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Aesthetic Interdisciplinarity in Donald Capps' *Weltanschauung*

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Abstract This article considers the aesthetic interdisciplinarity of the work and *Weltanschauung* of Donald Capps. It suggests three themes of Capps' *Weltanschauung*: reframing, confusion, and empiricism. These themes converge in an image of calmness that epitomizes Capps' aesthetic interdisciplinarity. Capps envisions a world that is *heimlich* (homelike), and his aesthetic therefore pursues "homemaking" in this world by virtue of enjoying a certain calmness in the process of pastoral counseling.

Keywords Donald E. Capps · Aesthetic interdisciplinarity · Reframing · Calmness

Introduction

The question—What makes pastoral counseling *pastoral*?—has long been asked by pastoral counselors and pastoral theologians alike. The answers they have variously offered in response almost invariably include reference to interdisciplinarity and the crucial task of somehow linking theology and the social sciences. In one sense, one could almost equate the search for an authentic interdisciplinarity among pastoral theologians with the uniqueness of the vocational calling of pastoral counseling. Various strategies and approaches for achieving interdisciplinarity have been proposed by practical theologians over the years. Correlational interdisciplinarity reflects one prominent approach, a type constituted by Paul Tillich (1959) and pursued by Don Browning (1980), David Tracy (1988), Matthew L. Lamb (1982), and Rebecca S. Chopp (1987). It attempts to frame a mutually critical dialogue between theology and the human sciences, including, for example, psychology, ethics, philosophy, and feminist theory. A second approach may be called transformational interdisciplinarity, a type advocated in works of James Loder (1981), Hans W. Frei (1992), and Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger (1995). This approach emphasizes ontological and ultimately unbridgeable differences between theology and science, and therefore argues for the necessity of transformation in

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interdisciplinary work. A third approach is transversal interdisciplinarity, a type identified with the works of J. Wentzel van Huyssteen (1993, 1998, 1999, 2001), who builds on some fundamental ideas about rationality deriving from the work of Calvin O. Schrag (1992). Transversal interdisciplinarity is characterized by what van Huyssteen calls "postfoundationalism," a postmodern suspicion of foundationalism, that is, fideism, fundamentalism, or nonfoundationalism. Van Huyssteen calls for "transversal" dialogues among experts and argues for intellectual transversality among rational disciplines. Pastoral counselors who follow this model would seek out and share ideas with other experts, such as family members of counselees, support groups, doctors, or religious leaders.

In this essay, I want to suggest a new interdisciplinary type in response to the question—What makes pastoral counseling *pastoral*?—this one based on the life and work of Donald E. Capps. Since Capps himself would likely resist being categorized as representing a single type of interdisciplinarity, I attempt instead to simply draw attention to three recurring themes of Capps' *Weltanschauung*, but themes that nonetheless suggest a certain style of interdisciplinarity that I refer to here as an "aesthetic interdisciplinarity."

Three themes of Capps' *Weltanschauung*

Let me first briefly consider aspects of Capps' personal history to better understand possible origins of his aesthetic *Weltanschauung*. Born on January 30, 1939 in Omaha, Nebraska, Capps grew up in the Swedish branch of the American Lutheran Church. His mother was Swedish, a daughter of Swedish immigrants. His father was of English, Welsh, French and Irish background and had a long heritage in the American Universalist Church, which teaches that all persons are destined for heaven. In this regard, one of Capps' most vivid childhood memories was that of his paternal grandfather consoling young Donald around his concerns about going to hell. His grandfather assured the boy that everyone goes to the "Happy Hunting Ground," a Native American description of paradise and one reason why Capps believed he wanted to become a minister of the Gospel as a boy. But Capps was also interested in literature and in his undergraduate years majored in English literature at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. After graduation, he enrolled in the Bachelor of Divinity program of the Divinity School of Yale University, where his own unique theological interests and tendencies began to emerge. He considered doing advanced graduate work in systematic theology, ethics, and comparative religion, but by the time he graduated, he decided to return to his undergraduate interest in English literature and entered a Ph.D. program in that field at the University of California in Berkeley in the fall of 1963. Shortly thereafter he transferred to the philosophy program there. Still unsatisfied with his choice, he withdrew from the program and returned to his home city of Portland. He worked in a church there for several months and applied to the Master of Sacred Theology program at Yale Divinity School in order to take courses in pastoral care and Christian education, the two areas in which he was focusing in his work at the church in Portland. As this eclectic academic history suggests, Capps was one to dauntlessly plunge into a sea of experience in order to discern and face just who he was and to understand what he really wanted. This circuitous academic path may seem to some to be a waste of time, but I suggest it offers evidence that Capps was, and remains, an empiricist who must find his own way by means of personal experience.

It was through exposure to Erik H. Erikson's (1958) writings, particularly *Young Man Luther*, that Capps grasped clues about who he was to become and what vocationally he wanted to do. Influenced by Erikson's interpretation of Luther, he wrote his S.T.M. thesis on the vocational struggles of John Henry Newman and Søren Kierkegaard. This thesis also

influenced his doctoral dissertation, "John Henry Newman: A Study of Religious Leadership," at the University of Chicago, which he attended from 1965 to 1969. His interest in the searches for vocational identity of Kierkegaard and Newman seem to be related to his own struggles with personal and theological identity.

Capps married Karen Virginia Docken on August 22, 1964, just before entering doctoral studies. By the time he received his degree, he had been offered a teaching position at Oregon State University, near his wife's home in Portland. After a few months there, he was offered a teaching position in the field of Religion and Personality at the University of Chicago. He accepted and taught there for five years, from 1970 to 1975. Next, he taught at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte for two years (1976–1977) and another three years at the Graduate Seminary at Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma (1978–1980). He was invited to join the faculty at Princeton Theological Seminary as a full professor of Pastoral Theology at age 41 in 1981. Throughout his long teaching career, he has written countless books and articles. Among those that he himself considers to be personal milestones are *Pastoral Care: A Thematic Approach* (Capps 1979), *Reframing: A New Method in Pastoral Care* (Capps 1990), *The Child's Song: The Religious Abuse of Children* (Capps 1995b), *Agents of Hope: A Pastoral Psychology* (Capps 1995a), *Men, Religion, and Melancholia* (Capps 1997), *Jesus: A Psychological Biography* (Capps 2000b), *Men and Their Religion: Honor, Hope, and Humor* (Capps 2002), and *A Time to Laugh: The Religion of Humor* (Capps 2005).

Based on these brief reflections of Capps' life and academic career I will suggest three recurring themes in his personal and professional development that have contributed to forming his *Weltanschauung*: the theme of reframing, the theme of confusion, and the theme of empiricism.

Reframing

The theme of reframing is, I think, deeply lodged in Capps' early experience of his grandfather, who reframed for Capps as a boy certain features of heaven as a way to console him around his anxiety about going to hell. His grandfather's reframing might be seen as an early exposure to what much later would become Capps' academic interest in reframing. Even as Jesus declares in Matthew 11:28 (NRSV), "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest," Capps seems to have creatively imagined a generous and liberal heaven in this particular world by means of reframing, while feeling truly liberated in Jesus who is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). For instance, Capps prefers to reframe his academic concentration as that of "pastoral psychology" rather than call it "pastoral theology." Given that he has spent the majority of his teaching career as the senior scholar at the most influential seminary of the Presbyterian Church (USA), it seems a significant reframing to call his field pastoral psychology, a sign that he wants to rethink conventional approaches to the discipline. This is not an evasion of his responsibility as a pastoral theologian but an expression of liberation; he seeks not to be controlled in the process of developing his academic imagination.

His theme of reframing recalls Seward Hiltner's concept of "perspective." Hiltner (1958) argues that two main foci of pastoral theology, namely, on pastors' aim (intentionality or faith) and on their realistic fields (praxis), can be harmonized in the concept of perspective, and that pastoral theologians can expand their fields in diverse, even unlimited, ways due to their particular perspectives. Based on Hiltner's concept of perspective, I suggest that Capps sees pastoral counseling from a certain complex and ever-changing perspective of academic interest. His interest in reframing leads Capps to understand pastoral counseling as vivid, defossilized, and uncategorized. In his book *Reframing: A New Method in Pastoral Care*, Capps (1990) criticizes counseling methods that the biblical character Job's three friends use

in attempting to help Job through his crises. He contends that pastoral counselors have usually been judgmental, contenting themselves with simplistic diagnoses. Capps suggests instead that pastoral counselors should meet their counselees with broader, more nuanced and surprising perspectives, just as God, the Great Reframer, counseled Job (see pp. 111–181). In particular, Capps argues that Job's three friends—Zophar, Bildad and Eliphaz—represent the use of three of the models advocated by Howard Clinebell (1984) but that their counseling was ineffective because they did not take account of important aspects of Job's experience. Capps is not necessarily suggesting that these are poor counseling models. Instead, he is claiming that God used reframing methods in response to Job's complaints.

In *The Depleted Self*, Capps (1992) argues that "institutionalism" should likewise be reframed by a true recognition of individualism. What he means by "institutionalism" is illustrated through the biblical character Jonah's relationship to autonomous authority, in this case God. Jonah, a narcissist both driven and hamstrung by shame, Capps says, is toyed with in the narrative by a condescending and autonomous God, who uses shame to manipulate Jonah into compliance. Capps depicts this kind of relationship with God as a bad dream suffered by Jonah. For Capps, Jonah's hope must be awakened from that bad dream in order to discover an alternative vision of relationship with divine and human authority, one characterized by loving recognition (positive mirroring) and encouragement to trust and care for the depleted self (pp. 148–169). Therefore, for Capps, "institutionalism" is far more likely to be the locus of self-depletion. Furthermore, unlike Robert Bellah et al. (1985) and Christopher Lasch (1991), who think of individualism as egoism or narcissism, Capps reframes here the meaning of individualism. He argues that egoism or narcissism is the result of the diminishing influence of individualism in American institutional life. To him individualism constitutes individuality and preserves the unique gifts and energies of individuals (pp. 97–109).

Confusion

Reframing leads to a second theme familiar in Capps' writing, namely, the theme of confusion. This theme might strike us initially as strange, but it becomes clearer if we fathom the nature of confusion. I am not talking of just any instance of being confused. Rather I am considering a kind of confusion that holds creative power within it. I begin by focusing on Capps' personal struggles with identity confusion. When Capps was a student, a primary academic interest of his centered on identity. He studied Erik Eriksons's work on Luther and the vocational struggles of John Henry Newman and Søren Kierkegaard. It seems likely that Capps' academic interest in identity confusion reflected similar struggles within himself: "What is becoming of me?" and "To whom do I belong?" His curriculum vitae suggests that he had considerable difficulty in selecting his major field of study and made a long detour throughout various disciplines of English literature, didactic-informative theologies, and philosophy, before finally arriving at pastoral theology. But this detour, although seemingly time-consuming, was indispensable to his formation, for it hints at a process of alchemy through which he truly finds who he is and to whom he belongs, just as Job confesses to God, "I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you" (Job 42:5). In this sense, I suggest that Capps' struggles with identity confusion are crucial for illuminating his interest in the creative power of confusion.

John Dominic Crossan (1973, pp. 336–343) believes that a degree of confusion is necessary if we are to truly appreciate Jesus' parables. He understands this confusion as the interpreters' courageous action of participating in the actual events of the parables of Jesus. He further claims that the interpreters ought to preserve the "poetic metaphor"–a literary form of confusion, obfuscation, ornamentation, and information that leads ultimately to participation. The obfuscatory nature of metaphor work as the key to unlocking the new,

and drive toward participation-in rather than information-about. In this regard, Crossan argues that Jesus' parables as poetic metaphor cannot be limited by the pedagogical meanings driven by a reductive understanding of the parables as didactic metaphor. Thus, it is crucial to first experience "obfuscation" in order to finally participate in interpretation, that is, to experience so-called "a-ha!" moments. Crossan's view strikes me as similar to a biblical depiction of creation. Just before God created this world, "the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2a). In the midst of chaos and darkness, God said, "Let there be light!" God's dauntless command actually forms creation. From this analogy, I contend that creation genetically occurs from a place of chaos and darkness, meaning a place of confusion or, in Crossan's term, obfuscation. Therefore it is crucial to sometimes be confused by things we thought we knew very well in order to participate in the essence of interpretation and in its consequent creativity.

Paul Ricoeur (1978) likewise claims that confusion is a significant aspect of interpretation, for it points to interpreters' experience of letting the interpretive event happen in them. Confusion is the way to appreciate Jesus' parables creatively: "The poetic power of the Parable is the power of the Event. Poetic means more than poetry as a literary genre. Poetic means creative. And it is in the heart of our imagination that we let the Event happen, before we may convert our heart and tighten our will" (p. 245).

In his sermon "Listening to the Parables of Jesus," Ricoeur argues that Jesus' parables say more than any rational theology and moral fables. According to him, Jesus' parables must not be extracted as frozen concepts, i.e., the parable of the prodigal son as an example of the free will of persons or the parable of the lost coin as an example of the doctrine of predestination. Rather, he argues, "If we look at the parables as at a word addressed first to our imagination rather than to our will, we shall not be tempted to reduce them to mere didactic devices, to moralizing allegories. We will let their poetic power display itself within us" (Ricoeur 1978, p. 245). In turn, Ricoeur encourages us to see Jesus' parables as rich and lively actions. If they are alive as events within us, then they will touch our imagination to evoke the "poetic" power of the parables.

According to Crossan and Ricoeur, it is crucial to allow ourselves to be confused. This means we have to let life happen to and within us. Confusion is central to the "poetry" of our life experience. But it takes courage to endure confusion, to participate in life while retaining hope in and amid the creative power of confusion. We never fully know when we might finally reach the new meaning. Thus, although it is not easy to remain in obfuscation and to endure its consequent pains, if we have courage to endure confusion we will experience creativity in due time. In this sense, I suggest that hope can be hope only in the midst of the unanticipated and unexpected. Capps shows, throughout his life, how the creative power of confusion works in him. Because of his dynamic engagement with life, he comes to understand himself as a reframer. This is possible because he maintained both "hope" through confusing early vocational detours and "courage" to allow himself this identity confusion. His creative interests in reframing seem to be a natural outgrowth of this hope, courage, and confusion. For instance, in his book *The Child's Song: The Religious Abuse of Children*, Capps (1995b) is concerned with the hidden abuse of children by means of intentional use of biblical texts in the name of promoting children's belief. He further argues that there is inherently abusive literalism in scripture (pp. 44–54, 60–75, 81–95). But using the biblical image of Garden, Capps reframes the same biblical texts in the light of reconciliation and healing. In another of his books, *Jesus: A Psychological Biography*, Capps (2000b) interprets the personal identity of Jesus of Nazareth under the rubric of illegitimacy. Capps endured much scholarly and ecclesial criticism because of this book, but his critics miss the point. He attempts in this book not a

mere psychological anatomy of Jesus of Nazareth but to reach the transformative heart of the Gospel. His deconstructive writings simultaneously enlighten and transform.

Empiricism

The third theme of Capps' *Weltanschauung* is that of empiricism. I posit that as one who intentionally confuses for the sake of creative reframing, Capps knows the importance of attending to experience in artistic and creative ways. He thus has no hesitation in participating in the work of interpretation, that is, in pastoral counseling. For Capps, pastoral counseling is no mere process of making mechanical diagnoses but instead involves interpretative participation (Capps 2001b, pp. 53–55). In this sense, Capps is not content with simplistic and stable "how-to" frames for pastoral counseling, even as he says with a degree of humility that he is not qualified to build such frames (Capps 2001a, p. 2). Rather, he pursues an unexpected, alterable, and creative methodology. Consequently, his ways of doing counseling may seem unorganized, but they are, precisely speaking, well harmonized from an aesthetic perspective. This is because he tries to sustain the essential goal of pastoral counseling from many angles and perspectives which converge for him in a sense of the importance of the individual. For Capps, a pastoral counselor is effectively an empiricist. To be an empiricist means to use experience creatively and to avoid absolutism in pastoral counseling. The empiricist aims toward an *appreciation of* the dynamicity of experience and *participation in* the vitality of pastoral counseling. William James provides a good example of this approach. James (1950) defines God as the name of "the whole of things" who calls us to cooperate in his purposes, unlike God conceived of as a super-agency (p. 111). James believes that the notion of God's omnipotence must be given up, and that the only God worthy of the name must be finite. However, it must be said that his major purpose in addressing this issue is not to make a case for the finite God of popular religion but to argue against absolutism. The basic reason why James rejects absolutism is that he sees an essential "foreignness" in it.

Capps' understanding of experience in many ways parallels that of James, so a closer look at James here is important. In his article "A World of Pure Experience," James discusses radical empiricism. Unlike Descartes' effort to insist on "clear and distinct" ideas, he rather praises *confusion* (James 1922, p. 11). He rejects clarity not as a general desideratum but as the critical criterion of certainty or, at least, of reliability. He thus argues that elementary physical experience (related to sense perceptions), confused and vague as it might be, provides much more reliable access to the world than abstract conceptions that might appear initially to be more clear and distinct (Dean 1981, p. 169; see also Viau 1999, pp. 22–23). To James, the formation of conceptions is a secondary capacity, for concepts are "distilled" from percepts in the psychology of knowing. In *Some Problems of Philosophy*, James (1979) claims that concepts by themselves are not only groundless but also misleading. Concepts, being static, not only miss the concrete flux and novelty of the perceptual world, but also actively falsify the world by presenting the fluid and the novel as if they were static and eternally the same (see pp. 31–60). Consequently, James turns from "concept" to "percept" and announces his quest for "pure experience." In *The Meaning of Truth*, James (1910) argues that "pure experience" is based on sensation; it is knowledge of *what*, over against knowledge of *about* (pp. 12–17). However, in *Essays in Radical Empiricism*, James' (1922) characterization of "pure experience" reaches beyond the ordinary receptivity of the five senses. Instead, he argues that pure experience includes fully both experiences of "oneness" and of "manyness," as well as of "distinction" and of "identity." From this perspective, James asserts that adequate knowledge must include not only the reports of the five senses but also the reports of the non-conscious and the confused bodily preconditions of sense experience. It is this broadly

encompassing aspect of James' empiricism that makes it "radical" and distinguishes it from ordinary Humean empiricism (see James 1979, pp. 99–101).

Like the Jamesian dynamic understanding of experience, Capps also praises the dynamic creativity of experience. Such an approach leads him, for example, to find beauty in melancholia (see Capps 1997). Moreover, for Capps, to participate creatively in a matrix of human experiences means to do pastoral counseling. Pastoral counseling becomes the place where a counselor and a counselee together enjoy a confluence of their living stories in search of the Gospel (Capps 1998). As a consequence, Capps' approach to pastoral counseling, while seemingly confused and unorganized, is actually highly dynamic, creative, and transformative. In this regard, Capps avoids prescribing any one particular frame or methodology for doing pastoral counseling, for he believes that the counselor who holds fast to only one methodology will be confined by reductionism, favoritism, even absolutism. Capps instead favors an "aesthetic" approach to accomplish the essence of pastoral counseling. But this approach, by avoiding prescriptive certainty, requires hard work and courage on the part of counselor and counselee alike. Courage derives from hope; without hope one cannot be courageous. What then is hope? It is different from anticipation. Both are modes of expectation but are distinguished from one another by the litmus test of "confusion." When one feels confused, she cannot anticipate because she cannot estimate and evaluate. But she can be hopeful even in the midst of confusion. Thus hope becomes hope only in situations where one cannot say with complete confidence, "Such and such is possible." In such situations, courage is a sort of hopeful action which shines from the center of confusion. Therefore, to approach pastoral counseling from the perspective of Capps, which involves mutually creative participation in experience, is to take courageous action with unfailing hope. In this sense, Capps portrays hope as the nucleus of pastoral counseling (cf. Capps 1995a, chapter one).

Capps' aesthetic interdisciplinarity

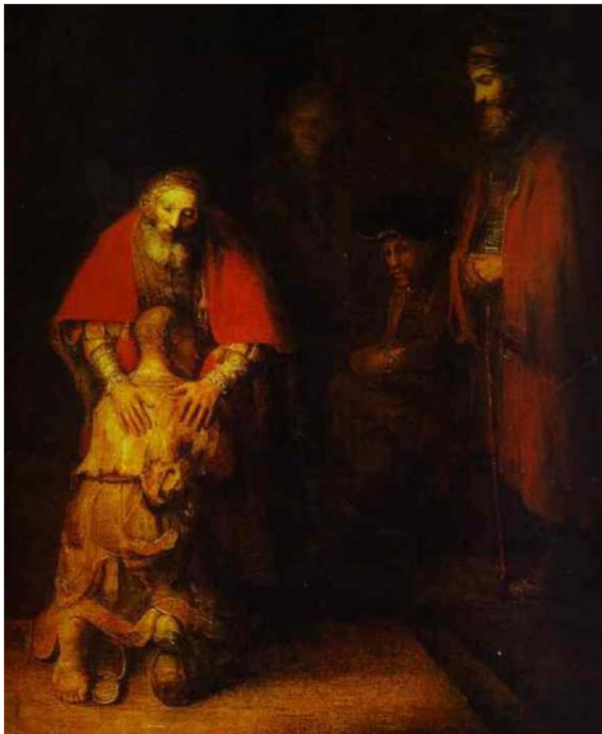
I have so far presented three themes of Capps' *Weltanschauung*: reframing, confusion, and empiricism. As I argued earlier, these themes construct a certain interdisciplinary type, that is, an aesthetic interdisciplinarity. What I mean by "aesthetic" here is a striving on the part of the pastoral counselor to sustain Capps' three themes in interdisciplinary dialogues between theology and other sciences while engaged in the process of counseling. This approach to interdisciplinarity lends a certain "color" to the counseling process because it is constituted by a certain worldview. And this color has various methodological implications. Specifically, Capps' interdisciplinary aesthetic suggests approaching the counseling task in such a way as to invite the transformational power of reframing, the creativity of confusion, and the dynamicity of empiricism. Such an "aesthetic" cannot be described very precisely as a concrete and unchangeable method. Many forms of and approaches to counseling might fit within these parameters. To describe Capps' approach as an aesthetic interdisciplinarity is *not* to suggest a specific method but to encourage pastoral counselors to attend to their own aesthetic sensibility in and as their actual goal in counseling. So while difficult to define and to actualize in pastoral counseling, the confusion that counselors may experience in counseling is a positive one, because confusion can lead to new interpretive possibilities, reframing, growth, and transformation.

Capps suggests that there are many possible ways to do pastoral counseling. In his article "The Lessons of Art Theory for Pastoral Theology," Capps (1999) considers three paintings in different perspectives and suggests at least three possible models of pastoral counseling employing interdisciplinary frames that correspond to these differing artistic styles. The first painting that Capps discusses is Dieric Bouts' *The Last Supper.* He describes the model

signified by this painting as the "model of convergence," for it is natural for our eyes to converge on the figure who is sitting in the middle. Thinking along the focal lines of this painting for pastoral theology, Capps (1999) understands this painting to show "the two disciplines [of theology and psychology in pastoral theology] as being on convergent paths moving toward an imagined vanishing point" (pp. 336–337). He further argues, "We do not consider the one to be in the position of assimilating the other, but rather that they are dynamically interactive with one another, and that this dynamic interaction is oriented in the long run toward a single compositional center" (pp. 338).

The second painting Capps introduces is Picasso's *Family of Saltimbanques*. He suggests a "model of juxtaposition" as deriving from the aesthetic style of this painting, for there is no convergance in it toward one central vanishing point. Rather, one may appreciate it by alternately focusing on three portions of the picture divided by two spatial intervals among the seated lady, two gloomy boys, and two jesters and a girl. Capps creatively applies this artistic style to pastoral theology by suggesting that the seated woman may be viewed as signifying the place of theology, the two boys the place of psychology, and three circus figures as other social sciences (pp. 339–340). In arguing in support of juxtaposition, Capps claims that he observes several possibilities of coexistence for different disciplines in any given process of pastoral counseling. These possibilities may develop into consequent "how-to" methods of pastoral counseling. For instance, a pastoral counselor may focus first on whatever interpretive frame she wants to concentrate, i.e., any number of theological themes, in her actual counseling sessions, but this does not mean that she ignores or forgets the existence of other themes, i.e., psychological themes, anthropological themes, or sociological themes. Nor does she require all themes to converge toward a single central vanishing point but juxtaposes them

for whatever insights this process yields. Capps calls this state of altruistic coexistence the "metonymic relationship."



The last painting he delineates is Rembrandt's *Return of the Prodigal Son*. Capps argues that the perceptual style of this painting suggests a "model of structural uniformity." When one first

views this painting, one looks at its brightest part—the two embracing figures—and only then toward its darker figures, including the robed figure standing on the right side to the two persons under dim lighting beside the father and the prodigal son. The style of this painting, according to Capps, shows another possibility in pastoral counseling, where a counselor's insights into how to assist her counselees encompass several disciplines. This model seems similar to the model of juxtaposition, but in reality it is not; the counselor here would attempt to focus on just one figure or perspective, as in the model of convergence. But the uniqueness of the structural uniformity model involves the "interchangeability" of such foci. Capps (1999) explains this approach as follows:

> An obvious implication is that one will tend to see theology and psychology as assuming interchangeable positions. One will be as likely to turn to texts by theologians for their psychological as for their theological insights. Conversely, one will turn to psychologists as much for their theological as for their psychological insights. One may also be disposed to turn to other literatures for both theological and psychological insights. (p. 343)

I have briefly considered Capps' aesthetic approaches to *doing* pastoral counseling by virtue of presenting three possible aesthetic models of interdisciplinarity. According to Capps, these three examples are merely examples for doing pastoral counseling, not the only models we should follow. Instead, they are "suggestive ways" we may ponder the process of counseling (p. 345). I posit that at the heart of any approach Capps would endorse is his sense of the importance of pastoral counselors' efforts to consider pastoral counseling as an interdisciplinary and aesthetic practice. This aesthetic way involves pastoral counselors' creative participation in their various cases, and, further, it entails counselees' dynamic cooperation with counselors in their search for a new, reframed way of understanding and responding to their struggles. This aesthetic collaboration is possible because of counselors' genuine concern for counselees as precious, artistic creations and creators, not as mere objects to be handled. Therefore, Capps' aesthetic imagination suggests not mere interdisciplinary dialogue between theology and the social sciences but an actual world beyond various models of interdisciplinarity. Capps seeks to make pastoral counseling *heimlich* (homelike or familiar) in the midst of *unheimlichkeit* (unfamiliar or uncanny) events and difficulties of life. His aesthetic interdisciplinarity opens a world where creative and *heimlich* imagination prevails.

Let me take Jean Francois Millet's *The Evening Bell* as an example for delineating what Cappsian interdisciplinarity looks like. One's first impression of this painting may be one of a sense of "peacefulness." But this peacefulness is different from what might be felt in Georges-Pierre Seurat's *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte.* This may be because Millet's painting seems to convey human "bitterness" and "*unheimlichkeit*" not unlike what we may feel in viewing Edvard Munch's *The Scream* or in Michelangelo's fresco *The Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel.

But Millet's *The Evening Bell* elicits more than peacefulness and human *unheimlichkeit*. This is because it captures a special sense of completion, of "something finished," that may also be experienced in Giovanni Bellini's *Crucifixion*. Bellini's painting clearly carries the bitterness of the cross, but simultaneously it also carries a state of something "finished."

Christ Jesus declares on the cross, “It is finished” (John 19:30). This last word means Jesus has finished what he set out to do on this earth. It does not mean, however, that he has done everything that needs to be done on earth. Poverty, sickness, war, discrimination, and disunion still remain. Likewise, in Millet’s painting a poor couple seems to say, “It is finished,” though they did not completely fill their basket with potatoes. They may have kids dying of famine at home or immense debts still to pay. Despite all this, when the church bell rings at sunset, the couple in the painting seems to say, “Thank God, it is enough. We have done what we can do today.” By appreciating Millet’s painting, I see the couple’s genuineness, courage, and hope in the midst of confusion and the uncanniness of life. Further, there is something calming about the picture, and this calmness creates a mood of “It is enough.”

Calmness differs from quietness, for quietness suggests an absence of noise. But calmness can be preserved in the most unlikely of places, even in noisy ones such as marketplaces and ballparks. Therefore, I imagine Millet’s painting as describing a calming state of “consolation within deficiency.” Similarly, Capps’ aesthetic interdisciplinarity pursues a sort of “calmness” in dialogue between theology and other disciplines. He advocates genuine, hopeful, and courageous action in the midst of confusing and uncanny experiences of life, encouraging the counselor to plunge right in to the dynamic events of

life, yet while enjoying the real blessings of calmness. Such calm consolation within deficiency is palpably possible because Capps thinks of the counseling process as a kind of "homemaking," as a search for *heim* (home/the familiar) in the most *unheimlich* (uncanny/unfamiliar) of situations. He concerns himself with how we may experience being "at-home" in the world, with how we may make peace with the fact that it is our one and only habitation (see Capps 2000a, pp. 62–89). The metaphor of the world as *heim* becomes so important to counselees in crises who seek a hopeful way through their *unheimlich* pain and struggles, to a home beyond their abandonment and victimization. Counselors and counselees alike can courageously share their *unheimlich* experiences and seek to shape them into more inviting *heimlich* stories. Together, they will enjoy the blessings of creativity in the place of "at-homeness," and that, to Capps, is the "Happy Hunting Ground."

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