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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE

An occasional newsletter

of New York Theological Seminary's PROGRAM XI

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"AND" IS IMPORTANT!

...."and" in the title of this occasional newsletter from the seminary's Program XI: Research, Evaluation, Planning.

"The future of theological education" is a legitimate concern: what will seminaries or replacements be like in the future? But this sheet asks a wider question. The question you shape shapes you, and Program XI's question includes but transcends this question of the future of the theological-educational enterprise as process and institution.

Then how about "theological education in the future": how will theological education fit into the future, in relation to all other concerns, movements, institutions? Again a legitimate, necessary, but too narrow question to cover our assignment.

...so we arrive at the widest, freest way of shaping the question: "theological education and the future": how can the Christian mind, particularly as present in theologians and theological-educational institutions, best be in dialog with the mind of the future as it is now forming in the consciousness of futurists and of those who employ and of those who listen to them?

That first shaping of the question was, legitimately, self-serving: as seminaries, what slice of the future will be ours? And the second was participatory passive: in the future, how will we seminaries be related to psychosociodynamics and institutions ecclesial and secular? The third shaping of the question is participatory active: how, now, as Christian educational institutions, can we act most responsibly toward the human future in and beyond the biosphere?

This newsletter intends to keep all three questions alive and well, but--partly because other publications attend to the first two questions--we intend to lean toward the third. And we welcome contributions of little more than 100 words. We are especially eager to hear good news of experiments, and learn of fresh resources.

FUTURE < SHOCK RESPONSIBILITY

Moving from the passive stance of shock to the active stance of responsibility now for the future, and helping others move....

"Which changes can we have an impact on and which must we accept, which will we try to slow and which accelerate, who among us shall work at creating the future we want, who will nurture the past we do not want to lose, who will enrich the present?"--Ralph H. Perrotta, NYT OpEd 14Dec72.

...a few futurists' clusterings that would delight in deluging you with information:

WORLD FUTURE SOCIETY

Box 19285, 20th St. Sta., Wash., DC 20036

Objectives: The Society's objectives, as stated in the charter, are as follows:

- 1. To contribute to a reasoned awareness of the future and of the importance of its study, without advocating particular ideologies or engaging in political activities.
2. To advance responsible and serious investigation of the future.
3. To promote the development and improvement of methodologies for the study of the future.
4. To increase public understanding of future-oriented activities and studies.
5. To facilitate communication and cooperation among organizations and individuals interested in studying or planning for the future.

COMMITTEE for the FUTURE



Penn's Landing Square
130 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19106

RECENT FUTURE-LEANING COURSES AT NYTS:

- "Teilhard's Theological Vision of Man"--Dimitri Michaelides
"The Church and the Future"--Letty Russell
"Revelation"--Gabriel Moran
"Myths and Realities: Hebrews, Christians and Marxists"--Henry Sidorowicz
"Re-Forming the Spirit"--Willis Elliott

"THE EMERGING PLANETARY SOCIETY" is a useful cassette for the pastor. Krister Stendahl + futurologists Kenneth Cauthen and Krafft Ehrlicke, in short talks that won't bore your groups but will orient them to future-thought. THESIS, Box 11724, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15228.