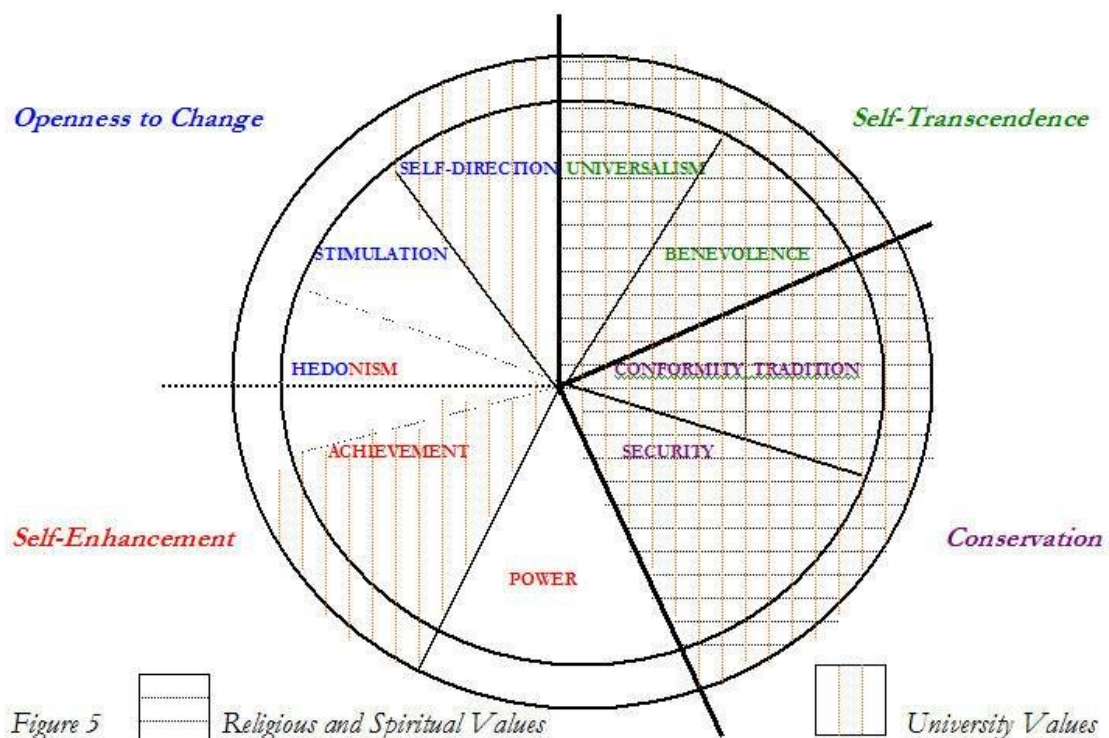
²⁶ Paper delivered at Brisbane Campus graduation on April 9, 2003, and distributed to staff of the University on April 15, 2003.

²⁷ John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

Universalism	attention to all of concern to human beings being guided by concern for justice, equity and dignity of all bringing a spiritual perspective to higher education	broadmindedness wisdom social justice equality
Benevolence	making a specific contribution to local, national, international communities	helpfulness responsibility
Tradition	being explicit about engaging social, ethical, religious dimensions of questions re-inspiration in Catholic intellectual, social traditions	respect for tradition

Figure 4

It will be apparent that not all the expressed values of the University are coterminous with values correlated with religiosity or spirituality, although many of them are. The overlap is illustrated in Figure 5.



Nevertheless, it could be argued that a university is a social, rather than a religious institution, and that it is legitimate for a university to incorporate other values. A problem might arise, however, if values associated with the University as a public institution were directly to contradict religious values upheld by the University as Catholic. Values relating to the achievement domain, for example, might be understood to be contrary to the expressly religious values found in the benevolence domain. The potential conflict

between achievement and benevolence could be lessened, nonetheless, by the framing of achievement goals by social, rather than simply individual, outcomes. Achievement would thus receive its proper meaning from self-transcendence rather than self-enhancement. This particular shaping of values might actually be a marker of the distinctiveness of the University. Quality of delivery (efficiency, competency) and excellence in standards (achieving goals, hard work, having an impact) would be seen as desirable in this context only when they were underpinned by a sense of service and moderated by genuine concern for persons. One way in which further research into the Catholic nature of the University could be carried out would be to examine whether this is simply rhetoric or whether it is the case that achievement goals in faculties and individual schools are actually reframed in the context of the mission of the University. Of particular interest in the current context, however, is the conflict that might be seen or suspected to occur between the upholding of self-direction and universalism values, in particular, and values related to tradition, conformity, and security. Is it possible for the University to maintain simultaneously its inspiration in the Catholic intellectual tradition, which is concretely expressed in close ties with the Catholic Church at a number of levels, *and* its commitment to creativity, freedom, independence, curiosity, and the choosing of one's own goals, broadmindedness, and wisdom? In many areas, it is easy to give a positive response to this question.²⁸ However, where the University explicitly engages religious and ethical questions, it is more difficult to make an assessment. It is my view that the question can best be considered in the context of the following issue.

(ii) Theology as an Academic Research Discipline and Theology as a Means of Religious Formation

When theology was defined, above, it was noted that it is a reflection on faith from within the perspective of faith. This immediately raises the possibility of a conflict in values, for if theology can only be done from within the perspective of faith, then students who study theology must necessarily participate in the faith that they are studying. Such a requirement for religious faith would strongly violate a commitment to free inquiry and academic integrity. For this very reason, there has been heated debate in Australia over many years about the appropriateness of the location of theology in a university context. Some universities were explicitly founded on the inviolable distinction between church and State and hence are constitutionally unable to teach theology.²⁹ The teaching of Christian theology was, traditionally, largely left in the hands of the churches, although even then, the question of potential indoctrination was still seen to be an issue. When the *Melbourne College of Divinity* was constituted by an Act of the Victorian Parliament in 1910, the legislators quite explicitly deemed that students of the College should not be submitted to any "religious test."³⁰ In other words, no student could be required to confess to Christian faith as a prerequisite for participation in or completion of a degree offered by the College, in spite of the fact that the churches were to be responsible for the College's

²⁸ This is particularly so where *Ex Corde Ecclesia* underlines, on many occasions, the commitment of the Catholic university to the pursuit of truth: "It is the honour and responsibility of a Catholic University to consecrate itself without reserve to *the cause of truth*" (§4); "It is in the context of the impartial search for truth that the relationship between faith and reason is brought to light and meaning" (§5); "... by its Catholic character, a University is made more capable of conducting an *impartial* search for truth, a search that is neither subordinated to nor conditioned by particular interests of any kind" (§7).

²⁹ The University of Melbourne is a prime example, where the teaching of "divinity" was expressly forbidden.

³⁰ Parliament of Victoria, *Melbourne College of Divinity Act 1910 as Amended 1 March 1998*, 1910, http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/12d/M/ACT02410/0_1.html, 21 April 2003.

functioning and regulation. The situation in 2003, where some universities are able to offer degrees or units in theology and where a number of private theological institutions are now in receipt of Commonwealth funding, suggests that further developments may have been made in terms of the question. Given that while there is renewed contemporary academic interest in the question of religion, there is a simultaneous rise in the phenomenon of secularisation, it is unlikely that these developments have been to overlook completely the thorny issue of indoctrination. More likely, in my view, is that for reasons emerging from considerations of equity, some accommodation has been made with regard to the presuppositions of theological study. For the study of theology to be undertaken without the requirement of religious faith on the part of the student, means that theology's traditional emphasis on "faith seeking understanding" has *de facto* if not *de jure* shifted to "understanding faith from the perspective of a faith community" to which the student may or may not belong. This is not the fullness of theology in the contemplative, integrated, medieval sense, but neither is it simply the study of religion as sociology, philosophy, or anthropology. Theology undertaken in this way is an entering into the thought-world of a religious tradition, and with an imaginative suspension of disbelief, an attempt to understand something of the complexity of the meaningfulness of that world. It retains its integrity as a descriptive system, with its own beliefs and values, without the threat that students might be forced to accept its religious conclusions. It could be argued that it is only when the teaching of theology is disengaged in this way from the automatic acceptance of beliefs *as personally held beliefs*, that it can have a justified place in a university curriculum. This involves the explicit bracketing, perhaps, of religious values such as devotion or obedience, although students who hold these values in relation to Catholic tradition are not required personally to abandon them any more than other students are required to pick them up. These values instead simply remain beyond the realms of classroom and assessment. Importantly in this regard, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* affirms the need to respect both individual conscience and religious liberty.³¹

To focus solely, however, on the clash of values that may arise as a result of the promotion of free inquiry and academic integrity in opposition to devotion and obedience, does not really do justice to the study of theology. This is because such a focus lends unwelcome support to the view that theology is a monochromatic and essentially unscholarly discipline, involving the memorisation of answers to questions that have already been definitively settled in advance. In the earlier discussion of religious values and theology, it was observed that theology often works within a delicate balance of value-emphases. Theological research has a valid place in the domain of intellectual enquiry because theological debate continues, and because new issues, experiences, and cultural, historical, literary and philosophical perspectives emerge to unsettle old ways of understanding. To make this claim is not to undervalue tradition (or Tradition). On the contrary, as Balthasar notes:

Being faithful to tradition most definitely does not consist ... of a literal repetition and transmission of the philosophical and theological theses that one imagines lie hidden in time and in the contingencies of history. Rather, being faithful to tradition consists much more of imitating our Fathers in the faith with respect to their attitude of intimate reflection and their effort of audacious creation, which are the necessary preludes to true spiritual fidelity. If we study the past, it is not in the hope of drawing from it formulas doomed in advance to sterility or with the intention of readapting out-of-date solutions. We are asking history to teach us the acts and deeds of the Church, who presents [its]

³¹ John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

treasure of divine revelation, ever new and ever unexpected, to every generation, and who knows how, in the face of every new problem, to turn the fecundity of the problem to good account with a rigor that never grows weary and a spiritual agility that is never dulled.³²

Theologians operate with a range of values that in Schwartz's terms are represented largely across the domains of universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. Further, as a hermeneutical activity, theology results in range of perspectives on the meanings of beliefs, many of which are held in tension, some of which are appropriate for particular times in history and others of which retain a freshness and a meaningfulness across centuries. To imagine that outside the explicit protection of students from indoctrination, which is an important factor in the university setting, theology could only function as an ideology, is to underestimate the scope, status, and strength of the whole realm of values to which Christian faith is committed, as well as to ignore theology's fundamentally hermeneutic methodology.

A further point must be made in relation to this question of theology as religious formation, and this time with regard to respect for the personal beliefs of students. In keeping with values appropriate to a university that emerge from the self-direction and universalism domains, and, indeed, with *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, it is important not only that students not be forced to accept particular beliefs but that they also be allowed to maintain their own beliefs and belief-systems. This seems obvious. At the same time, the benefit of freedom in terms of religious beliefs is the source of much misunderstanding in the theological classroom. This is because some students come to theology with the view that it is simply a site for the promotion of any and all beliefs. They feel perfectly entitled, with that predisposition, to explain doctrines of Christian theology in terms of their own personal beliefs or belief systems, which may or may not be Christian, and which may or may not have been subject to critical or academic scrutiny.³³ There are a number of issues here. First, while students are entitled to their own beliefs, and are not required to accept Christian beliefs as personally valid, the area under consideration in many units in Christian theology is—quite explicitly—beliefs pertaining to Christian faith. Second, while experience is an important resource for theological reflection, it is only one of six suggested sources for this reflection, and must be balanced in terms of the others if theology is not to become merely autobiographical.³⁴ Third, the kind of study undertaken in a university setting is academic in nature, and requires students to grasp difficult concepts and conceptual frameworks, and to enter new linguistic worlds. This is as true of theology as it is true of mathematics or business or biology. For students who have had a Christian background, in particular, the new demand for adult conceptual rigour in the area of Christian faith is sometimes initially received with some reluctance, either because it is personally challenging or because it is intellectually challenging. While this demands some sensitivity to the emotional demands that may be placed on students in this setting,

³² Balthasar, *Presence and Thought*, 12.

³³ This ranges from students who would maintain a supposedly critical stance in relation to Catholic tradition to students who would maintain a commitment to Catholicism in a very "traditional" way. A real example in the former category: a student who explained that "God" is simply another way of understanding his "soul." A real example in the latter category: a student who publicly expressed her commitment to Catholicism in terms of a close adherence to doctrine on sexual matters, but who felt perfectly entitled to deny Catholic teaching on the possibility of hell. In each case, the problem emerged from confusion about the role of one's own beliefs in theological study. Students are free to make judgments about the meaningfulness of Catholic beliefs for their own lives, but if they are explicating Catholic beliefs, need to be aware of what they are, and how they have been meaningfully understood within the tradition.

³⁴ Macquarrie, *Principles* 1-15.

there can be no backing away from the need for students to approach theology as an intellectual task.

There are practical situations, however, in which the question of students' beliefs is problematic, and this is where the University is quite explicitly preparing students for professions where Catholic faith may well be assumed on the part of the student by a potential employer. This is particularly the case in the preparation of teachers to work in Catholic schools. While not all teachers in Catholic schools are Catholic, or even Christian, there is usually a minimum requirement for employees in this setting to "support the ethos" of the Catholic school. However, where teachers in these schools undertake to teach Religious Education, this undertaking involves an explicit engagement of primary and secondary students in the life of a specific faith community and an exploration with students of the beliefs of that community. Such a task is very demanding, especially in a contemporary context. It requires of teachers a high degree of integrity in their very consent to teach in this area.³⁵ Moreover, it requires that teachers have undergone some personal development in faith, at least to the stage where faith no longer involves simply the passive repetition of beliefs, but an authentic attempt to understand and reflect further on the meaning of those beliefs.³⁶ Finally, it requires that teachers have a clear understanding of what respect for the beliefs of their own students means.³⁷ While these factors do not alter the commitment to free inquiry that characterises the University, and do not affect the teaching and learning of theology in the terms that it is set out above, it

³⁵ By this I mean not that teachers should have to be subjected to a religious test, but that due recognition be accorded to the seriousness of their decision to teach (or not to teach) Religious Education. In other words, no teacher should have to teach Religious Education unless they feel that they can do so freely and with a sense of their own integrity.

³⁶ There are a number of issues that emerge from this statement. First, there is the question of development in faith. While the research of James Fowler has not gone entirely unquestioned, it seems reasonable to assert - on the basis of his and other evidence - that some development in faith occurs. Second, there is the question of the extent to which teachers need to undertake explicitly theological reflection. Teachers of primary students need to deal with faith concepts in age-appropriate ways, and it is sometimes suggested that this precludes those teachers from needing to acquire a level of theological sophistication. I would argue that the alleged need for simplicity at this level does not exempt the teacher from having to wrestle with complicated problems. A lack of theological skill can result in: i) teachers who are not actually able to teach Religious Education in an age-appropriate way (for example, difficult concepts cannot be meaningfully translated for children but are written off as "mystery"; questions from children cannot be answered satisfactorily); ii) teachers whose attempts to explain formulations of belief actually draw inevitably on their own severe misunderstandings (beliefs are explained in superstitious terms, for example, baptism is seen as important so that a child who dies does not go to "limbo"); and iii) teachers who do developmental damage to children by characterising Catholic beliefs in such a way that understanding cannot grow with the child (for example, the two creation stories in Genesis are handled so poorly that the older child experiences irresolvable conflict when the concept of evolution is raised in science class, and feels compelled either to reject faith or to reject science). Third, there is the issue of how teachers are to be qualified to teach in different subject areas. It seems ludicrous to argue that secondary teachers, for example, should not possess a tertiary degree, or at least a major, in the subject area they choose to teach. If this is the case for physics or mathematics, it is logical that it should also be the case for theology in Religious Education. And while primary teachers are required to be generalists in a range of areas, and may not undertake quite the same degree of specialisation as their secondary counterparts, they still need to draw on sophisticated skills in each learning area in order to integrate appropriate and holistically-conceived curriculum development with developmental concerns. It is patently not the case that primary teachers only need to think as primary students. The need for the study of child psychology is a case in point.

³⁷ It means that teachers must not be involved in the practice of indoctrination. It means that teachers must deal with the presence of different religious traditions or an expressed lack of a faith commitment by students in their classrooms in sensitive, positive, and respectful ways. It means that when the study of other religious traditions is undertaken, it is done without caricature, with respect for the complexity of other faiths, and with an understanding of the ways in which Catholicism has sought to relate itself to world religions. But it also means that teachers give due recognition to *the legitimate and explicit context* in which they find themselves, which involves as their primary task the communication of living Christian faith, in its explicitly Catholic form.

does mean that students must be encouraged to face the moral question of whether or not they can authentically participate in education in faith. In this way, the engagement with values that is highlighted in the Mission Statement of the University will be more than an intellectual exercise, and will demand lifelong attentiveness.

Values-Based Education in Theology

In the previous section of this paper I examined the issue of possible tension in the University's identification as both public and Catholic, particularly through the prism of the teaching of theology. The tension can be resolved, I argue, by the University's ongoing commitment to freedom of inquiry, and by the recognition that theological research and education is actually characterised by a positive pluralism of values. In this final section I propose to outline in point form some of the ways in which the teaching and learning of theology serves as an opportunity for values clarification and for the promotion of values seen as central to the University's mission.

- (1) Theology, like several other disciplines within the University, provides an appropriate setting for ongoing values clarification with students. Studies that emphasise questions of human meaning are particularly well suited to the sustained opening up of questions to do with values. However, all studies can potentially serve to focus students' attention on the values that they bring to personal and professional situations.
- (2) Theological education is enhanced by the clarification of religious and spiritual values implicit in different theological positions. Given that theology often involves a pluralism of perspectives, even where it seeks to emphasise a foundational unity of beliefs, it is helpful to encourage students to try to uncover the different values represented by different views. Such an approach can help to overcome the simple polarisation of theological positions into "liberal" or "conservative."
- (3) Christian theology is underpinned by a number of ethical principles. It will inevitably include reflection on the value-sources of those ethical principles, as well as on their contemporary implications. For example, the study of Catholic Social Teaching naturally leads to the consideration of issues such as the treatment of asylum-seekers, or Australian participation in war in Iraq.
- (4) Theology can provide a bridge with practical engagement. In raising issues such as those mentioned in point 3, above, theological study can help to provide an intellectual and religious basis for students to get involved in social action. Theology can promote the articulation and examination of the values implicit in various moral stances undertaken by the University as a whole.
- (5) The examination of values in theology can serve as a prompt for students to reflect on the implications of their own values. This is particularly the case where students are being prepared for vocations such as teaching Religious Education in Catholic schools.
- (6) The School of Theology, along with other academic areas, can reinforce stated values of the University through consciousness-raising and sustained reflection on issues involving justice in the delivery of education, respect for individual differences, and so on.

In using Schwartz's value theory to frame the question of values-based education in theology, my aim has been to clarify something of the relationship of values both to

religion and spirituality, and to the tasks of theology as such. It is my hope that a balanced articulation of the complexity of the role of theology in the University has emerged, and the way in which theology takes its place alongside other academic disciplines in incarnating the mission of the University. It is not the role of theology somehow to make the University or its students “religious” and hence in some naive way to legitimate its Catholic foundation, but to offer informed perspectives on questions of Catholic Christian faith, to promote dialogue, intellectual rigour, and understanding, and to continue to clarify the nature of the values which are claimed to characterise the University’s identity.

Author: *Dr Robyn Horner, former Dean of the Melbourne College of Divinity, is a lecturer within the School of Theology, Melbourne campus of Australian Catholic University. This paper was initially presented at an ACU internal forum on Values-Based Professional Education, North Sydney, 12th June 2003.*

Email: R.Horner@patrick.acu.edu.au
