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***Interacting Stories of the Flourishing Life:
Religious Identity and Curriculum
in Two Anglican Single-sex Schools***

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Abstract

This comparative case study employed a narrative lens to explore the intersecting and interacting stories of the flourishing life as recounted in student religious identity and curriculum in the context of two single-sex Anglican schools. It employed a mixed methods approach that ensured that the perspective of students about their religious identity was heard clearly. A validated measure was used to estimate the religious identity Status of students at one point of time. This showed that a number of students had committed to a religious identity that was neither Christian nor Anglican in dogma and practice but dependent on belonging to social groups. Subsequent interviews and classroom observations found that students were concerned about the school's religious tradition restricting their freedom of ethical choice. At the same time, they were keen to maintain connection to family and friends and a number expressed the desire to continue to explore issues of religious identity.

In comparing the two case studies, it was confirmed that Anglican schools do influence the religious identity of students. However, the schools had interpreted Anglicanism differently according to school context and this impacted on the manner and extent of their influence. In this the powerful role of the Head of each school was crucial, as they balanced a duality of theology and educational philosophy. The study suggests the importance of a school framework for teaching and learning where a theological anthropology is linked to a rigorous epistemology. This may guide teacher pedagogical and content choices so that student meaning-making is supported by a curriculum story that is coherent and the role of religious identity acknowledged.

Glossary

Anglicanism: The Christian religious tradition originating from the Church of England. It is contextualised within Australian culture to give it unique characteristics. These may include a focus on the authority of the local church and a less formal liturgy as well as a flexible recognition of the role of the dogmatic formularies of the C. of E., the 39 Articles.

Constructivism: A learning theory that in response to experience a person constructs personal meaning by assimilating that experience into their interpretive framework or adapting the framework to accommodate it.

Diocese: An administrative structure within a Christian denomination, a collection of local churches and aligned church organisations in one geographical area, usually presided over by a bishop.

Enacted curriculum: the teaching and learning program as it is given form by the actions of everyone in the classroom.

Experienced curriculum: the teaching and learning as perceived and interpreted by the students in the spatial/temporal context.

Epistemic relativism: An approach to knowledge that understands the limits of human knowing: that humans always know incompletely and from a particular perspective.

Faith-based schools: Schools established by a particular religious tradition, usually Jewish, Muslim or Christian. Alternatively, a school established to reflect the beliefs and values of the establishing parent community.

Identity: ‘an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history’ (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). This internal structure may be developed in the form of a narrative, ‘internalized integrative narrations of the personal past, present, and

future' (McAdams, 1996, p. 295) that create a form of order (Eide, 2012) and enable people to make sense of their lives.

Ideology: 'the shared framework of mental models that groups of individuals possess that provide both an interpretation of the environment and a prescription as to how that environment should be structured' (Denzau & North, 1994, p. 24).

Judgemental rationalism: The capacity of humans to assess theories and methods for explanatory adequacy.

Narrative: can be used to refer to a method by which researchers inquire into such lives, telling stories about them and is thus referred to as 'narrative inquiry'. Narrative can also be taken to mean the recounting orally or in written form of the life story.

Ontological realism: A philosophical stance that claims that a real world exists apart from our construction of it.

Religion: belief in a transcendent realm, involving:

- devotion and commitment to a source of order and meaning in the universe,
- consecrated rituals and symbols,
- (often) sacred writings containing statements of dogma and principles of conduct and
- a (more or less) coherent, imaginative narrative of the good life, expressing its unique worldview and ethos.

Religious Identity: Identity experienced in the religious domain. It reflects exploration and commitment in relation to 'a transcendent being or force and/or a social group characterised by that transcendent being' (Bell, 2009, p. 11).

Religious tradition: The particular denominational version of a religion as defined by its theology and practices.

Secularism: Western secularism has two major claims: values based on personal preference and truth based on material causality (Volf, 2011). ‘Soft secularism’ advocates the separation of the state from church denominations while allowing for the influence of various religious beliefs in the public discourse.

Spirituality: Originally referring to ‘the interior dimension of a person’s religious life’, now referring to ‘outlook and values, whether religious or not’ (Mason, Singleton & Webber, 2007).

Story: ‘Stories’ is used phenomenologically to refer to the leading and telling of ‘storied lives’; ‘narrative’ is used to refer to a method by which researchers inquire into such lives, telling stories about them.

The ‘good life’ or the ‘flourishing life’: A phrase originating with Greek philosophy referring to individual and societal understandings of what it means to flourish as a human and lead a fulfilled and purposeful life. It is based on worldview assumptions and a related ethos.

Theological anthropology: A theology-informed understanding of human beings. In the Anglican church, this includes biblical insights on creatureliness and spirituality, focussed on relationship with the Creator God through Jesus Christ.

Theological critical realism: a meta-theory that advocates:

- ontological realism: a real world exists independently of human knowing;
- epistemic relativism: humans can know some form of truth, but never perfectly or completely;
- judgemental rationalism or rationality: humans can assess theories and methods for explanatory adequacy.
- belief in a Creator-God. (Shipway, 2011, pp. 19-23).

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Chapter 1. Introduction

There is such a thing as Anglican identity, but we have insufficiently explored and taught it in recent years. We have lost confidence in what is a good thing. (Jensen, 2009, p. 4)

Introduction

“How do the stories of the flourishing life told by the curriculum and student religious identity interact in two Anglican single-sex schools?”

This question directed this study of two single-sex schools in the Sydney Diocese of the Anglican Church in Australia. A narrative lens was employed to explore the stories generated by the interaction of three key areas of interest to all faith-based schools: student religious identity, the curriculum and the founding religious tradition. As a mixed methods study, a validated measure of religious identity as well as semi-structured interviews were used to generate a clear student story of school experience. Observations of the curriculum in action were undertaken in History and Christian Studies classes, as were interviews with the teachers of those classes. These strategies produced a rich storied account of the way two Anglican schools are meeting the challenges of promoting their moral purpose in an increasingly diverse and secularised cultural context. Although the mostly qualitative research process resulted in several modifications, the following sub-questions guided the research.

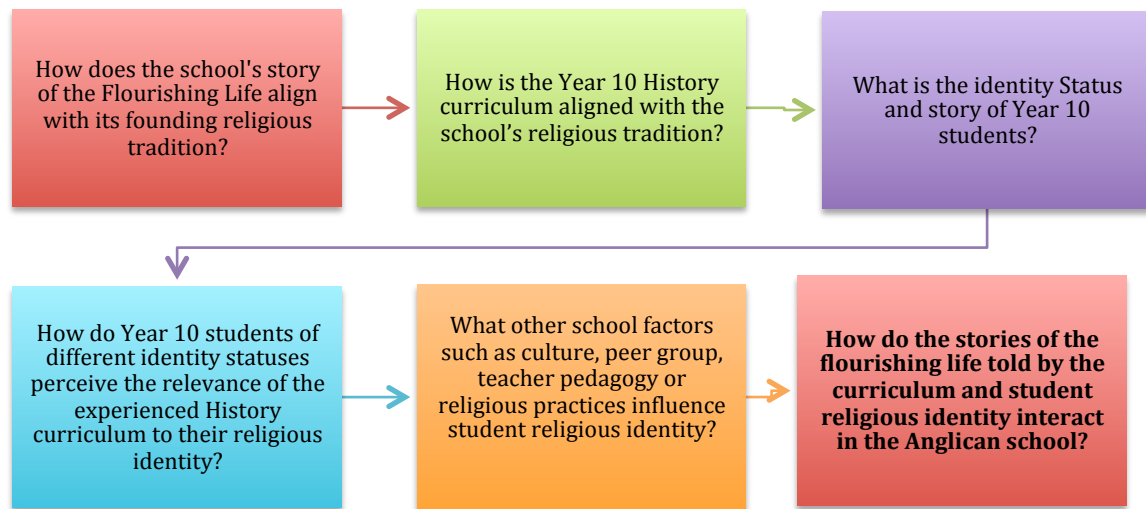


Figure 1.1: *Interacting Stories*

Introducing religious tradition

To access and describe the interaction of the three key areas, the idea of the flourishing life was used as the basis for the conceptual framework as it is a dominant concept in recent Christian writings in the area of education (Smith, 2009). This story of the flourishing life is a normative understanding of the worldview that grounds an individual's values. It supplies an external focus, a telos or goal towards which one may orient one's identity. A religious tradition such as Sydney Anglicanism provides a visionary story of the flourishing life, providing answers to the key identity questions, 'Who am I?' and 'What is my purpose?' (Taylor, 1989, 2007). These answers were expected to be reflected in some form in these Diocesan schools, which I have named Catherine Hamlin College and William Cowper College to preserve confidentiality. Yet, the presence of such a story is not unique for across all school systems religion is pervasive but often unacknowledged in school policies, teachers' values, assumptions of the syllabus and the individual interpretive framework of a

student (James, 2015, pp. xii-xiii). Particular organisational expressions of religion in a religious tradition may be understood in terms of content expressed as a story. This story is replete with beliefs and values expressed in worldview and ethos, but also includes a relationship of some kind with a transcendent being or force (Bell, 2009, p. 11). Given that it may act as the meaning-making core of a student's identity (Hunsberger, Pratt & Pancer, 2001; Kunnen & Bosma, 2000), religion, whether expressed in a religious tradition or not, is important for the learning of many students. This study generated important knowledge of the complex dynamic at work in schools of the Anglican religious tradition and it is sincerely hoped that these will be used to inform more effective teaching and learning. Although restricted to two schools in one Diocese, the geographical spread of the Anglican communion makes many elements of this study globally significant.

Sydney Diocese operates 32 schools and considers 9 schools as 'Associates' (Sydney Anglicans, 2019). This Diocese promotes itself as "conservative, Protestant and evangelical" (Sydney Anglicans, 2017); however, it also sees itself primarily as a "scion of the Reformation" and secondarily as "Anglican" (Cameron, 2016, p. 9). This allows principals of Anglican schools the freedom to set the vision and direction of the school more in terms of their personal theological and educational vision and less in terms of a common understanding of Anglicanism. However, according to Michael Jensen, "the problem of the identity of Sydney's Anglicans *as Anglicans* still remains" (Jensen, 2012, p. 89); and this proved a key factor in exploring student religious identity in the two schools of this study.

Introducing religious identity

I view identity through a psycho-social lens that emphasises the interrelationship of internal psychological processes and social perspectives (Bertram-Troost, 2006) and builds on the pioneering work of Erikson (1968) who claimed identity formation was a key developmental

challenge of adolescence. This study considers the two major approaches to researching identity as complementary (Dunlop & Walker, 2013; Sorell & Montgomery, 2001). They are Status and Narrative

The Status approach is general and universal and understands identity as “an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organisation of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history” (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). The Narrative approach is thought to focus on the personal and particular as “an inner story of the self that integrates the reconstructed past, perceived present and anticipated future to provide a life with unity, purpose and meaning” (McAdams, 1996, p. 295). Narration may bring unity to these two different ways of meaning-making while preserving their uniqueness (Bamberg, 2011) because the act of narrating,

enables speakers/writers to disassociate the speaking/writing self, and thereby take a reflective position vis-à-vis the self as character in past or fictitious time-space, make those...events relevant for the act of telling...and potentially orient to an imagined ‘*human good*’. (Bamberg, 2011, p. 7)

The episodes recounted in the story gain meaning by being referenced to some vision of the flourishing life or “human good”. This is also the case in the more process-focussed Status approach, decisions about commitment being based on a values-rich vision (Hitlin, 2003). A narrative lens of the flourishing life was understood in this study to incorporate both Status and Narrative approaches to religious identity while affirming a lesser role for the more paradigmatic Status approach.

Religious identity is variously understood as either a discrete construct or a global, unitary construct exercised in the domain of religion with each understanding applicable to specific contexts (Bertram-Troost, de Roos & Miedema, 2006; Goossens, 2001;

Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008). This study understands religious identity as global identity that possesses specific characteristics in the religious domain (Hemming & Madge, 2011). But the difficulty of determining boundaries to definitions of both identity and religion are acknowledged.

Introducing curriculum

However it is understood, few attempts appear to have been made to explore religious identity in the Australian context in relation to the curriculum (Rossiter, 2007). I conceptualise it as three interactive/interrelated ways of understanding curriculum: planned, enacted/experienced and hidden (Pinar, 2011; Smith & Lovat, 2003). ‘Planned’ refers to intentions reflected in the development of teaching and learning content, strategies and resources. ‘Enacted’ curriculum is the teaching and learning program given form by the actions of everyone in the classroom. ‘Experienced’ curriculum: the teaching and learning as perceived and interpreted by the students in the spatial/temporal context of the classroom. ‘Hidden’ refers to the often ideological or religious assumptions of the school context which inevitably impacts on the curriculum.

This study also understands curriculum as a narrative process, formed amongst other things by what the teacher values, by student interpretation and by school culture. Students face multiple challenges to their developing religious identity through potential non-alignment with the religious tradition of the school context and/or the curriculum. Yet how religious identity develops in interacting contexts, such as the religious tradition, classroom and school culture, has been little explored, despite the key role of context in its development (Kroger, 2007). This study began as a rather abstract exploration of the impact of curriculum on religious identity. By using a narrative lens of the flourishing life it

morphed into a rich picture of how two Anglican schools supported students in the challenges of developing their religious identity when confronted by conflicting narratives.

Students navigating 21st century education in Australia

Students making meaning

To watch any lesson in the middle school, especially Years 9 and 10, is to observe students actively trying to make individual meaning out of the curriculum they are experiencing.

Whether in a Music lesson where they are encountering the blood-drenched Sex Pistols for the first time, or in a History lesson where they are confronted by the poignant tragedy of the Stolen Generation, students are being challenged. The challenge presented to them is to integrate confronting images and ideas with their own embodied experiences and feelings in order to develop some form of meaning for their life and learning. Culturally-influenced understandings of life supply students with a diversity of frameworks of meaning that may or may not possess the coherence that is the goal of identity achievement. Grounding all of them is an understanding of humanity, an anthropology. Central to the Anglican understanding is a theological anthropology that understands students as creatures of a loving God, purposed to live in fellowship with Him. This anthropology provides lucid answers to the key identity questions of ‘Who am I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’ Eliot Eisner highlights how this meaning-making works out in the classroom:

They [students] learn more [than what teachers intend to teach] because what they learn is not simply a function of what teachers intend to teach, but of what students themselves bring to the table. The concept of interaction is key here.

The meanings that are made by students are a function of their intentions and the conceptual material they bring to the situation that teachers create. (Eisner, 2008, p. 18)

In the absence of any reference to elements of an external grand narrative, students bring their own ‘intentions’ and ‘conceptual material’ to the classroom interaction, developing meaning that is almost wholly centred on the values of their family and culture. Without exploring the worldview issues beating in the heart of the Sex Pistols or the Stolen Generation, the religious tradition of the school may appear irrelevant; so too the individual’s developing religious identity. Students sometimes appear to have little support in developing a comprehensive understanding of who they are and their purpose, especially for the common good. Nevertheless, the role of students in constructivist curriculum is to make meaning for themselves and it was hypothesised in this study that an exploration of the assumptions present at the heart of all interpretive frameworks would be essential in Anglican schools, especially around theological anthropology.

Students developing religious identity

Meaning-making is also said to be a major component of both process and product in understandings of identity (Kunnen & Bosma, 2000; McLean, Yoder, Syed and Greenhoot, 2014). Students come to middle school with their identity already at least partly formed (Meeus, 2011). Needing to make sense of their experiences for meaningful learning to occur, students in the classroom help shape the enacted curriculum in the classroom, at least partly on the basis of their socialisation into the identity of their primary culture of home and family (Theissen, 1993) within a formative socio-historic context (Erikson, 1968). Although not necessarily associated with a set of religious dogmas, their developing interpretive framework provides students with belief-based answers to the existential questions traditionally associated with religions such as what it is to be human (Segal, 2012). These are summarised in the two identity questions, ‘Who and I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’ and provide the motivation towards the telos of the flourishing life pictured by students.

Religions provide a formal source of order and meaning for students, with an internally structured interpretive framework offering coherence and a map for everyday living (Geertz, 1993; Kroger & Marcia, 2011). However, both the home and the socio-historic context also make some key assumptions about the nature of persons and knowledge, although mostly implicitly (Theissen, 1993). These beliefs and values may be considered religious to the extent that they too provide the basis of an interpretive framework to guide everyday living with a worldview and associated ethos (Segal, 2012) and are driven by a telos or vision of the flourishing life. Perhaps then all identity is at its heart religious identity. Indeed, some writers consider Erikson's work to be pseudo-religious (Hoare, 2009).

However, this study understands religion as more than an interpretive framework. Religion also involves unique personal experiences which students bring to the classroom as part of their religious identity. As the pioneer of psycho-social understandings of identity, Erikson's emphasis on the religious domain appeared throughout his writings, both published and unpublished (Hoare, 2009). His emphasis on both internal mental processes and social influences is reflected in more recent understandings of religious identity as comprising two components: that of individual faith as well as the religious group (Van Camp, 2010). The content of religious identity may then be described in terms of:

- Affiliation and belonging
- Behaviours and practices
- Beliefs and values
- Religious and spiritual experiences. (Hemming & Madge, 2011, p. 40)

This presents a dilemma. How do schools support students in their unique religious identity while seeking to unite them for the common good in a pluralist democracy? It is a dilemma that can only be ignored at students' peril (Kunzman, 2015).

Students orienting to secularism

Student meaning-making takes place within multiple layers of often-unacknowledged belief-based frameworks. These are developed in communities within a broader socio-historic context (Theissen, 1993). This applies to families as well as more formal institutions.

Catholic philosopher Charles Taylor notes the way identity functions to place an individual within a normative framework:

[There is an] essential link between identity and a kind of orientation. To know who you are is to be oriented in moral space, a space in which questions arise about what is good or bad, what is worth doing and what not, what has meaning and importance for you and what is trivial and secondary. (Taylor, 1989, p. 28)

‘Orientation’ is not unidirectional. This “moral space” is also a social space that can exert a formative influence. In 21st century Australia, it is increasingly an aggressively secularised space, secularism itself taking on some characteristics of a religion.

Christian philosophers such as Miroslav Volf see secularism’s demand for the exclusion of religion from the public space (of which education is one component) as untenable, given the tendency of 21st century postmodern communities to be religiously diverse (2011, p. 121). In Australia, the public space is increasingly seen as a secularised one, understood in terms of “a binary relationship with religion” (Chavura & Tregenza, 2014, p. 299). Taylor claims that the type of secularism that has evolved has been constructed as a ‘subtraction story’ of life minus the encumbrance of religion.

What emerges from this process – modernity or secularity – is to be understood in terms of underlying features of human nature which were there all along, but had been impeded by what is now set aside. (2007, p. 22)

“What is now set aside” is often taken to be the moral and ethical boundaries that are

traditionally associated with the major world religions in favour of an understanding of identity in terms of freedom from external restraint and dominance of individual freedom. Anglican schools seek to affirm that there are aspects of human nature that are universal and reflected in many forms of ideology and religion. Individual freedom in this understanding finds its *métier* in community, supported but also guided by its norms.

Rather than functioning as a common normative framework for 21st century society, religions are now seen in terms of diversity (ter Avest, 2019). To not seek to accommodate religious diversity in the public space, according to Volf, is a vacating of that space and an enabling of a particular type of anti-faith secularism to become the “*favoured* overarching perspective” (2011, p. 125). Thus Western secularism’s two major claims – personal preference as the dominant value and material causality as the dominant truth (2011, p. 125ff) – become ascendant. Both of these are strongly contested by Anglican schools committed to belief in a transcendent God, an authority beyond self and human cultures.

Students responding to the diverse religious space

Sociologist Peter Berger recently revised his secularisation thesis: that modernity would lead to the inevitable decline of religion. Instead, he suggested that there is a plurality in the 21st century that requires “personal choice between competing beliefs, values, and lifestyles” (ter Avest, 2019, p. 239). Members of the academy have also begun to claim a valid role for the exploration of religion and spiritual or religious identity in the public academic space, particularly within the sociology of education (Durant, 2017; Green, 2012). A moral framework is inevitable and necessary for resolving identity issues so this century has subsequently seen a proliferation of large-scale studies on the beliefs and commitments of adolescents as demonstrated in their religious life.

Christian Smith's *National Study on Youth and Religion* investigated the experience of American students aged 13–17 years and interpreted their understanding of faith in terms of “moralistic, therapeutic deism” (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 162). He re-interviewed available students from the same sample in “emerging adulthood” and described “the dark side” of their experience in an individualistic and relativist consumer culture (Smith, 2011).

Australian researchers based in Victoria explored the spirituality of a particular generation in their *Spirit of Gen Y* study (Mason, Singleton & Webber, 2007). While a little outside the focus age group of this study, Mason et al. nevertheless exposed a certain trend in the way spirituality was being understood: self-constituted rather than imposed externally by a religious tradition.

The more recent *Australia's Generation Z (AGZ)* study refocussed this distinction and classified teens into six categories: this worldly, indifferent, spiritual but not religious, seekers, nominally religious and religiously committed (Singleton, Halatoff, Bouma & Rasmussen, 2019). The *Youth on Religion (YOR)* study out of England (Madge, Hemming & Stenson, 2019) particularly focussed on school students in very multicultural areas and was the most emphatic in engaging with the factors that influence religious identity. Their exploration of the role of family, friends and school was very relevant to the analysis of the data in this study.

The way in which the Reformed Evangelical emphasis of Sydney Diocese has developed is unique in many aspects and therefore comparison with global Anglicanism for its impact on student religious identity is a little problematic. Perhaps the study most relevant to religious identity in the Anglican context is that undertaken by Francis, Penny & Baker (2013). They compared three types of English schools (Anglican, secular and private Christian) for their impact on the ‘spiritual welfare’ of students. The survey they

administered appears to share many aspects of the measure used in this study, the Bell Measure of Religious Identity. For example, questions on the existence of God, sense of purpose and the relevance of church appear. Its findings around the effectiveness of Anglican schooling in this area proved very similar to the results of this study and therefore set this study in a more global context.

I refer to each of these influential studies in more detail in my discussion of the data in Chapters 9 and 10. For now, while these studies are very helpful in setting the big picture of adolescent perspectives in this area, I note that they were all undertaken within a sociological perspective. They largely employed very general understandings of religion, spirituality and identity, at times seeming to overemphasise socialization and downplay student agency. None of them appeared to address curriculum interaction with student spirituality/religion as they develop their religious identity. I therefore employed a more comprehensive psycho-social lens, enriched with an understanding of the theological issues at play in the area.

Students experiencing wellbeing

This study assumes that Religious Identity, broadly understood, is central to student learning and welfare. General identity stability is now recognised as one indicator of psycho-social health and is important for student wellbeing (Crocetti, Sica, Schwartz, Serafini, & Meeus, 2013; Serafini & Adams, 2002). A healthy sense of general identity is seen to provide:

- A sense of structure to promote understanding of self-related information and experiences
- A sense of harmony, consistency and coherence for values, beliefs and commitments
- A future orientation combined with a sense of continuity with the past, present and future

- An ability to set goals on the basis of personal commitments and values
- A sense of personal control leading to active self-regulation of learning and life.

(Based on Crocetti et al., 2013)

Belief in a transcendent God also appears to offer protection against depression by enabling significant meaning-making by students (Seligman, 2007). Further, there are consequences for students failing to meet this developmental challenge. For example, too much fluctuation in general identity appears to predict future anxiety and depression in middle school students with lower levels of identity commitment being related to anger and sadness (Klimstra et al., 2015) and low social trust and involvement (Hihara, Umemura & Sugimura, 2019).

Consideration of identity, experienced in the religious domain that is so important in a neo-Eriksonian understanding, is then an issue of student welfare.

Implications for Anglican schools

There is a rich body of writing (Kunzman, 2006; James, 2015) confronting the dilemmas around student religious identity in public schools in the United States but little for faith-based schools in multicultural Australia. For a multicultural society to flourish, students are said to need to understand difference, respect all, have the skill of dialogue, compromise for the common good and accept the fallibility of knowledge (James, 2015, p. 36).

In the Australian context, a survey of research on independent schools found that parents are very concerned for “moral values” (AISNSW, 2016), presumably endorsing a school’s right to teach their religious version. Further, the role of church and family are affirmed by the claim that intelligent spirituality and critique result only from immersion within a substantive religious tradition (MacIntyre, 2007; Thiessen 1993). In a highly contested

environment, it is not always easy to resolve these dilemmas around formation in a religious tradition. This relates especially to contestable sources of authority.

To be as a school in Sydney Anglican Diocese is to be very aware of the authoritative position accorded to the Bible. It is regarded as sacred, a status that Meredith Lake claims is “crucial to its impact in culture” (Lake, 2018, p. 13). She claims that to accept the theological authority of the Bible is to see it as “a word to be believed, a means of knowing the living God” (Lake, 2018, p. 13). It presents a “vision of the world” (Lake, 2018, p. 15) that counteracts secularism. Similarly, this study assumes that every type of curriculum lays out a worldview or promotes an ideology and hence stimulates students to appropriate some vision of the world for themselves (Eisner, 2003; Smith & Lovat, 2003). Recognising Biblical authority then has implications for Anglican schools in aligning their Biblical metanarrative with the curriculum as an interpretive framework, especially in the secular social context. To my knowledge, no research has been undertaken on this relationship in Sydney Anglican schools. This study explored how two Anglican schools addressed the challenge of immersing students in this lived tradition while being an hospitable space for students from diverse religious backgrounds.

Linking curriculum and religious identity

Various suggestions have been made about possible links between curriculum and global student identity as well as the discrete construct of religious identity. My focus on the three modes of curriculum – intended/planned, enacted/experienced and hidden – uncovered multiple ways in which the two schools intentionally and unintentionally (Verhoeven, Poorthuis & Volman, 2019) influenced the formation of religious identity. Recognising curriculum in terms of a story of the flourishing life alerts us to the key curriculum questions: What story? and Whose story? (Smith and Ewing, 2002). In relation to Anglican

schooling, the story encapsulates particular assumptions about people, with associated values and worldview. It is a metanarrative that invites the inclusion of personal stories, an incorporation. I did not assume that this metanarrative would be known to all staff or students given the open enrolment and hiring practices of the schools. Nevertheless, the nature of the Anglican metanarrative, in its dependence on historical events, focussed this study initially on the History curriculum in all its forms.

Feminist care ethicist and educator Nell Noddings (Noddings, 1993; 2002; 2012) advocated incorporating the big questions of life in the intended/planned curriculum:

Throughout most of human history, questions about the existence and nature of gods, about the meaning of life, about the role of religion in societies and about moral life, with or without gods, have been recognized as paramount in any examined life and, therefore, central to education. (Noddings, 1993, p. xiii)

She advocated that religious traditions, as rich sources of answers to the existential questions, should be incorporated into classroom practice in a deliberate way to help students develop personal meaning (Noddings, 2002). Some have criticised Noddings (Kunzman, 2005; Neiman, 2000) for promoting “the image of religious identity as a kind of optional garment: often useful, handily accessorized and readily changed to suit one’s personal tastes” (Kunzman, 2005, p. 73). On the contrary, religious commitment, claimed Kunzman, is deep-rooted in both the self and a faith community and is inherently mysterious, paradoxical and profoundly emotional. Nevertheless, Noddings’ strength lies in her advocacy for the inclusion of religious issues in the content of mainstream intended/planned curriculum.

David Smith (2018), writing from an Anglo-North American Reformed tradition, advocated an emphasis on pedagogy as an expression of a Christian approach to curriculum.

His approach has been very influential in demonstrating how emphasising pedagogy may direct students towards a counter-cultural view of their subject, one that expresses a theological view of humanity. He encouraged teachers to ask questions such as “What would it mean to understand the learning of an additional language as an act of hospitality, not self-centred preparation for tourism?” As a result of this approach, the enacted curriculum can become a vehicle for students to both form and be formed by. If at times his approach appeared to be rather too focussed on ethical issues at the expense of other relevant aspects of student identity, it did promote rethinking of the subjects from a Christian perspective so they would have real formative impact in curriculum enactment.

No exploration of student identity, either global or religious, could be complete without attention to the essentially ideological strategies built into the school’s culture. This hidden curriculum of the school is powerfully present in all sorts of documents, rituals, hierarchies etc., yet there is little empirical research on the impact of school context (Sinai, Kaplan & Flum, 2012). The static nature of religious tradition leaves little room for divergence from a school’s founding faith, so it was expected to be less hidden and more clearly articulated in each school. Curriculum in this study was thus understood in its three related modes of functioning: planned, enacted and hidden. Each was found to be significant for the development of student religious identity, although in some unexpected ways.

Conceptualising the Anglican school’s moral purpose

The concept of the flourishing life was used as the primary lens in this study, partly as a means to explore recent understandings of Christian theorists and partly because it honours the moral purpose of Anglican schools. Aristotle referred to it as *eudaimonia*: “blessedness, happiness, prosperity” (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 148), achieved by the habitual exercise of virtues that are aligned with the common good (Eberly & Mesimer, 2018). “Wellbeing,

doing well and living well”, “the good life” or “the flourishing life” are all used to refer to the concept in education. St Augustine Christianised Plato’s “good” by replacing it with “God”, reflecting his belief in the transcendent and focussing teleologically on some order and goal beyond himself (Freeman, 2016). For identity researchers the flourishing life reflects a normative understanding of life’s meaning undergirding the individual’s value judgements (Cote & Levine, 1987) and an external focus for orienting identity (Bamberg, 2011). Both the end and the means for achieving it are highly contested because of its normative emphasis, especially in the curriculum in a pluralist social context with a remnant of belief in the possibility of value-neutrality. The Anglican understanding of the flourishing life may be constructed as one means of grounding student, staff and community values. It may also function as a viable option for orienting identity, including in the religious domain. However, it is a contention of this study that this requires focussed attention by the school to the envisioned end of Anglican schooling well as appropriate means related to moral purpose. The transcendent telos of Sydney Anglicanism may not automatically be communicated or lived out in an identity-supportive way without the careful consideration of its relevance to teaching and learning. Uncovering the various stories of the flourishing life in each case study highlighted such a necessity.

‘Who am I?’ ‘What is my purpose?’

Being recognized as a certain “kind of person,” in a given context, is what I mean here by “identity.” In this sense of the term, all people have multiple identities connected not to their “internal states” but to their performances in society. This is not to deny that each of us has what we might call a “core identity” that holds more uniformly, for ourselves and others, across contexts.
(Gee, 2000, p.99)

Gee seems to be discerning between psycho-social and sociological understandings of identity, both of which are important to education. One focuses more on meaning-making,

the other on positioning in relation to others. A generic understanding of human nature, similar to Gee's "core identity", undergirds the work of both Erikson (Waterman & Schwartz, 2013) and Christian sociologist J.K.A. Smith (2009). Smith has been an influential advocate for understanding human persons as lovers before they are thinkers or believers. As lovers, we desire an implicit end or telos, "a picture of what we think human flourishing looks like" (2009, p. 52). We focus on this object of our love as we move intentionally through the world inspired by our imaginations (2009, p. 46).

Our identity is shaped by what we ultimately love or what we love *as* ultimate – what, at the end of the day, gives us a sense of meaning, purpose, understandings, and orientation to our being-in-the-world. (Smith, 2009, p. 27)

This emphasis on intentionality is evident in understandings of identity narration as well (Schachter, 2011), where narrators construct their stories based on their personal values and goals. For Smith, the goal is less cognitive and more a picture: a rich, imaginative social vision found in stories, novels, films and the like (2009, pp. 52-3). It is a way of imagining the world before we theorise about it, the "social imaginary" of Charles Taylor (Smith, 2009, pp. 65-67).

Aiming towards a telos

In Smith's understanding of persons, identity develops its telos, the focus of its love, partly in response to social context. It takes the form of pre-cognitive desire directed towards an imagined "best life" that is promoted by the cultural context. Cultures in this understanding formulate, maintain and communicate answers to the big questions of life, usually in imaginative and aesthetically pleasing narrative form (Smith, 2009). In doing so, they answer the two key identity questions, 'Who am I?' and 'What is my purpose?' Likewise, in

narrative form, members of the culture absorb and interact with these answers constantly revising their personal story of life (Polkinghorne, 1996).

Smith does not deny the role of the cognitive in suggesting persons primarily as lovers, but he certainly downplays it. He retains a strong sense of intentionality linked to his understanding of identity, yet seems to focus on the social context more than internal meaning-making. This has implications for the way he sees students develop in their religious identity. For example, he understands bodily practices that grab our hearts through our imagination are the key to development (2009, pp. 62-3). Liturgies, broadly understood, become the means for habits of (Christian) virtue to be developed.

These virtues he contrasts with the consumerism developed in the shopping centre. In his metaphor, the mall is understood as a liturgy, a web of practices that attract our desire and direct our heart's telos on to a material version of the flourishing life. Christian virtue-focussed practices of the faith-based school such as assembly, classroom etiquette and chapel services become almost more important in this understanding than exploration of ideas in the classroom. Smith's emphasis on a rich social vision is a helpful balance to individualised cognitivist understandings of how worldview studies may form identity. But this study also acknowledges the activity of people as rational agents, exploring and intentionally uncovering and/or constructing their identity in a social context, although it may be motivated by a pre-cognitive imaginative vision.

This view appears to be supported by moral psychologist Jonathan Haidt. While affirming that the affective may be prior, he claims this cannot be divorced from information processing in the area of concern for this study, moral development. He suggests two kinds of cognition in this regard: moral intuition (which is largely affective) and moral reasoning (largely cognitive). The latter he claims can override the former (Haidt, 2007, p. 999) and

this understanding has implications for students focussed on a telos that takes the form of an imaginative picture. Moral intuition and moral reasoning may both come into play as students experience a rich vision that seeks to capture their hearts. They do not experience the mall, for example, as a neutral site. Twenty-first century students may choose to enter the embrace of the mall, but I claim they are intentional beings, well aware of their being courted by a jealous consumerist-lover with a particular agenda. They are wary of this lover's subtle truth claims as they are of all such claims embodied in practice and image. But they also feel the freedom to commit to the mall's story of the flourishing life if they choose to.

In relation to ideas of a specific religious telos, key philosophers have theorised that “control beliefs”, “plausibility structures” and “fiduciary frameworks” all set boundaries or provide lenses within which we can theorise and interpret formal knowledge (Cooling, 2019). Former ethics lecturer in Sydney Diocese, Michael Hill, set out the basis for such a theological understanding of telos:

The order established by God at creation with its inherent purpose is fundamental to Christian ethics. The purpose or goal supplies us with the content of what is good. (Hill, 2002, p. 26)

This understanding suggests that a transcendent Creator God patterned the universe to focus on an end, a telos, that is the basis for valorising from a Christian perspective. The picture of the good or flourishing life comprised in that telos is, in Miroslav Volf's words, love that enriches mere desire with hope and meaning (Volf, 2011), motivating behaviour that aligns with a Christian moral framework.

The concept of ‘telos’ then is of major importance in Anglican schools in the sense that curriculum may potentially be focussed on a clear, faith-based end, an explicit and integral

purpose that gives coherence to the story of the good life it promotes. It is an understanding that a flourishing life is lived not for its own sake, but in loving relationship with and service of God and others because of the way God made them (Hill, 2002, p. 26). The unconditional love of Jesus Christ has been termed the centre of the Anglican perspective of the flourishing life (Null & Yates, 2017) , understood in Sydney Diocese as manifested in his atoning death (Cameron, 2016). This is a key assumption of this study of two Anglican single-sex schools.

Ontology and Methodology

Researching as a cautious insider

My own experience in faith-based schools has taken many forms. I characterise myself as a cautious insider in relation to the Anglican tradition, partly because of coming into Anglicanism from an ‘outsider’ Catholic background. However, my late husband was an Anglican minister and after retiring from an executive role in an independent Christian Grammar school where I was previously the principal, I worked as a consultant for the Anglican Education Commission of Sydney Diocese for some years. With the Headmaster of the boys’ school of this study I sat on the previous Archbishop of Sydney’s Education Fellowship, convened to discuss the educational philosophy of Diocesan schools. I also led seminars on leadership in the girls’ school of this study and have also had multiple family-based connections with both schools, all of which influenced my role as an insider. For example, each of my interviews with staff involved a sort of negotiation of position as staff were mostly aware of my connections. Each interview became a co-construction between myself and the interviewee. I discuss this further in Chapter 6, Methodology.

Ontological and epistemological framework: Theological Critical Realism

All research is conducted within a particular ontological and epistemological context impacting on the researcher's lens, interests and methodological issues, including techniques and analysis (Edwards, O'Mahoney & Vincent, 2014; Neuman, 2014). As a reflection of my own faith-based understanding, which is Christian, I took what I refer to as a Theological Critical Realist (ThCR) framework to guide the research. Critical Realism (CR) was initially developed as a philosophy of science (Bhaskar, 2008) that aimed "to connect the inner world of ideas to the outer world of observable events" (Edwards et al., 2014, p. 3). It was further developed within a Christian ontological framework by English scholars seeking to harmonise science and religion (McGrath, 2002a, 2002b; Polkinghorne, 2011). ThCR shares with CR the potential to act as an underlabourer by requiring researchers to articulate the role of their presuppositions in structuring meaning (Hostettler, 2010; Shipway, 2011) and to correct them and any truth claims in light of the 'real world'.

ThCR is distinguished from CR in its carefully defined, theology-based presuppositions of "the existence, authority and involvement of a knowable God who has revealed himself through His word including Jesus, and that all of life is lived out in obedience or disobedience to his authority" (Edlin, 2015, p. 5). This starting point of a Creator-God allowed me to find a place for the transcendent in student experience and an authoritative role for the Bible's version of the flourishing life, centred on a Biblical anthropology. ThCR may offer the best form of faith-based epistemology, where presuppositions are declared in a clearly-articulated ontology, and the intertwining of truth-seeking and perspective is acknowledged. Evangelical Critical Realist Don Carson explains this position of epistemic humility:

Humans beings may know objective truth in the sense that they may know what actually conforms to reality, but they cannot know it objectively, that is, they cannot escape their

finitude and...their fallenness, and therefore the limitations of perspectivalism, and thus they cannot know anything completely or from a neutral stance. (Carson, 2008, p. 101)

Implications of ThCR for narrative approaches

In undertaking this study, I recognised that a strong social constructivism is sometimes promoted in the use of a narrative lens. But I rejected that “‘Reality’ is presented as the effect of discursive conventions, fluid and fluctuating.” (Eide, 2012, p. 144). Instead of an over-emphasis on ‘fluidity’ I claim that stories are ‘about something’, and have ‘purpose’ (Eide, 2012, p. 145) such as orientation to an external moral framework, the common good or flourishing life (Bamberg, 2011; Taylor, 1989). They are about making meaning, bringing a sense of order to life. The attention to the ‘something’ that life stories are about grounds us in the (albeit partial) knowability of reality as well as the limitations of personal perspective. Although the study of narrative may be “the study of the ways humans experience the world” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2), through a ThCR lens, stories can be appreciated for truth-telling about external reality and valued accordingly within research as much as any scientific theory.

The ThCR approach also allowed for participants’ voices to be heard within the real world social context of the school and I was aware of my role as researcher in these interactions. My theological anthropology also affirmed the value of each student. This enabled the study to go deeper than a recording of naïve experience as well as respect for the personal nature and complexity of the experience of people (Eide, 2012). Eide values the CR theoretical framework for narrative-based research because it supports:

- a concept of joint creation of truth, rather than mere personal construction
- narration as embodied phenomenon
- interaction of world and narrator

- analysis and joint creation of common ground between narrator and researcher
- plurality of experienced facts.

Methodology

A comparative case study methodology with a mixed-methods approach to data collection was undertaken, as endorsed by ThCR (Edwards et al., 2014). A questionnaire, the Bell Measure of Religious Identity (Bell, 2009), was administered to a Year 10 class in each school. It comprised two sections exploring the implicit and explicit salience of students' Religious Identity as well as a section based on Status Identity measures. This allowed for a simple additive approach to determining Global Identity as well as determining Religious Identity as a discrete construct.

Much of previous research on identity has explored and developed categories for describing identity and thereby glossed over the uniqueness of student experience and perspective (Visser-Vogel, Westerink, de Kock, Barnard & Bakker, 2012). Given the unique nature of religious experience and meaning-making in learning, it became important to incorporate student voice in this study. Semi-structured interviews with 6 students became the basis for 4 nested case studies.

In addition, the curriculum was observed as enacted in History and Christian Studies classes, notes taken and audio recordings made. General observations were also made around the schools over a period of one term and multiple school documents were analysed. Key interviews were conducted with the Principals, Chaplains, Year 10 History teachers and Year 10 Christian Studies teachers to gain staff perspectives on the school's approach to the curriculum and religious identity. All data was coded in two phases, initially based on theoretical understandings of religious identity, curriculum and religious tradition. Themes that were uncovered were then used as the categories for analysis. As the largely qualitative

research progressed, the central research question altered somewhat in its exclusive focus on History and became:

“How do the stories of the flourishing life told by the curriculum and student religious identity interact in the context of the religious tradition told by two Sydney Anglican single-sex schools?”

The following subsidiary questions guided the comparative case study.

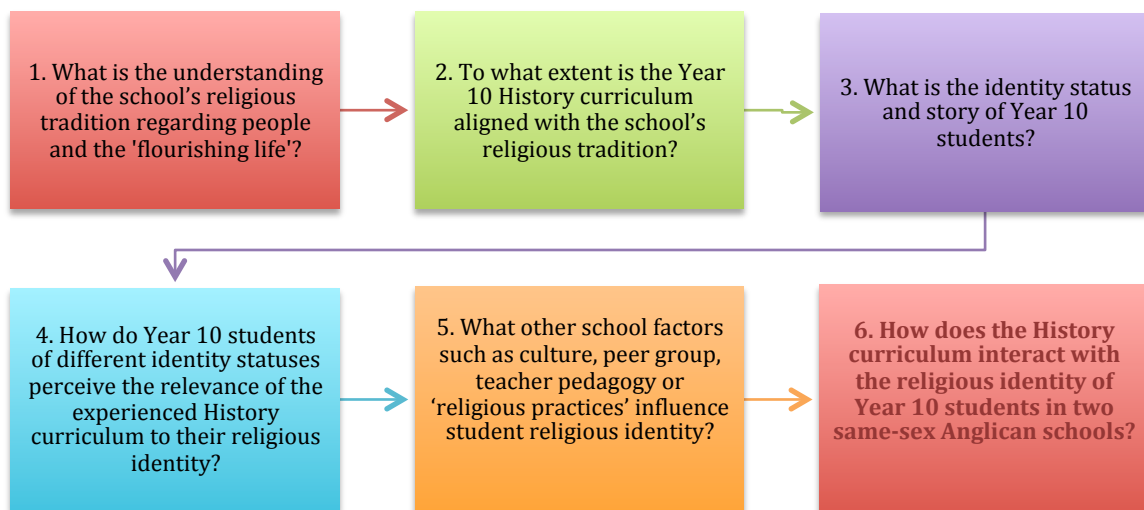


Figure 1.2

Conclusion

Identity is a powerful and relevant construct in considerations of 21st century education (Johnston, 2012; Kaplan & Flum, 2012), not least in the policy and practice of faith-based schools. Identity's many domains are harnessed by politicians and promoted by interest groups or condemned for their threat to social cohesion/international peace. Nevertheless,

Kaplan and Flum note “the complexity, multidimensionality, and indeed, ambiguity of the concept of identity and yet also its indispensable contribution to capturing central cultural, social, and psychological phenomena” (2012, p. 175). This is especially so in specifically religious identity, which is of interest to those independent schools in Australia that are faith-based. That more research has not been undertaken on the religious identity is quite surprising, given the commonalities between identity and religion generally as interpretive frameworks. Students in faith-based schools navigate a course amongst the shoals of the interpretive framework of the curriculum, the interpretive framework of their family and their own personal previous attempts to make sense of life and the world (Huber, 2008). This takes place within the temporal and cultural context of the school, which itself is presumably formed by its particular religious tradition as well as a host of stakeholders. Given the advantages indicated above of a healthy sense of identity in relation to self-regulatory and interpretive functions, the development of a specifically religious identity as an interpretive framework would appear to be an important educational goal in the context of the faith-based school and therefore important as an object of research. In order to explore the interaction of these multiple interpretive frameworks, this research established commonalities between them by considering them as a form of narrative explicitly or implicitly bearing a telos-focussed vision of the flourishing life. Conceptualising curriculum, religious identity and religious tradition as story enabled an exploration of the anthropology grounding each story’s answers to the key identity question of ‘Who am I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’

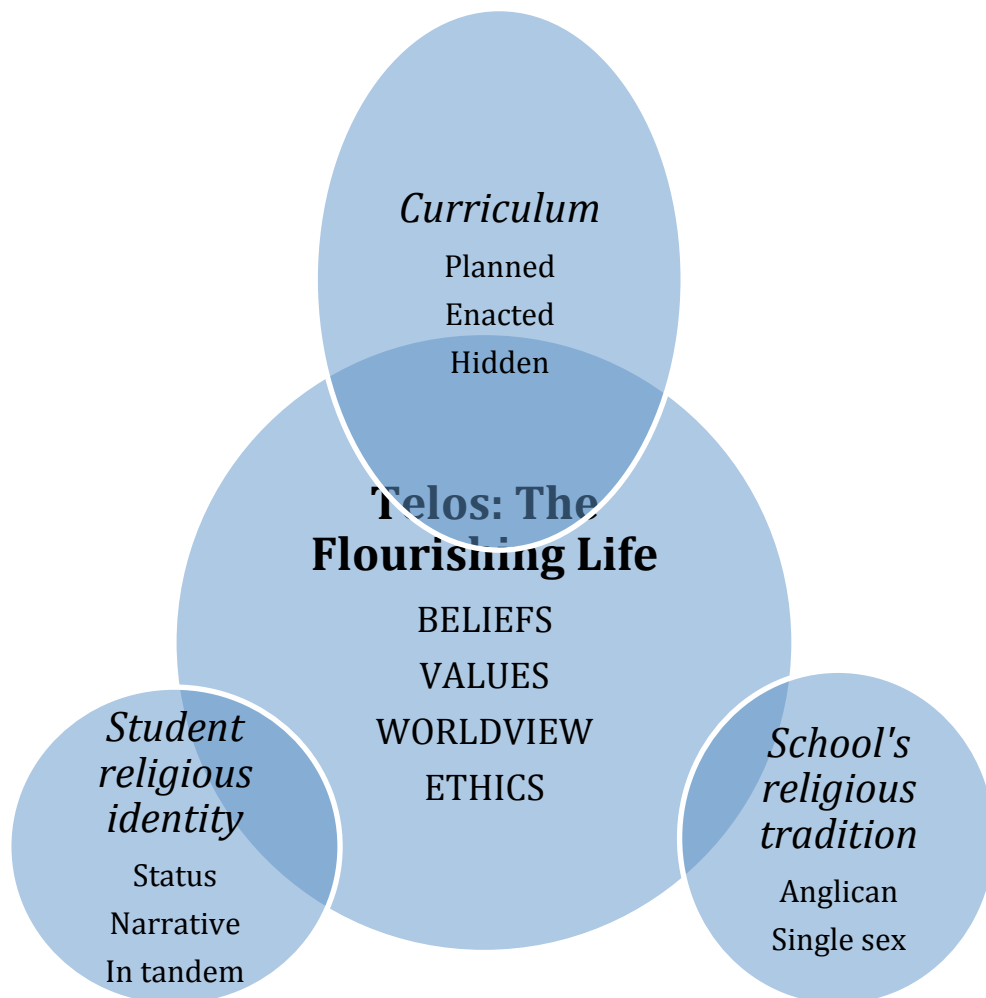
Structure of the Thesis

I have provided a Glossary prior to this chapter to orient readers to the area, given that it is quite specific in some of its definitions. After this Introduction I describe in subsequent chapters the three potentially intersecting areas in the faith-based school. In Chapter Two I

outline an understanding of curriculum in three interacting modes – planned, enacted and hidden. In Chapter Three I describe the two approaches to understanding religious identity as Status and Narrative. Chapter Four involves two sections, the first seeking to define religion and religious tradition generally and then the particular version of Anglicanism of the Sydney Diocese. Having established understanding of these concepts, I give an overview of the research on developing links between identity and curriculum in Chapter Five. In Chapter Six I describe my methodology, including how my ontological and epistemological understandings in, Theological Critical Realism, framed the study. In Chapters Seven and Eight I describe the stories related by each school through the lens of the flourishing life, focussed on the two key identity questions. I then discuss the data and compare the two cases in Chapter Nine before concluding in Chapter Ten with the voice of the students and some suggestions for future school practice and research.

In the next chapter I survey an understanding of curriculum that focuses on its moral purpose as well as its function as an induction into disciplinary concepts and methodology. Paying attention to student voice as they contribute their version of meaning is emphasised in a conceptualisation of curriculum as enacted and experienced in the classroom. I indicate how the curriculum may function in its ‘hidden’ form in the culture and practices of the school in order to account for other influences on student religious identity. Finally, I seek to explore whether there may be some distinctive aspects in the practice of the faith-based schools in providing opportunities for students to develop their religious identity in response to a school’s religious tradition.

Chapter 2. Curriculum



Introduction

For the purposes of this study the three key concepts, curriculum, student religious identity and a school's religious tradition, are each considered in narrative terms. In Chapters Two to Five, I argue that each story explores answers to the question, 'What does it mean to flourish in this life?' by focussing on two sub-questions. These are: 'Who am I?' and 'What is my purpose?' Each story is focussed on an end, a telos which may take the form of a vision or picture of the 'best life', offering a sense of purpose. Each story is infused with beliefs,

values, worldview and ethics that gives substance to the answers to these key identity questions. In this study I argue that the telos of the flourishing life functions in a multi-directional relationship with curriculum, religious identity and religious tradition. Because they share a similar focus, these three stories may share many understandings, yet due to differing beliefs, values, worldview and ethics they may be unique in others, as indicated in the diagram above. In this chapter I highlight the way that curriculum functions in this multi-directional relationship.

In Chapter One I indicated that curriculum may be understood as a complex conversation around stories of the flourishing life. This is to indicate the multiple voices that are at play in all forms of curriculum. This understanding is unlike notions of curriculum that reduce it to a mandated, content-filled syllabus that seem to dominate education in the era of the National Curriculum in Australia (Ewing, 2013, p. 134). The latter understanding favours a technical approach that ignores the unique site of classroom and school context. There is far more complexity to the term, stemming from its dynamic nature and the way various interest groups and traditions have chosen to define it for their purposes (Smith and Lovat, 2003, p. x).

Curriculum is planned by educational administrators and educators, enacted in the classroom and experienced by students in a particular school and broader social context. Interpretation and meaning-making are essential to the process of curriculum at every level. Hermeneutical knowing thus appears to be highly appropriate to understanding how curriculum functions in a student's life in contrast to more technical, paradigmatic ways of knowing (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 131). To conceptualise identity in narrative terms aligns with this understanding of curriculum, as a student's life story is inherently hermeneutical, seeking meaning through selection and interpretation of memories (Bamberg, 2011).

However, I suggest in Chapter Three that both paradigmatic and narrative ways of knowing are important to studies of identity where students' stories integrate both, understood as cognitive processes. It is a key contention of this study that curriculum is a complex conversation in a bi-directional relationship with personal and organisational visions of the flourishing life. That conversation is undertaken in three primary modes in a school: planned, actual/enacted and hidden.

The Moral Purpose: Conceptualising the Flourishing Life

I have suggested an understanding of the flourishing life based on a holistic understanding of the embodied, affective and cognitive human being as described by James K. A. Smith (2009). Smith understands the “good life” not in terms of rules or even ideas, but in terms of a rich and creative social vision that feeds into the common good (2009, pp. 52-3). This is inherently normative, based by Smith on a biblical understanding of human nature that positions love as directing humanity towards both an individual and cultural purpose for living that is ultimately focussed on a transcendent telos. This poses an alternative perspective to a secularised understanding, often seen as the construction of power-seeking and moralising socio-cultural groups. A love-driven vision is of major importance in the Anglican school because of the opportunity to focus on a clear, transcendent telos undergirded by a theological anthropology (Jensen, 2018). The Anglican school has an explicit and integral moral purpose lending coherence to its story of the good life and supporting student meaning-making. It is an understanding that a flourishing life is lived not for its own sake, but in a love relationship with God, serving Him and others.

Smith claims this “imaginative picture” or “social vision” (2009, p. 53) is promoted mainly by means of stories told by a community. This vision is expressed imaginatively in

various texts and grounded in ideology, replete with values, beliefs, attitudes and ideals (Erikson, 1968). This would suggest the desirability of uncovering the many storied accounts of the flourishing life for possible interaction with the students' religious identity. However, Ewing (2016) cautions us to hold an open-ended, dynamic understanding of the concept of story in relation to the curriculum. She advocates "storylines" in lieu of "stories" in curriculum's form as an ideologically-grounded meta-narrative (Ewing, 2016). A sense of ambiguity, incompleteness of events and a recursive element thus ensures that we consider the imaginative and creative nature of curriculum as it is enacted in the dynamic classroom situation. It also indicates the complexity of researching in this area where the unfolding storyline may not be obvious either to teacher or observer but exists as a product of a community. This study uses both 'storyline' and 'meta-narrative' to refer to the 'big story' of the religious tradition and alternative worldviews that claim to describe 'the flourishing life' in various forms of curriculum. It retains the terminology of 'story' for the 'small stories' that reflect more individualised interpretations such as occur in the classroom where "teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and others' stories" (Shkedi, 2009, p. 834).

I have suggested limitations to Smith's theory of how a particular version of the flourishing life meta-narrative may be promoted by a school and adopted by students. For example, it cannot be assumed that this imaginative social vision will be absorbed into students' religious identity on the basis of his recommendation of ritual religious practice or "liturgies" of various sorts. This is especially the case in relation to conversionist aspects of religious identity, which involve a re-orientation of telos or "metaphysical change" (Bruner, 2004, p. 709) of a student's story. Nevertheless, his conceptualisation of the flourishing life as a social vision focuses strongly on community where the storyline may be articulated,

critiqued, adapted and adopted. As a dynamic function of the community, the concept of the ‘flourishing life’ has a broader application than the theologically-loaded term ‘conversion’, traditionally used in the Anglican school context. For that reason it is eminently suited to research in the context of open-enrolment schools in a pluralist society.

The Multiple Forms of Curriculum

Understanding curriculum as a complex conversation around big and little stories of the flourishing life enables a mapping of the conceptual links between curriculum, student religious identity and the religious tradition. All three, to varying degrees, contain an account of the world and humanity’s place in it, because every form of curriculum is developed around basic beliefs about the world at large. In relation to identity this account is rich with answers to the two key questions: ‘Who am I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’ This is particularly important for the interpretive and meaning-making functions of the curriculum. For the purposes of this study, the forms of curriculum are understood as: intended, enacted/experienced and hidden. Each form of curriculum was found relevant to student identity formation in this study while requiring a complex effort at understanding both the term and its function (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. x). A distinction between the intended/formal, actual/enacted and hidden curriculum did facilitate a closer focus on the practice of teacher, student and school respectively. But these were never understood to function in isolation from one another.

The intended curriculum

The intended curriculum may be understood as planned and programmed, based on syllabus documents and contextualised by teacher-developed programs in a particular school. This form of curriculum is both stimulus and framework for the “complex conversation” based on

its ideology, defined as “the shared framework of mental models that groups of individuals possess that provide both an interpretation of the environment and a prescription as to how that environment should be structured” (Denzau & North, 1994, p. 24). It is a framework for meaning-making and action that functions bi-directionally with a particular telos or view of the flourishing life. Post-modernism has alerted us to the possibility that “a generalizable and institutional framework of curriculum is highly problematic” (Smith & Ewing, 2002, p. 31). My Critical Realist lens, however, requires reference to an external objective reality without denying the role of language and social context in knowledge development. The Anglican school must then seek some sort of correspondence of its vision of the flourishing life with the reality of the world.

This view guides answers to classic curriculum questions, especially in the area of epistemology where assumptions are made that are critical for selection of content (Smith & Lovat, 2003). For example, “What knowledge is of most worth to learners?” (Smith & Ewing, 2002, p. 26) positions the learner at the centre of the valuing process. On the other hand, “What knowledge is of most worth?” (Pinar, 2013, p. 63) appears to have a canonical, subject focus. Yet answers to each question involve the development of a set of criteria driven by worldview and ethos, the conceptual expression of understandings of what comprises the flourishing life. So too will answers to the question “Whose knowledge?” (Smith & Ewing, 2002), which hints at suspicion of universal knowledge and biased power groups in knowledge selection. These classic questions illustrate the core concern of curriculum: “the nature of knowledge, how we know and how we can prove that we know” (Smith & Lovat, 2013, p. 12). This became a key issue in this study when considering how the Anglican religious tradition functioned in each school.

It is also important to retain a sense of the planned curriculum's historic development, given the assumption of Western democracies that it would forward both personal and common good. Pinar (2013) thus warns against conceptualising the intended curriculum strictly in terms of ideology and power through use of the terms 'discourse' and 'identity'. He claims that the "specificity of circumstances" is lost (2013, p. 46) as well as an appreciation of individual agency (2013, p. 49). The result is that character is seen as irrelevant while cultural, racial and gender identity dominate curriculum as a new meta-narrative (2013, p. 50). The key question, "What knowledge is of most worth to learners?" becomes a matter of personal life history and preference, with criteria of "most worth" determined by identity issues (2013, p. 63). Assuming Anglican schools are aligned with the dogma of their founding tradition, the nature of persons as created precludes them making reductionist assumptions around power-seeking groups devoid of altruistic telos and an element of human agency. But the Christian faith does emphasise the role communities play in formation. Holding strong views on human weakness and potential, character development is seen as an important priority.

Indeed Pinar (2011), in resurrecting the term *Bildung*, suggested that curriculum is, at least in part, character formation. *Bildung* has been described as "personhood formation" undertaken in a dynamic, dialogical relationship with others, the world and the self (Miedema, 2017). Hence the importance of ethics to Pinar who states, "Ethics may replace politics as curriculum studies' primary category" (Pinar, 2013, p. 77). We have already noted that beliefs and values are embodied in the meta-narrative driving answers to the classic questions of curriculum development. *Bildung* acknowledges the powerful, inherently normative nature of curriculum, a feature that has been marginalised by neo-

liberal emphases on content or “basics” (Miedema, 2017). This then poses a further question, “What values and beliefs are of the most worth?”

This is a key question for Anglican schools given that the ideological nature of the syllabus may challenge their worldview, values and beliefs around the flourishing life. Faith-based schools generally espouse a vision grounded in understandings of what it is to be human (Cole, 2005; Peterson, 2001). Indeed such assumptions form the basis for all research in the Social Sciences (Yin, 2016) and may provide what Christian philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff (1984) has called “control beliefs”, providing a framework for theorising within a discipline. Alignment of the religious tradition’s meta-narrative of the flourishing life with that told by various versions of the curriculum may be evaluated on the basis of control beliefs related to what it is to be human. For example, a neo-liberal storyline may be critiqued by a worldview grounded in a belief in the intrinsic dignity and worth of every human being as mutual subjects of a loving God, rather than objects or ciphers in the economy. It may be that a certain lack of coherence prevents the emergence of a clear picture of the flourishing life meta-narrative. Nevertheless, being based on assumptions about persons, curriculum is inevitably value-laden and the question of ‘whose values and beliefs’ remains relevant to curriculum development in Anglican schools.

Despite contestability related to the moral purpose of education, educators have traditionally advocated a planned curriculum focussed on exploring the flourishing life. Skills such as critical thinking, ethical judgement and exploration of alternative world views are often incorporated. The telos is often a harmonious, diverse society involving commitment of the individual, a non-transcendent telos focused on the cognitive and affective. It has echoes of Pinar’s understanding that inner development and social

democracy are likely juxtaposed concerns for the 21st century curriculum planners (Pinar, 2013).

The Lee L. Jacks Professor Emerita of Education at Stanford University, Nel Noddings, also advocated a broad approach to the intended curriculum, advocating it as a context for the development of transformational values, reflecting her feminist Ethic of Care. She claimed the curriculum as a place where the good life is a focus and the “immortal conversation” is undertaken (Noddings, 2002, p. 137). Noddings highlighted two things needed to attain the good life: material goods and the development of personal virtues (2002, p. 137). I consider her advocacy significant for open-enrolment Anglican schools in its emphasis on student agency around “intelligent belief or unbelief” (Noddings, 1993) and for its inclusion in mainstream discourse rather than specifically religious education. At a further level of the intended curriculum, the teacher’s role appears to be crucial in the planning, as “teachers’ mental plans or images are most important in providing a picture of what is intended should take place in the classroom” (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 133). This throws the focus onto the classroom, playground and all spaces where the teacher’s plans and images take form.

The actual curriculum: enacted and experienced

The classroom is the space where the intended and actual curriculum are brought together (Smith & Lovat, 2003) and transformed by the hidden curriculum of teacher and students. I refer in more detail to the hidden curriculum below, while focusing on the actual curriculum as enacted by the teacher and experienced by the students (Pinar, 2011). However, I do not understand the actual curriculum as a passive student experience. Due to student agency, the actual curriculum may reflect more than the teacher’s intentions. Students bring their own “intentions” and “conceptual material” to bear on the classroom tasks and relationships

enacted by the teacher (Eisner, 2008, p. 18). In particular, students' religious ideas interact with the curriculum as:

- Consciously religious: the subject matter or the caring nature of the classroom invokes students' Religious identity.
- Self-consciously religious: a sense of isolation is generated as the result of previous experiences of the world.
- Unconsciously: Students remain unaware of any connection between their ideas and religious commitments. (Schweber, quoted in James, 2015, pp. 54-58)

Understanding with Pinar (2013, p. 63) curriculum as Currere (an individual race) in tandem with Bildung, (making ethics central) suggests a rich picture of student experience of the actual curriculum as well as their intensive individual impact on it. However, while supporting Pinar's acceptance of an important role for academic study, a Theological Critical Theorist would perhaps question the extent of his emphasis on the individual race at the expense of a focus on abstract theoretical knowledge (Wheelahan, 2010).

Students need to learn to work with the dynamic of a discipline, learning a "mental map" (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing & Le Cornu, 2015) of it and knowing how its knowledge claims are justified, including the role of beliefs in these claims (Wheelahan, 2010).

"Understanding" is the "raison d'être" of curriculum for Pinar (2011, p. 7). However "understanding" seen through a Theological Critical Realist (ThCR) lens incorporates a component of the universal by referencing a many-layered external reality. ThCR both articulates the role of presuppositions in structuring meaning and mandates correction of them and any truth claims in light of the "real world" (Hostettler, 2010; Shipway, 2011).

The approach of this study is to accept that the imagination is central to the process of developing a story of the flourishing life and is grounded in ideology involving worldview,

values and beliefs, often of a religious nature. Nevertheless, study of school subjects still involves a search for what the ThCR researcher would term objective truth that corresponds with reality. Students need to be assured that knowledge claims of their subjects can be justified while maintaining a certain epistemic humility, conscious of their finitude and perspective (Carson, 2008).

In this regard, the teacher is no neutral deliverer of information, but a believing and valuing agent who weaves an account of life in interaction with students. For example, Shkedi (2009) found that in the process of preparation and delivery of curriculum, teachers overcame the perceived absence of order in a disjointed curriculum by using their own meta-narrative. He labelled the two dimensions of this meta-narrative “pedagogical content” and “didactic-pedagogic” (Shkedi, 2009, pp. 847-8). Interestingly, most teachers appeared to differ significantly from the meta-narrative of the intended curriculum, being unaware of its presence. While this may be seen as an exercise of professional judgement, Huber (2008) reminds us of the rights and responsibilities of families, the third party in the construction of curriculum in the classroom. Parents may have the right to expect that the formal meta-narrative of the school be the one that staff promote in their classrooms.

It is interesting to note that in choosing a faith-based school, a survey of 12 studies demonstrated that parents in NSW independent schools prioritise the area of “personal characteristics” in terms of “values”. This appears to be understood as universal Aristotelian virtues rather than a specific religious identity. It is “ethos” that parents of independent school students mention in relation to one of the seven qualities they value in choosing a school, that of “reinforcement of moral values”.

For many parents, it is the ethos of a school — a subjective sense of the culture and values and the way students and staff interact — that is the basis for judging school

quality. Research shows that this is indeed a valid measure of a good school. A school's culture and values, and the extent to which these are shared by the student body, have a substantial influence on student achievement, largely through motivation and support.

(AISNSW, 2016, p. 2)

Such parental expectations restricting the promotion of the religious tradition to subjective understandings of school ethos could be expected to impact powerfully on the curriculum as enacted in the classroom. As a conversation (Pinar, 2011) or narrative process (Shkedi, 2009) around the flourishing life, significant gaps could be expected between the intended and the actual curriculum given that the hidden curriculum of teacher, students, parents and school context operate powerfully in the background.

The hidden curriculum

Portelli (1993) identified four major ways in which the hidden curriculum may be understood. They relate to the unofficial and implicit expectations set by the school; the social structure of the school; the way the process of schooling delivers unplanned outcomes; and, finally, student agency. Taken together these appear to be quite relevant to Anglican schools. The conversation around the flourishing life is conducted in a never-neutral, constantly shaping environment and culture, sometimes referred to as a “figured” or socially constructed world (Faircloth, 2012, p. 187). This is the world of expectations that is promoted by the school as a social institution focusing on acceptable roles for its members as the school fulfils its socialisation function (Smith & Lovat, 2003). “Appropriate” tasks and values as well as styles of interacting (Faircloth, 2012) are implicit in such areas as school customs, culture, rules, rituals and relationships (Smith & Lovat, 2003) and these always have a normative aspect (Portelli, 1993). It includes the “ethos” referred to above and may be either intentional or incidental to the teaching and learning in any school. It may

also include such intangibles as a sense of school community, which was found to impact on the religious commitment of students in faith-based schools in the USA (Wighting & Liu, 2009). Its function has been referred to as a “powerful saturation of consciousness”, a daily reception of the school’s messages (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 37). Given that every religious tradition has a belief and values-based message to tell, it was expected that this message would be expressed in various ways across the schools, making this aspect of curriculum very important for the current study. Additionally, the boys’ and girls’ schools were expected to differ in the nature of their “figured world”, given the traditional gender differences in areas such as rituals and relationships.

Portelli’s fourth way of understanding the hidden curriculum emphasised student agency in contributing to the curriculum conversation. Students may recognise at least partially the hidden curriculum and respond to tasks in ways that reflect a belief that they will be rewarded in the particular school context, thus creating their own form of the hidden curriculum (Portelli, 1993). The hidden curriculum then does not necessarily function in a one-way process. Each participant in the community brings experiences and a set of values that guide responses to and choices around the curriculum. This includes the teacher, who comes to the community with a personal hidden curriculum which is in part their approach to the subject matter of their subject, the product of interpretation filtered through worldview and values. These understandings of the hidden curriculum added a further layer of complexity to classroom observation in this study.

The power of the hidden curriculum lies, of course, in its tendency to remain hidden. Students can’t easily exercise agency in relation to something whose influence they remain largely unaware of. Nor can teachers address their own “personal hidden curriculum” unless actively reflecting on and articulating it. Nevertheless, in each area of the school its

foundational meta-narrative or storyline is being given a particular form by more or less active agents. Teachers, students and school executives are all involved in formation of the school's curriculum, often without a conscious recognition of either the impact of the hidden curriculum on them or vice versa.

To summarise, for the purposes of this research, curriculum was viewed as:

- a complex conversation around the knowledge that has been judged of most value for the individual's *Currere* or race of life in the particular school context;
- values and belief-based formation or *Bildung* focused on an imaginative, telos-focused social narrative of the flourishing life;
- comprising three forms within the school: intended, actual and hidden.

Its different forms may or may not align well with the interpretive framework of a school, which in the Anglican school is fleshed out by the flourishing-life meta-narrative of the religious tradition. This stems from a theological understanding of the nature of persons and life purpose: answering "Who am I?" and "What is my purpose?" Such religious assumptions could be expected to drive the focus of the school's offering to varying degrees across all educational activities.

Religious Tradition and Curriculum

To understand curriculum in terms of a narrative of the flourishing life is to recognise the socially constructed nature of curriculum in all its forms and should trigger a quest for at least a minimum level of harmony amongst the stories functioning in the Anglican school. In this I am assuming that religions offer a source of order and meaning, with an internally structured interpretive framework offering coherence and a guide to everyday living (Geertz, 1993; Kroger & Marcia, 2011). This implies the potential for non-alignment of the syllabus-

based intended curriculum with the interpretive framework offered by the school's meta-narrative. For example, a secularised, neo-liberal meta-narrative of the flourishing life downplays the transcendent with its focus on economic conditions and material wealth rather than care for the marginalised and may become the inadvertent means of student formation when it is actualised in the classroom. I suggest that there are at least three ways in which a religious tradition can function effectively in relation to a school's curriculum in Anglican schools.

Coherence for the curriculum through its meta-narrative

Understanding the curriculum as a meta-narrative with many forms aligns well with Erikson's idea of the religion/ideology domain as powerfully present in curriculum. As discussed, an ideological mental framework comprises a set of beliefs and constructs with associated practices and actions (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Its functional role in simplifying the universe and organising experience is thought necessary for the adolescent ego (Erickson, 1968). So the question in relation to curriculum becomes "What story?" and "Whose story?" (Smith & Ewing, 2002) and highlights the essential role of the meta-narrative in the development of the intended curriculum.

Erikson (1968) noted the possibility of two cohering stories: those of Technology or New Humanism. Neil Postman (1996) extended this by suggesting that a "god" be promoted by the curriculum story. What he recognised as a pressing need in education could be satisfied by a variety of "gods" including Science or Technology. Both sets of suggestions were made in response to a particular socio-historical period and reflect the needs of the time; but Postman's appears to be more expressly ideological in its understanding of the criteria for qualifying as a suitable "god". He suggests the necessity for a comprehensive story with complex symbolic power so as to inspire students to organise their lives around it (Postman,

1996). This he claimed was what was lacking in late 20th century curriculum offerings in the USA.

The most important contribution the school can make is to provide young people with a sense of purpose, of meaning, and of the interconnectedness of what they learn.

(Postman, 1983, quoted in Hughes, 2001, p. 5)

In the NSW syllabi for the Australian Curriculum it may be that the Cross Curriculum Priorities such as “Sustainability” or the “Other Learning across the Curriculum Areas” such as “Difference and Diversity” (<https://syllabus.bostes.nsw.edu.au/support-materials/parents-guide/>) might fulfil a similar function for the 21st century secularised school. But they appear to lack the comprehensiveness and symbolic power needed for a coherent big story of life as they lack an element of transcendence. This presents faith-based schools with an opportunity to contextualise such “Learning Across the Curriculum” emphases within their own meta-narrative.

It should be noted, however, that an implication of having a transcendent God as the ‘god’ of this big story is that it is intrinsically confessional. This meta-narrative is told not for simple intellectual assent, nor is it an abstract cognitive process. Instead it offers the opportunity for students and staff to identify their own small story within it and to live out the big story in relationship with God. Partly for this reason, the big story of a God-focused religious tradition has potential to function as a Postman-like ‘god’, giving a central focus and meaning-making structure to the intended curriculum (Geertz, 1993; Kroger & Marcia, 2011), one that may become a focus of human love. It is a big story of coherence found in the person of God himself. Its function may thus be uncovered, articulated, critiqued and accepted or rejected by students rather than operating covertly in hidden assumptions and practices. It may also function in relation to the criteria for selection, organisation and

pedagogical approach of the curriculum, originating in its distinctive understanding of people and knowing (Smith, 2009).

The relationship between the meta-narrative of a religious tradition and various forms of the curriculum is still often problematic, being neither linear nor automatic. It is always given its narrative form by valuing humans and therefore formed and transformed in curriculum. However, seeking to bring a telos-focused coherence to an otherwise fragmented curriculum may align with a more holistic understanding of student development. It allows space for the spirituality of students, advocated in the Melbourne Declaration (2008) and affirmed in the 2019 revision, as well as encouraging students to see beyond the boundaries of the discrete subjects. This is especially so if we accept that the embodied narrative of the religious tradition is framed around a structure that supports students to make sense of their world and their place in it.

Support to construct personal meaning in a post-Christendom world

The approach of Anglican schools (if indeed we can refer to such in general terms) was, in previous centuries, predicated on a social compact that situated a Christian cognitive framework as the interpretive grid for the broader community as well as the school (Hill, 2007). As such, its impact on curriculum was not immediately obvious, while operating as a framework on which students could implicitly construct their personal meaning as they participated actively in actual curriculum formation. However, Hill reminds us that the worldview of Christendom no longer provides the “value canopy” under which we live. Rather than mourning its collapse, he claims that it is a helpful outcome, dividing the Christian faith from a compromised culture. However, that does leave a potential vacuum where Christian schools may have depended on the taken-for-granted “common sense” framework of Christendom to act as a set of assumptions and beliefs to ground student

meaning-making. Religion generally has lost its integrative function in society (Miedema et al., 2008). Indeed many have mourned the loss while claiming the necessity of some sort of spiritual framework. Charles Taylor, for example, claims the need for “inescapable frameworks” in meaning-making:

Why speak of this in terms of a loss of meaning? Partly because a framework is that in virtue of which we make sense of our lives spiritually. Not to have a framework is to fall into a life which is spiritually senseless. The quest is thus always a quest for sense.

(Taylor, 1989, p. 18)

In Chapter One I suggested that you cannot have an identity of any sort without a supportive interpretive system functioning to recognise and reinforce it (Gee, 2000; Taylor, 1989). It may not be religious, but it is located outside of the person in this socio-cultural understanding.

Some theorists have focused on the dynamic nature of both curriculum (Pinar, 2000) and student meaning-making in response to curriculum (Kunnen & Bosma, 2000). It has been described as “a system since all the variables are related, and dynamic because it describes an iterative process” (Kunnen & Bosma, 2000, p. 63). However, understanding curriculum and student meaning-making as a dynamic system may imply the potential for more radical change than the capacity of any static religious tradition. It also makes the impact of the interpretive framework on student meaning-making very difficult to explore and describe. For the purposes of this research, “interpretive framework” is understood as a system functioning with multiple related variables and driven by ideological or “religious” assumptions that limit its capacity to be dynamic. In relation to the religious tradition of Anglican schools, this involves particular assumptions about people with associated values and worldview, the skeletal structure that supports the meta-narrative and hence student

meaning-making as they engage in the actual curriculum. As Bartoszek and Deal (2016) claim, “all religion is about meaning-making” (2016, p. 150).

In this regard, there appears to be little consideration by schools of the ideological basis of the intended curriculum in the way it may impact the interpretive framework of the school. Remy Low (2013) found that the parent-controlled Christian schools of his study generally accommodated themselves to the broader community on terms that were “defined by the hegemonic discourse of neo-liberalism” (Low, 2013, p. 5). These related to the role of such schools in “training worker-citizens” and ensuring that their religious offering was “marketable to consumers, who are free to choose schools on the basis of their private preferences” (Low, 2013, p. 5). The potential of the hegemonic discourse to distort the storyline of the religious tradition is obvious. Low continues: “this has implications not only for the way religion is conceived in religious schools that are currently operant, but also for those whose religious discourses are less amenable to such articulations” (Low, 2013, p. 5).

If this is true also of Anglican schools, then it may be that the neo-liberal interpretive framework is dominating curriculum choices and delivery for the sake of community acceptability and enrolments. The neo-liberal ideology may act as a hidden curriculum to subvert Anglican understandings and limit impact on the intended and actual curriculum. Postman’s (1996) idea of consumerism as a ‘god’ resonates with this understanding.

We are what we possess and... our identity is defined by what we do for a living.

Education in service to this god turns out productive economic units that keep the economy growing. (Peterson, 2001, p. 4).

If the central god of the curriculum is, for Anglican schools, the transcendent Creator-God, then one would expect a somewhat different story of human purpose and identity to that of neo-liberalism and thus a different framework for interpreting and making meaning. The

challenge may be one of alignment of accounts of the flourishing life, recognising students as agentic beings, able to consider and critique the plausibility and resilience of the school's framework of meaning.

Various suggestions have been made as to how to encourage this meaning-making process, some cognisant of the developing Religious Identity of students. Englund (2016), for example, advocated Deliberative Communication as a “complementary and alternative means of knowledge formation as meaning-making” because all students and teachers must reflect on their own views and assumptions to reach a common framework. However, this does not give full credit to diverging beliefs that might remain non-negotiable and prevent agreement on a common framework for interpretation.

Noddings further suggests that in a pluralist democracy a range of alternatives be examined as options for student meaning-making (Noddings, 1989). However, that exploration should not necessarily be expected to change the interpretive framework of the student or student religious identity (Kunzman, 2006). This would especially be the case in a faith-based school in which it is presumed the moral purpose of education is a clear priority. Nor is it supported by my assumption that seeking after some form of truth can and should be a component of the process. Belief-based perspectives cannot be negotiated away so easily, even for the purpose of relating and compromising in the face of a plurality of beliefs. This study was aimed at uncovering some possible answers to these dilemmas.

Exploration and articulation of the assumptions of the curriculum

As stated previously, students are not always ignorant of the hidden curriculum's presence, often adjusting their own practice in response. Paradoxically perhaps, a religious tradition can support critique of various beliefs and values by the deliberate articulation and living embodiment of one particular account of the flourishing life. Observing different versions of

this enables students to consider and perhaps discriminate between alternatives. This requires active and “imaginative engagement” with traditions leading to understanding in depth the “why” that lies at the heart of the story (Kunzman, 2015, p. 82). Concomitantly, it may stimulate critique of the assumptions around persons and knowledge that lie at the heart of any school’s curriculum offering.

Understanding the curriculum meta-narrative as inevitably value-laden, driven by ideological concerns, beliefs and values, implies that it will not automatically align with every religious tradition. I stated above that the religious tradition has the potential to become the “value canopy” for the associated faith-based school, providing a framework for student meaning-making in the context of the actual curriculum. I claim this is especially the case when its inherent contestability is acknowledged and assumptions around personhood uncovered. Such an acknowledgement aligns well with the secularised, 21st century temperament (Taylor, 2007). But it may be that Anglican schools are failing to educate students in the assumptions of its meta-narrative in the areas that are of importance to the curriculum. For example, students’ late 20th century value systems were not found to be significantly affected by attendance at a faith-based rather than public school (Astill, 1998). However, Astill reported no data on deliberate interventions in the context of the curriculum as recommended by those who emphasise the moral purpose of education (Lovat, 2006). Focusing on values as an end product also restricts the picture of student development suggested by religious identity. Values may lie at the core of religious identity, but they are embodied in a comprehensive picture of human flourishing that includes worldview, beliefs and participation in a worshipping community, all of which are based implicitly on assumptions about the nature of persons and knowledge (Theissen, 1993).

Schweber (2015) has categorised the position that students adopt in applying their own “religious ideas” to the curriculum as:

- Consciously religious, where the curriculum content stimulates a response based on religious identity
- Self-consciously religious or religiously intersected, where students feel themselves to be isolated in their religious identity on the basis of their previous experience and respond negatively to curriculum stimuli
- Unconsciously religious, where students have no realisation that their values are contributing to the actual curriculum and are based on their religious identity.

Students’ religious identity can thus function in individual and communal meaning-making with rather mixed impact especially if it remains a part of the student’s own hidden curriculum. Depending on a degree of goodwill towards a plurality of religious identities, a religious tradition can support students to develop their religious identity by affirming the cohering interpretive role of a religious tradition for students’ studies as well as life generally. One way to effect this is to guide students in their analysis and evaluation of the many assumptions around human personhood that form the basis for curriculum in all its forms.

History as a Context for Religious Identity Development

My initial focus in this study was on the subject of History, especially as enacted and experienced curriculum. Owing to the core belief claims of Christianity, it seemed appropriate to give History a central place in research in Christian schools. In Sydney Diocese, the narrative of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ claims a dual

identity for him as God and Human in a socio-temporal context. It would thus be crucial to an Anglican school's identity that these events be explored in the context of the discipline of History, with its methodological and conceptual emphases. Although this may not form the basis for a topic in the Middle School History programme of such schools, the subject of History is thereby recognised as highly important in religious education generally, as a major contributor to student meaning-making. My choice to focus on this subject was formed then by the following understandings of the potential role of the subject of History in the development of religious identity.

Social context and individual agency in identity development

History helps students understand their context with its local and global pressures and the way that has helped form their identity. Much of Erikson's explanation of ego identity was grounded in the unique circumstances of post-World War II upheaval and social change, particularly in the fifties and sixties. He claimed that socio-historical context plays a major role in identity formation, especially in precipitating identity crisis (Erikson, 1968). I claim an important role for student agency in dealing with these social influences. Twenty-first century students are confronted by high levels of crisis-producing social change matched with almost unlimited freedom to choose from a large number of answers to the identity questions of "Who am I?" and "What is my purpose?" For students whose families represent the rich diversity of multi-cultural Australia, being supported to understand and assume a rightful place in our pluralist society involves understanding who they are and their purpose in a socio-historic context. The processes involved in practising History are very similar to those required to further develop such identity.

A narrative understanding of identity with its emphasis on "inherently temporal" stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) accommodates both historical social influences and student

agency. It requires the narrator to tell a story based on insights about personal formation gleaned from the past. Within the school subject of History, students are not just presented with factual content to aid understanding of various social experiences. They are inducted into tools for researching, finding patterns, modifying their positions, narrating engaging and plausible stories and generally making the world of the past understandable (Schneider & Zakai, 2016). History students are involved in interpretive acts in a similar way to that of Narrative Identity; although it must be conceded that they will not necessarily recognise the self-relevance of much information that they process. Exploring with students the way their understanding of the nature and role of persons impacts on this process is a major opportunity for History to contribute to student religious identity. Questions such as “To what extent is the individual formed and directed by events and movements?” may be asked.

Historical processes and ethics

Alasdair MacIntyre claimed that the construct of ‘the self’ has been transformed through historical processes that we have little cognisance of (2007, pp. 34-35). For MacIntyre, identity and moral purpose depend on a history of traditions and practices. Denouncing both liberal individualism and moral conservatism he advocated a return to moral education by means of stories that stir the “moral imagination” (2007, p. 121). He condemned the approach to moral decision-making that he labelled “emotivism”:

the doctrine that all evaluative judgements and more specifically moral judgements are *nothing but* expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling, insofar as they are moral or evaluative in character. (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 12)

This has resulted, he claimed, in a cultural rejection of rational justifications for objective morality. An implication of this is that the context restricts student meaning-making in relation to moral expressions to an essentially historical process.

For students to explore the way the history of ideas, for example, impacts on their moral framework holds great potential for identity development. MacIntyre's account of the historical processes may be contestable. However, a consideration of significant moral issues in the Stage 5 syllabus, such as the clash of colonists and first nations, may prove helpful in addressing emotivism and encouraging critical but compassionate and just thinking. There is much scope for such an approach without sacrificing sound historiography. For example, Topic 6d of the Stage 5 Syllabus states, "Recall the nature of the early British contact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia" and "Outline the developments in government policies towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to 1900" (HSIE/History Syllabus K-10 p. 78).

The contribution of Evangelical, often Anglican, colonists, both lay and ordained, is not without tragic and shameful episodes. But nor is it completely without merit. Even Marxist bookseller, the late Bob Gould, affirmed the extreme courage and commitment of these men and women in protecting Aboriginal peoples, their languages and human rights (Piggin & Linder, 2018). It is surely important in the Anglican school for students to develop an approach to History that includes the empathic "Rabbit-proof Fence" while affirming positive aspects of the contribution of those who established the evangelical churches in Australia. William Dawes is one such well-known contributor (Piggin and Linder, 2018) as the first recorder of any Aboriginal vocabulary and grammar, that of Daruk peoples. Such History is potentially very formative of religious identity, given the strong ethical component of the religious domain and the links with the history of Sydney Anglicanism. It represents just one of the contributions of Anglicanism, a tradition with a rich intellectual, cultural and spiritual heritage worth exploring in History.

Epistemology related to anthropology

History promotes an epistemology based on assumptions of what it is to be a human in community. History affirms the important role of religion in human experience (Wolterstorff, 2014), suggesting that persons are essentially religious beings. Erikson also favoured the development of what he termed “historical logic” to enable students to position their life story within the broader scope of history (1968, p. 257). If true to the disciplinary basis of the subject, middle school History may present a balanced tension between realist epistemology and critical perspectives. In Stage 5, Topic 1c, the syllabus references “Progressive ideas and movements (1750–1918)”, ideologies that formed the modern world. This presents an ideal opportunity to examine the roots of ideology in certain understandings of humans and knowing that impact on the lives of students as they develop their identity. “Capitalism, socialism, egalitarianism” etc. (BOS NSW, 2012, p. 87) are all packed with assumptions about humanity and how they know and act, especially in social groupings. As the syllabus states, “History provides the skills for students to answer the question ‘How do we know?’” (BOS NSW, 2012, p. 10). Additionally, Smith and Lovat (1995) claim that Habermas’s hermeneutical knowing aligns well with the subject of History, exploring the values found in social relationships. As interpretation and meaning-making are paramount in the area, again History appears to be a crucial subject in relation to student meaning-making leading to the further development of their own worldview, values and, ultimately, their religious identity.

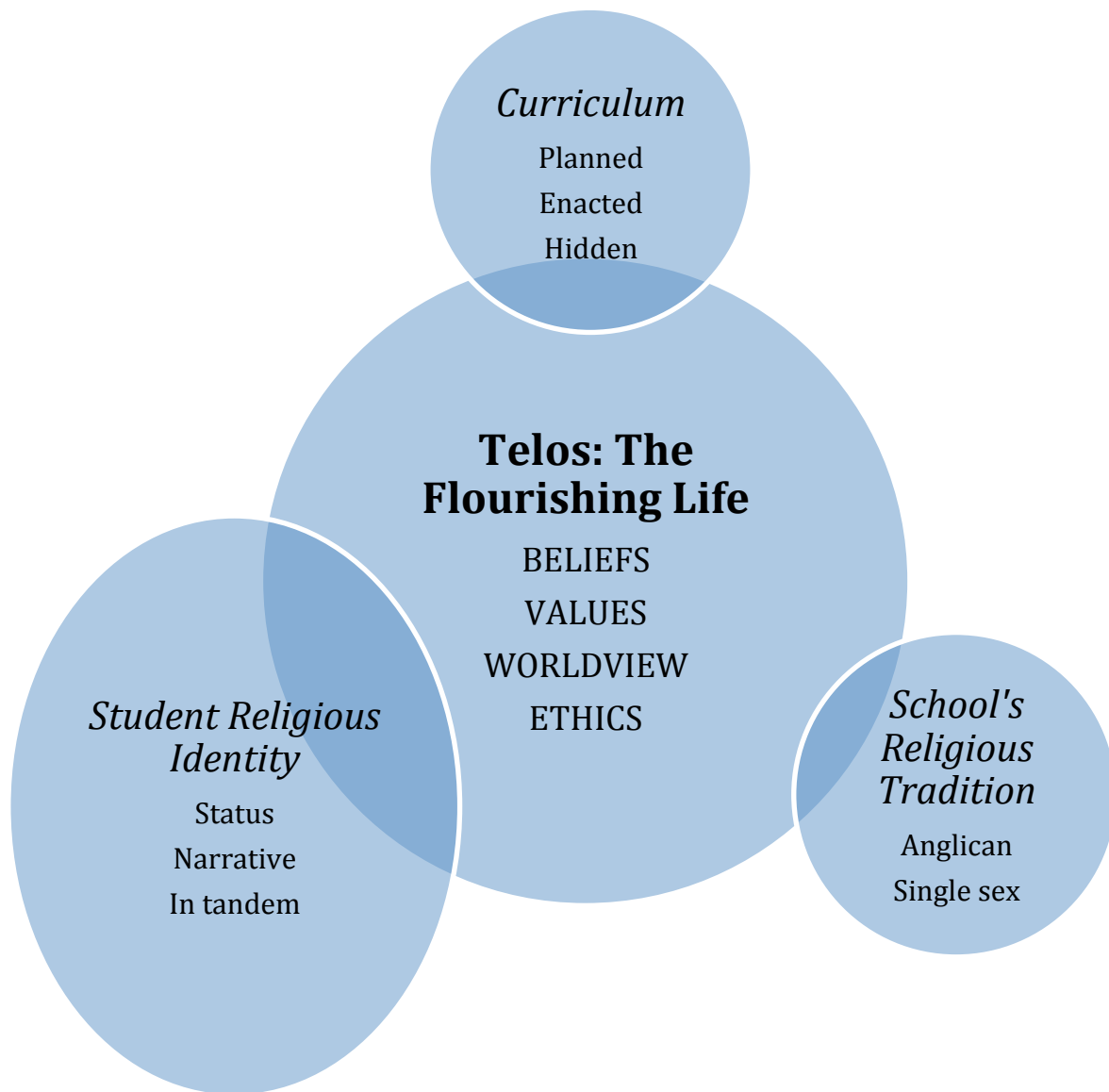
Conclusion

It is apparent that the ideological nature of curriculum may be problematic for Anglican schools for the following reasons. Being essentially material and secular, national or State-

mandated curricular requirements may present challenges for implementation in schools that by definition have a transcendentally-focused telos for its version of the flourishing life. A secularised curriculum may promote a reductionist view of what it is to be human, eliminating the spiritual from its all-encompassing meta-narrative of the flourishing life. If the curriculum is indeed the main story offered by the school for the development of students' meaning-making framework, then conflict with other school-based versions of the story is almost inevitable. This may be particularly evident in the subject of History, given that evangelical history has been largely omitted from the discipline (Piggin & Linder, 2018) and hence the school subject. This potentially impacts plausibility of the religious tradition, which requires strong ties to a religion's origin and history as integrated aspects of its way of life (Volf, 2011, pp. 19, 40).

In the next chapter I discuss the various theories and studies related to religious identity. I examine neo-Ericksonian understandings of identity formation, found in the Status Identity construct, as well as the more recent narrative turn in identity as theorised in understandings of Narrative Identity. As complementary approaches to identity studies, I will argue that they resonate with paradigmatic and hermeneutic knowing as well as the integrated balance of ThCR epistemology. Consideration is given to whether religious identity is a discrete construct or simply the unitary construct operating in the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain and an integrated definition of religious identity is offered. After discussing the literature on identity in Chapter Three, in Chapter Four I survey research on school interventions that link curriculum and identity.

Chapter 3. Religious Identity



Introduction

In Chapter 2 I focussed on curriculum in three interactive and interrelated modes: planned and intentional, enacted by teachers and students in the classroom, and experienced within the particularities of a school ethos. As a complex conversation around stories of the flourishing life it is attuned to the moral purpose of Anglican schools and understands

curriculum's multiple forms all involve interpretation and meaning-making. In the context of the Anglican school, I have suggested that there is a deliberate focus on a rich imaginative picture of the flourishing life, with its associated beliefs, values, worldview and ethos. This is a conceptualisation that is directed towards and motivated by a telos incorporating both a present concern for the common good and an eternal future. It thus promotes a sense of purpose and meaning-making, prominent aspects of identity formation (Crocetti et al., 2013; Visser-Vogel et al., 2012).

In this chapter I examine various theories of identity to explore how middle school students may experience and develop their religious identity in the Anglican school. After this brief introduction, I explore the initial understandings of the construct of identity in the theories of Erik Erikson. I then describe identity in the Identity Status paradigm, questioning whether it is a unitary or domain-specific construct. Understandings of Narrative Identity are then explored leading to an integrated framework for understanding religious identity.

Eriksonian Understandings of Identity

In the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling
of being alive without a sense of identity. (Erikson, 1968)

Some basic assumptions

Beliefs about 'the way things are' form the framework for understanding different theories of identity as they do for the social sciences generally. Ontologically-derived beliefs about humanity, truth and meaning are the basis for differing psycho-social theories and these beliefs often remain unarticulated yet powerfully present (Neuman, 2014). I have indicated that the interpretive lens I take in relation to identity is predominantly narrative, with my Theological Critical Realist ontology acting as underlabourer and supporting critique, thus enabling the inclusion of a complementary paradigmatic approach, that of Status Identity.

Conceptualising identity as Narrative Identity represents a later, second phase in understanding this construct. Further, theorists have recently sought to combine Narrative Identity in some way with the first phase approach into what I regard as the third phase (Dunlop & Walker, 2013; Juzwik, 2006; McLean & Pasupathi, 2012; Visser-Vogel et al., 2012). This third phase recognises that identity can be developed by either paradigmatic or narrative means and validly researched by utilising both approaches in tandem. Each approach perhaps emphasises a different perspective of people and different aspects of their activity in the world to yield a rich combined picture of middle school students. Each approach derives initially from the work of Erik Erikson in suggesting the possibility of an adolescent crisis in relation to identity formation.

Distinguishing modes of identity

Over half a century ago Erik Erikson (1968) originally suggested that the resolution of certain challenges to identity was a critical developmental task of the adolescent. Widely varying understandings and associated models have been proposed, due in part to the somewhat vague and anecdotal nature of Erikson's original theorising (Waterman, 1988; Schwartz, 2001). For example, 27 different statements reflecting an understanding of the construct appear in the Prologue alone of Erikson's *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (Waterman, 1988, p. 186). Nevertheless, his broad and rich descriptions of troubled adolescence have stimulated multiple theories of identity up to the present day, due partly to his multi-disciplinary approach which is well aligned with education. His theories were thus taken in this study as the touchstone for understanding the construct.

Erikson seems to have initially construed identity chiefly as a process involving the ego, which seeks to synthesise past, present and future experiences, resulting in a "wholeness", a "sense of identity" (Erikson, 1968, p. 89). He appeared to distinguish between what he

termed “personal identity” and “ego identity”, with his emphasis on the cohering work of the latter in his early writings (1968, p. 50). Ego identity he claimed is “the awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego’s synthesising methods, the style of one’s individuality” (1968, p. 50). It comprises the most foundational beliefs about self and others and is intrapersonal. This subjective awareness of the self as found in ego identity is in contrast to the conscious feeling of possessing an individual identity. The latter may be objectively observed and Erikson referred to this as “personal identity”. He claimed that personal identity is based on two observable and therefore objective facts of existence: selfsameness and continuity experienced in a temporal-historical context and recognition of this by others (1968, p. 50). It is “the mere objective fact of existence” (1968, p. 50), as well as “the set of goals, values, and beliefs that one shows to the world” (Schwartz, 2001, p. 10). Crocetti et al. (2013) summarise Erikson’s conceptualisation as both conscious (a sense of personal uniqueness) and unconscious (seeking to ensure continuity of experience).

Erikson, however, appears to have vacillated as to whether or not to distinguish absolutely between personal identity and ego identity (Bell, 2009), using the terms interchangeably. In later writings, he also postulated a third “level”, that of social identity, understood as “a sense of inner solidarity with a group’s ideals” (Schwartz, 2001, p. 10). The three levels, ego identity, personal identity and social identity, reflect Erikson’s background in psychoanalytic theory and are supported by Cote and Levine (1996); but many researchers in a psycho-social paradigm make no significant distinctions between ego and personal. They seem instead to either conflate the two or to see identity as a construct operating in different modes depending on context and domain.

This study does accept an important distinction in identity between socio-cultural roles and internal psychology/mental processes (Faircloth, 2012). Gee’s typology is helpful in this

distinction by positing a core or personal identity formed by “nature” and three types of social identity (Gee, 2000), consistent with a psycho-social understanding of identity.

Table 3.1: *Four ways to view identity*

PROCESS		POWER	SOURCE OF POWER
Nature-identity: a state	Developed from	forces	in nature
Institution-identity: a position	Authorized by	authorities	within institutions
Discourse-identity: an individual trait	Recognized in	the discourse/ dialogue	of/with "rational" individuals
Affinity-identity: experiences	Shared in	the practice	of "affinity groups"

(Based on Gee, 2000, p. 100)

Core or nature-identity emerges from material existence, the result of being created in a certain way; yet Gee claims it is still subject to recognition by the social identities before it can really be called an identity type. Gee further claims that these identities are usually co-existent, overlapping and emphasised variously in different eras by different cultures. They become “four ways to formulate questions about how identity is functioning for a specific person (child or adult) in a given context or across a set of different contexts” (2000, p. 101). Hitlin (2003) suggests a further integration by claiming that core or personal identity and social identity are inextricably linked by values rather than forming a hierarchy or continuum.

I place personal identity at the core of the self, experienced as unique but subject to social patterning through the concept of values...My conception allows for the “permeability” of personal and social identity (Deaux 1992b), even while it permits the concepts to be

theorized and measured as separate, albeit fundamentally intertwined, structures. (Hitlin, 2003, p. 121)

Values in this understanding supply cohesion for the disparate social identities (Hitlin, 2003). It is in this sort of interrelationship, of internal psychological processes and social perspectives, that the nature of identity as psycho-social is seen (Bertram-Troost, 2006). The individual's meaning-making in relating to their environment thus has a dual focus, and no distinction between ego and personal identity is necessary to explore these. I thus refer to identity in general terms, as well as specifically to religious identity with the distinctive content of that domain. My expectation in conceptualising identity in this way was that it would enable focus on a rich picture of adolescent religious identity, infused with worldview assumptions, beliefs and values, centred on a particular and individual purpose, with general identity providing the broader psycho-social context.

“Finding something or somebody to be true to”

Erikson's theory involved developmental stages signified by specific tasks and identifications. Most relevant to this study are the tasks of exploration, commitment and narrating linked as a whole to 3 classic dilemmas of identity, being:

- Sameness across time versus constant change
- Uniqueness versus ‘same as everybody else’
- Personal versus socio-cultural agency. (Bamberg, 2011, p. 6)

The adolescent must find ways to integrate these, moving into maturity knowing that they have been faithful to past models and present living traditions (Erikson, 1968, pp. 137-140).

“Fidelity” for Erikson was the end product of developmental stages, climaxing in adolescence and understood as “the strength of disciplined devotion” (1968, p. 251). It is “the end result of finding something or somebody to be true to” (1968, p. 235) and is a

means for preserving what is worthwhile amid the multiple physical, social and psycho-sexual changes in adolescence. He emphasised adolescent agency and suggested that failure to achieve fidelity seriously impeded progression into adulthood (1968, p. 256). Anglican schools could therefore position themselves to have quite a significant role in student identity, given possible alignment between the fidelity goal and a transcendent telos.

Indeed, Erikson made some suggestions about how teachers might demonstrate and promote fidelity within school subjects. The accuracy of the scientific method, the fairness of rules of a game and the authenticity of arts productions are just three examples (1968, p. 235). They promote a sense of reliability and security in the midst of change and appear to combine a mix of paradigmatic and narrative thought modes. His special focus was history, which is one reason that this subject was chosen as the initial context for this study.

Students, he claimed, may see in history the irreversible nature of the past in important events and find explanations for the actions of others that give some assurance for the future (1968, p. 247). He suggested that the truth of historical accounts, coupled with the development of historical perspective, balanced adolescent desire for self-sameness with knowledge of the inevitability of change. Further, Erikson emphasised the processes of history with historical consciousness developed by multiple means such as religion, politics, the arts and media. What he termed “historical logic” he thought necessary for adolescents to position their own life story within the broader scope of history (1968, pp. 257-259). The role of the broader school curriculum with its rich curricular and co-curricular offerings in these formative areas was thus relevant to this study. To understand how the curriculum’s story of the flourishing life might interact with student identity requires an understanding of both approaches emerging from the initial theorising: Status Identity and Narrative Identity.

Identity in the Status Model

[Status Identity is] an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organisation of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history. (Marcia, 1980, p.159)

Based on Erikson's emphasis on the importance of the ego's synthesising role in identity, initial research of the construct had its main focus on intra-psychology, the mental processes involved in solving the dilemmas, rather than the impact of the socio-cultural and historical context (Faircloth, 2012; Kroger, 2000). However, Erikson also emphasised interaction between person and context (Cote & Levine, 1987). In adolescence especially, he claimed that "life history intersects with history" (Erikson, 1968, p. 257). Thus more recently there has been a renewed focus on the context of the social environment in identity development (Faircloth, 2012). I have previously indicated my understanding of how personal and social aspects operate in a 'permeable' relationship to form an identity centred on values.

Nevertheless, Marcia (1980), who initially operationalised Erikson's theory, has had a major impact on research focussed on the intra-psychology of the "mental processes" approach (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). His definition of identity reflects this. It is "an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organisation of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history" (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). He proposed a model of Statuses that assumes a process involving some social or contextual trigger leading to a sense of crisis (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001; Sinai, Kaplan & Flum 2012). This crisis in turn leads to exploration of alternative versions of identity becoming a form of problem-solving (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). The resolution of the crisis involves a commitment to particular values and belief-infused goals. The grid formed by these processes produces Achieved, Moratorium, Foreclosed and Diffusion Identity Statuses as shown below.

Table 3.2: *Identity Statuses*

	<i>Explorers</i>	<i>Non-explorers</i>
<i>Committed</i>	Achieved	Foreclosed
<i>Non-committed</i>	Moratorium	Diffusion

The processes involved have been defined as the following:

[Exploration is] active questioning and weighing of various identity alternatives before making decisions about the values, beliefs, and goals that one will pursue.

[Commitment is] making a relatively firm choice about an identity domain and engaging in significant activity geared toward implementation of that choice. (Crocetti et al. 2013, p. 2).

Values, beliefs, goals and actions are directed towards a way of life and fulfil major functions in the processes of exploration and commitment (Hitlin, 2003) with a concomitant emphasis on adolescent agency. This is a normative understanding of adolescent processes whereby they ascribe value to certain views of life and construct understandings of the meaning of life (Cote & Levine, 1987). The adolescent's vision of the flourishing life becomes of central importance. This aligns the processes of identity development very closely with the moral purpose of Anglican schools and it allows the tracking of connections between the stories of the flourishing life told by the three foci of this study.

The Status Identity model is not a description of developmental stages; but is considered to be a social psychology typology of the results of dealing with the identity crisis (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). Nevertheless, Status Identity has often been studied in relation to schools

and students, including student well-being, motivation and religiousness (Adams & Marshall, 1996; De Bruin-Wassinkmaat et al., 2019; Kaplan & Flum, 2012). Any cohort of students in the middle school might be expected to spread across the Status categories, with identity development continuing into adulthood requiring recourse to “identity capital” (Cote, 1996; Crocetti et al., 2008). This development could helpfully be supported in the senior years by Anglican schools.

Why not just adopt the Status model?

There are significant limitations to the original Status model, including a lack of consideration of the impact of family, peers or broader society. Nor are content and hidden interpretive processes of meaning-making directly addressed (Visser-Vogel et al., 2012). Cote and Levine (1987) in particular questioned whether Marcia’s operationalisation captured the complexity and breadth of Erikson’s theory, including his definition of the construct of identity itself. Marcia referred to exploration and commitment as “observable referents” of the otherwise hidden and integrated identity structure (Kroger & Marcia, 2011, p. 33). This is an understanding of identity in structural terms as a unitary construct, operating in the context of a limited number of domains as discussed below.

A further limitation can be found in Marcia’s claim of in-depth exploration occurring prior to commitment, which is challenged by longitudinal research (Meeus, 2011). There may be a continuous interaction between exploration in breadth and depth and commitment or recommitment (Luyckx., Schwartz, Berzonsky, Soenens, Vansteenkister, Smits & Goossens, 2008) perhaps reflecting Erikson’s positioning of identity as a bipolar construct of synthesis and confusion. As explained previously, successful synthesis involves the transformation of childhood identifications and commitments into a coherent structure of

ideals as the basis for adulthood (Schwartz, 2001). This signified a new kind of identity; but one that would be constantly developing over the life span with ongoing commitments.

Status theory then appears to have significant weaknesses in operationalising Erikson's imaginative writings. It may not capture the fullness of the identity construct (Cote & Levine, 1988). It de-emphasises social factors such as significant others or broader society. It cannot describe content and the full extent of meaning-making processes (Visser-Vogel et al., 2012, pp. 116-117). Identity in all its manifestations and contexts is a very complex construct. Nevertheless Marcia's operationalisation has enabled a huge body of effective research into adolescence for over three decades. It may be that the key to implementing Status Identity research lies in also acknowledging the role of the social context of family, school culture, peer group etc. (Kroger, 2000) and holding in tension the permeability of the two aspects of identity processing: intra-psychological and socio-cultural. Therefore Identity Status was used in this study as one indicator of student processing understood as a psycho-social task of integration.

Focussing on the religious domain

The issue of unitary versus domain-specific understanding of Status Identity is particularly relevant to this study. Marcia himself thought of the domains not as discrete but pointing to the internal synthesised structure of global identity (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Religious identity in this understanding is global identity experienced in the religious domain. An increasing number of domains have been recognised for their importance to adolescent identity, including:

- occupation and ideology
- occupation, religion and ideology

- dual categories of ideology (occupation, religion and ideology) and interpersonal (friendships, dating and sex roles)
 - additional areas of values, philosophy/lifestyle, recreation and family
- (Based on Schwartz, 2001).

Researchers have challenged the validity of the unitary global construct on the basis of its conflation or confounding of the domains, especially by aggregation (Bell, 2009; Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008). The unitary construct was often determined by simply adding together the Statuses identified in each domain (Goossens, 2001). Generally convergence between global and domain-specific Status has been low, with 45% of subjects having a global Status different from at least one of their domain Statuses (Goossens, 2001). Some researchers have thus concluded that global is not synonymous with domain identity (Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008).

However, *Occupation, Religion and Ideology* remains an important domain. Goossens (2001) for example reported research that found 85% convergence between global identity and *Occupation, Religion and Ideology* identity. If identity is understood as a successful process of synthesis involving human agency, then students may need some ideological or religious means for evaluating and giving structure to options. This could account for the domain's dominance, as it would provide a structured meta-narrative supporting the coherence and synthesis that identity suggests (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

Measures of global identity or domain-specific identity do have different applications in the research. For example, it is not recommended to use global identity Status when looking for specific differences between males and females (Goossens, 2001), when considering developmental issues (Bertram-Troost, 2006) or examining contextual influences (Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008). For this reason, while some items in the

questionnaire addressed global identity, the main focus of this study in its Status aspect was on the domain of *Occupation, Religion and Ideology*.

A paradigmatic snapshot

Research based on Marcia's model contains a snapshot of students, reflecting only part of their identity picture: the outcome of the process at a certain moment in time. Over half a century of research based on his operationalisation has demonstrated its usefulness in exploring the more paradigmatic processes that many people employ in coming to some sense of self in a bewildering world.

Further, there appears to be a positive relationship between global identity development and how adolescents interact with issues in the *Occupation/Ideological/Religious* domain (Hunsberger et al. 2001; King, 2003). These identity processes are based ultimately on their beliefs, values and vision of the flourishing life. Religion may function as the means for transcending the self to enable focus on the common good within this vision (King, 2003). In all the process accounts, there is a normative component that aligns with the renewed awareness of the power of values and ideology in 21st century curriculum development (Smith & Lovat, 2003; Lovat, 2006).

In summary, for the purposes of this study I understand Status Identity as an affective/cognitive schema of values, beliefs, goals and ethics reflecting exploration of alternatives and intentional commitment. Religious identity I understand as global identity experienced and given content in the domain of *Occupation/Ideology/Religion*.

In order to gain as full a picture as possible of student identity, I administered a measure of religious identity that incorporated questions around both religious identity and global identity, based on Marcia's operationalisation (Bell, 2009). Complementing this

understanding of processes, I employed Narrative Identity approaches to highlight meaning and content within the actual commitments.

Narrative Identity

[Narrative Identity is] an inner story of the self that integrates the reconstructed past, perceived present and anticipated future to provide a life with unity, purpose and meaning.
(McAdams, 1990 as cited in Baddeley & Singer, 2007, p. 177)

Towards a vision of human good

The 21st century has seen a flowering of narrative studies of identity (Meeus, 2011), perhaps stimulated by Bruner's (1986) distinction between narrative and paradigmatic modes of thought. Bruner asserted that the paradigmatic mode is based on logic, generalises about causes and is decontextualised. The narrative mode is particular, contextualised and focussed on constructing personally meaningful explanations. It is more aligned with social constructivist understandings of knowledge and allows more access to the content of identity (Visser-Vogel et al., 2012). Narrative is more than a story; but is also an unavoidable part of the teaching and learning situation. It is therefore appropriate for researching the interaction of various stories in the Anglican school. However, McLean et al. (2014) are of the opinion that both Status and Narrative approaches reveal more about the processes than the content, so particular attention was paid to content in the interview situation in this study.

Whether taking a Status or Narrative approach to the research, both modes of thinking should be explored as either can be operative in any domain (Dunlop & Walker, 2013). It could be that the very act of narration unites the scientific and the hermeneutical modes. This is due to events being narrated in a "quasi-causal and non-teleological" (i.e. paradigmatic) manner and then being interpreted "quasi-retrospectively" by configuration within a certain understanding of a life that is worth living (i.e. hermeneutically) (Bamberg,

2011, p. 7). This may be especially so in the context of day-to-day relationships where narration may support exploration and commitment directed toward a particular purpose – some values-infused vision of “human good” (Bamberg, 2011; Waterman, 1988). This study explored such narrations in the context of classroom relationships, but also in one-to-one interviews where such narration is encouraged by the semi-structured nature of the interaction.

Despite possible integration of the modes of thinking in the actual narration, significant differences remain between Status and Narrative Identity. Grounded largely in a psychological framework, Polkinghorne (1996) and others focussed on Narrative Identity and the role of narrative knowing in the social sciences generally (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). To narrative researchers within a psychological framework, identity is more like “an inner story of the self that integrates the reconstructed past, perceived present and anticipated future to provide a life with unity, purpose and meaning” (McAdams, 1990, as cited in Baddeley & Singer, 2007, p. 177). Stories that people construct to make sense of their experiences in life are held to actually comprise their identity in this approach. These are stories encapsulating “the good” as both a goal and a prior understanding. Integration of experiences through a meaningful mental story both depends on and leads to a life of “purpose and meaning”. In Narrative Identity there is more of an emphasis on content and no attempt is made to assign a level of achievement such as a Status. Instead, integration and coherence are developed and expressed in a personally meaningful story narrated within a cultural and historical context (Adler, Lodi-Smith, Philippe, & Houle, 2016; Polkinghorne, 1996). It thus has the potential for students to integrate their learning in an active process of meaning-making. Indeed, integrative meaning is the most studied outcome of the three

thematic indicators of well-being in Narrative Identity, eclipsing motivational and affective themes (Adler et al., 2016).

Partly because of my ThCR ontology, I do not take the view that Narrative Identity is simply a discursive construct such as suggested by Sfard & Prusak (2005). This may cede to the narrative process the power to form reality rather than interpret it. Rather I claim the necessity of grounding the story in reality in some way, albeit as an imperfect personal perspective. As I related in Chapter 1, ThCR is based on ontological realism (that a real world exists independently of human knowing) as well as epistemic relativism (that humans can know some form of truth, but never perfectly or completely). Students' stories must still be about something "real" to be valid (Eide, 2012) although their interpretation of that something will vary according to their values-based schema. To a general Critical Realist, persons are able to "construe experience, but not construct reality" (Eide, 2012, p. 146) and this is also the case for ThCR researchers.

The Operating Identity Story (OIS)

Further, there are significant differences in the literature between 'life history', 'life story', 'large stories', 'small stories' and 'narrative' (Freeman, 2011; Schachter, 2011) and these often indistinct distinctions make for a confusing research area. Polkinghorne, for example, distinguished between the inner story and the narrative product. He stated, "The story people tell about their lives is not the same as the story that serves to configure identities" (1996, p. 366). He posited a special inner story, the operating identity story (OIS), that functions in people's lives as a means for developing personal meaning by providing "personal unity and purpose" (Polkinghorne, 1996, p. 366; Fivush & Haden, 2003). This meaning does not take the form of propositional truths, being more "emotionally informed, metaphorical, analogical and integrative" than paradigmatic forms of knowledge. It is perhaps "felt

meaning” rather than rational, offered in images and stories (Polkinghorne, 1996, p. 365).

This does not negate my claim that it has to be anchored in some way to reality to be an effective resolution of adolescent crises. This felt meaning is also changed when given concrete form in a story, being impacted by:

- the narrator’s relationship with the audience (eg. the interviewer),
- their own active narrating processes (eg. sharpening...and exaggeration of certain parts of experience for effect and coherence)
- lack of conscious access to all parts of the Operating Identity Story
- the translation of felt meaning into language
- a degree of co-authorship between the narrator and the person(s) being communicated with.

(Based on Polkinghorne, 1996, p. 366)

There are similarities with Habermas and Bluck’s influential distinction between the life story on the one hand and its manifestations on the other. A life story manifests itself in a life narrative and in the process by which the content has been determined, which is autobiographical reasoning (Habermas & Bluck, 2000). Because of the above factors, the individual may not be fully aware of their OIS, nor in complete rational control of the processes and occasions by which the OIS is formed. This results in a possible disjunction between the narrative (resulting from a combination of questionnaire answers and the interview in this study) and the OIS. Some elements of the OIS remain hidden, even to the individual narrator. To address the difficulty of accessing the OIS, Bamberg suggests an approach to narrative analysis in its “interactional contexts” of mutual positioning (2011, p. 10), rather than simple discourse analysis of the interview transcript. Nevertheless, Narrative Identity still appears to provide a solution to the identity dilemma of individual uniqueness

versus “sameness” (Bamberg, 2011), a dilemma not addressed directly in Status Identity.

Therefore in this study aspects of the questionnaire, stories told in the interviews, and interviewees’ expressions and actions, formed the basis for inferring the OIS of students.

However, given that the theological component of a religious tradition is usually stated in propositional form, exploring a student’s religious identity still presented significant challenges. To partially address this, this study took the view that a religious tradition chiefly comprises an overarching story of life, understood as a meta-narrative that is prior to and subsumes theological propositions and categories, as I indicate in Chapter 5. It is then possible to interrogate the tradition in terms that allow for the content suggested for religious identity below, namely a story about affiliation and belonging, behaviours and practices, beliefs and values, and religious/spiritual experiences, all of which are infused with the transcendent (Bell, 2009; Hemming and Madge, 2011).

Personal versus socio-cultural agency

There are two further significant and interrelated issues related to this study’s focus on students’ stories: the cultural/historical context and student agency. They are essentially about Bamberg’s third identity dilemma: personal versus socio-cultural agency (Bamberg, 2011). Cultures help their members to answer the key identity questions through stories that follow certain patterns (Habermas, 2007) described as “canonicalized linguistic frameworks” (Fivush & Haden, 2003, p. viii). Knowledge of two components of these frameworks, age norms and biographical salience, appears to peak at the age of 16 (Habermas, 2007), the age group that was the focus of this study. In cognitive terms, these frameworks incorporate normative “life scripts” that are followed to the extent that personal traits, values etc. allow agreement with the script’s version of the idealised life (Rubin, Berntsen & Hutson, 2009).

In homogeneous cultures, there is widespread agreement as to the script to be followed (Rubin et al., 2009). In the multi-cultural context of Sydney, Australia, this is unlikely. However, there does appear to be a powerful family influence on the content of life stories per se (Hasford ,Abbott, Alisat, Pancer & Pratt, 2017) and I expected to hear a family voice somewhere in the interview stories. Like any story, though, the frameworks are still about characters and intention, personal striving after some goal, context and setting (Adler et al., 2016) and are characterised by temporal sequencing and an evaluative perspective (Habermas & Bluck, 2000). This evaluative perspective distinguishes the narrative from a simple recount of events, infusing it with personal meaning (Juzwik, 2006). Values then take on a central role in Narrative Identity as well as Status Identity, as discussed below. Of particular interest to Anglican schools is the implication drawn from the idea of the canonical framework that student agency may be limited by their access to a narrow number of scripts or by the processes involved. As Bruner states,

The culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes that guide the self-telling of life narrative achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organise memory, to segment and purpose-build the very ‘events’ of life. In the end, we *become* the autobiographical narrative by which we ‘tell about’ our lives. (Bruner, 2004, p. 694)

Bruner understands the narrator as a constructor of self within story-telling boundaries (2004, p. 702). Further, he claims that the schema for a life story is set early in a person’s life and remains persistent unless “metaphysical change” occurs (Bruner, 2004, p. 709). Changing the telos as well as the schema of the life story may form part of the moral purpose of a school based on an Evangelical religious tradition that aims to promote “metaphysical change”. But this presents challenges in a potential clash between the culturally-available models in a school, home and society. A student’s individual big story is

intertwined, with a certain degree of agreement/disagreement, with a particular community's big story of life, especially in relation to the nature of people and purpose (Bruner, 2004; Taylor, 1989). Just how much agency is operative in determining identity in the light of these multiple socio-cultural influences is contestable. However, consistent with Schachter's (2011) emphasis on the intentional nature of identity narration, I assumed a certain amount of student agency in interaction with the socio-cultural factors I explore below.

Developing Narrative Identity: Big and Small Stories

It appears from an initial exploration of Narrative Identity that students in Anglican schools face particular challenges in resolving Erikson's developmental crisis. Values, ideologies and norms that are foundational to a school are often assumed in everyday discourse and remain hidden influences on identity formation. This study aimed to uncover these influences in the Anglican school context. These influences are most evident when exploring what identity researchers refer to as 'big' and 'small stories', both of which students are motivated to develop and recount (Freeman, 2011). The relationship of these stories in construction of a Narrative Identity impacts students who must navigate around and within the big story of the school's religious tradition.

Small stories are thought to be the first step in a two-phase process of comprehensive change and development of Narrative Identity (Freeman, 2011). Big stories may reflect an accumulation of integrated small stories by the narrator, providing answers to the big issues of life such as its nature, quality and value (Freeman, 2011; Taylor, 1989, pp. 47-48). Institutionally, big stories are thought to be generally well-developed, informational and delivered to an often-passive audience (Dunlop & Walker, 2013). Small stories are developed in interaction with particular audiences in everyday relational dialogue, where

narrators try out identities and position themselves in relation to others, potentially changing their identity in the process (Bamberg, 2011; Dunlop & Walker, 2013; Freeman, 2011).

Situational factors, including group dynamics, play a part in the construction of these small stories (Freeman, 2011; Schachter, 2011).

Small stories also play a key role in the development of a personal big story by evolving gradually into a big story during the period of adolescence. Small stories become objects for reflection, integration and purposeful interpretation of the big story of a person's life (Freeman, 2011). This process involves similar processes to those of exploration and commitment, with choices focussed on goals of coherence and sense of purpose through a personal telos of the flourishing life. In this, the social context is an all-important driver of the initial step of the process, the development of small stories where students position themselves in relation to people as well as the school's master narrative (Dunlop & Walker, 2013; Thorne, 2004). It may be that the OIS (the Life Story lived) is aligned with the big story of identity. Similarly, the Narrative (the Life Story told) may be aligned with the small story, or a series of small stories. Whatever form it takes, the narrator chooses to construct their story based on a script and a telos. It is an intentional act, guided by social norms around its plausibility. We do know from the research that there is a relationship between these various life stories and effective adjustment to the events of life (McAdams & McLean, 2013) so this study was alert to both forms of story in the data collection.

Narrative and Status Identity in Tandem

Narrative Identity researchers in the 21st century have shared some common principles. They include a cognitive model of autobiographical memory, acknowledgement of socio-cultural factors, life-span development and multi-method research (Baddeley & Singer, 2007). Some

studies emphasise the *how* of Narrative Identity, others the *what* (Freeman, 2011). Big and small stories may be researched in tandem, examining particularly how small stories influence big stories and the way big stories are impacted by contexts (Dunlop & Walker, 2013). Further, we may integrate the perspectives of both types into a more complete personal story of identity (Freeman, 2011). These considerations helped drive the approach of this study. As I indicate in Chapter 6 Methodology, I used both the Status and Narrative Identity constructs to develop a broad and vivid picture of student religious identity as expressed in a story of the flourishing life. The table below summarises some of the key points of both approaches.

Table 3.3: *Narrative and Status Identity in tandem*

FORMS of IDENTITY	PROCESSES	INTERNAL STRUCTURE	PRODUCT
Narrative	<i>Recall of experiences; Autobiographical reasoning leading to a coherent story with a socio-cultural script; Not only logical; Intuitive; Values-based; Goal laden; Interpreted autobiography.</i>	Life story lived: <i>Operating Identity Story</i> with a less formal and conscious cognitive <i>framework</i> ; Big Story aligned; <i>Felt meaning</i> ; Beyond total conscious control; Partially accessible; Stories we live by; Implicit identity; Probably best understood as Core, Personal Identity.	Life story told: Small Story aligned initially; Units of discourse; Accumulative; Temporally sequenced clauses plus evaluation; A coherent and meaningful narrative; Stories we tell; Explicit meaningful identity; Probably best understood as Social Identity
Status	<i>Exploration of alternatives; Commitment to a model; Logical; Information-processing; Values-based</i>	Schema or cognitive <i>framework</i> for understanding the world that is at least partly intentional. <i>Paradigmatic meaning</i> ; Partially accessible; Experienced within domains that are indicative of Global Identity.	<i>Identity Status</i> : Achieved, Moratorium, Diffuse, Foreclosed. Descriptive, meaningful <i>snapshot</i> of person in a temporal-cultural context.

A Framework for Religious Identity

Religious identity is understood by both Status and Narrative Identity researchers to be a key area requiring progress towards resolution in adolescence (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). Studies have confirmed its importance for student self-esteem (Davis & Kiang, 2016), for future community involvement or service (Hasford et al., 2017) and, some decades ago, even for giving to the poor (Regnerus, Smith & Sikkink, 1998). Religious identity then is an important focus for any school committed to student welfare and the common good.

Seeking fidelity

Identity development seems to proceed towards commitments that are either overtly or implicitly religious, although not necessarily aligned with a traditional institutional religion. It has even been suggested that Erikson's theory could be understood as a "model of religious faith development" (Hunsberger, Pratt & Pancer, 2001, p. 366) by suggesting "fidelity" as the final outcome of the identity process, understood as something or someone to be true to. As such, fidelity does appear to share aspects of religious faith.

Erikson also lamented the damage to ego identity through the lessening impact of religion, tracing a process that moved from loss of religion to individualism, widespread anxiety and a general change in the Western concept of human nature. "Where will that 'deep sense of specific good' come from?" he asked, a "sense of being human in a reasonably familiar universe" (Erikson, 1968, p. 84). Religion is an effective means of achieving synthesis by offering a safe, nurturing space with boundaries (Erikson, 1968) and also a way of containing and directing commitments in relation to the further development of adolescent identity (Leak, 2009). Religion is of course more than boundary marker or vehicle and I explore this in further depth in Chapter 5. Nevertheless, researchers continue to

recognise the importance of this complex domain in identity studies (Hemming & Madge, 2011).

Combining individual faith and religious community

Religious identity, in common with identity generally, requires careful nuancing (Hemming & Madge, 2011). There is no simple definition of religious identity, no easy formula for research in the area. It is not considered to simply be individualised, sequentially-staged development. Rather, it appears to have two components: individual faith identity as well as religious group identity (Van Camp, 2010). These are consistent with Erikson's psycho-social emphasis on both the internal agency of the individual and the external pressure of the context. Hemming and Madge in their landmark research on the religious identity of over 10,000 students in the U.K. developed a four-fold definition, incorporating:

- Affiliation and belonging
- Behaviours and practices
- Beliefs and values
- Religious and spiritual experiences. (Hemming & Madge, 2011)

While there is overlap, the first two aspects are more obviously related to the external context/group identity; the final two aspects to the internal functioning of the individual. Consistent with Bell (2009) I understand 'transcendence' to be a distinguishing component of religious identity in each of its aspects, defined as "the way a person relates to a transcendent being or force and/or a social group characterised by that transcendent being" (2009, p. 11). For example, in Anglicanism, the transcendent God, unlimited by physical and temporal materiality, may be approached in a mutual love relationship. This two-way relationship supports a sense of transcendence, enabling students to search for meaning beyond themselves (King, 2003). Hemming and Madge's definition thus supplies content for

Status and Narrative Identity, both of which have more of an emphasis on process driven by values. However, I would claim that this content is not simply cognitive, but experienced and embodied as indeed love relationships are, with the telos an envisioned love-focussed goal, consistent with the ideas of J.K.A. Smith (2009).

Making meaning in an ethical framework

Religion and identity both have meaning-making at their core, undergirded by personal and socio-cultural values (Bartoszuk & Deal, 2016; Hitlin, 2003; Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005). The coherent inner identity story functions as an ethical framework, replete with beliefs and values, images and ideas with a vision of the flourishing life as a context for personal decisions (Rossiter, 2007). Religion may also be understood as a meaning system supplying an ethical framework that functions implicitly and subconsciously in individuals, another form of cognitive schema (Bell, 2009; Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005; Morris, 2013). The four content characteristics of Hemming and Madge's understanding of religious identity all depend on cognitive and affective processes of meaning-making based on beliefs and values, meaning-making apparently linked to change in student beliefs or worldviews (Dunlop & Walker, 2013).

Both Status and Narrative Identity envelop coherence and purpose into a process of active meaning-making (Dunlop & Walker, 2013; Waterman, 2015). Adler et al. refer to this coherence in its Narrative Identity context as the "orientation of episode meanings within the broader context of life themes" (2016, p. 161), although these life themes may not be explicitly religious. Traditionally, the values of a religious institution would supply the standard by which to judge the efficacy of these identity constructions (Berzonsky & Papini, 2014) through a specific vision of the good life.

So important are values to an understanding of identity in relation to meaning-making that values are considered the “primary phenomenon” of identity. “Personal identity is produced through value commitments” (Hitlin, 2003, p. 121) that guide choices. Continuing the emphasis on permeability of personal and social aspects of identity, values may be “shaped by socio-demographic factors” yet experienced as the core of one’s self (Hitlin, 2003, p. 122). This values-constituted core self remains relatively stable even when exploring and committing to particular roles or narrating an interpretation of experiences (Hitlin, 2003). We retain, in other words, an ideal view of potential roles and behaviours, focussed on what we consider to be the flourishing life, or telos.

It should be noted, however, that this ethical framework or cognitive schema probably functions in a two-way relationship with Narrative and Status Identity. By its very hermeneutical nature, Narrative Identity is focussed on a goal and driven by values (Schachter, 2011). It involves “a moral stance” in interpreting experiences, implying that a particular individual’s perspective of “the good” is pre-existent (McAdams, 1996, p. 308), at least in some form. Without this evaluative personal perspective, the narration is simply a recounting of events or “facts” (Juzwik, 2006). Exploring and committing in Status Identity involves some evaluative judgement focussed on a telos, but telos may not function as powerfully there as it does in the more hermeneutical Narrative Identity. Conducting these processes in different spaces of a student’s everyday life provides the opportunity for further orientation towards “the human good” (Bamberg, 2011), thus implying that the relationship between identity and a student’s ethical framework is not uni-directional. Indeed, there is no simplistic relationship of cause–effect between the values of an ethical framework and any sort of behaviour (Hitlin, 2003). Multiple factors influence behaviour at any one moment in time.

Here is where student identity and curriculum intersect because I consider that students are confronted with an intended/formal curriculum that lacks a cohering central focus, let alone a transcendent religious one. Rather, an assortment of ideologies appears to drive individual subjects in the high school curriculum framework in New South Wales. While this may seem to be appropriate in a pluralistic society, I suspect it leaves students floundering to find some cohering theme. In attempting to bring a meaningful coherence to their studies, they may experience a disjointed curriculum framework that offers few imaginative alternatives in preparation for 21st century life.

The focus on values as the central phenomenon also raises the issue of the distinction between religiousness and spirituality (King, Clardy & Ramos, 2014) as differing expressions of these values. This distinction is not one that I wish to explore in any depth except to affirm that development in both areas implies “deeper connections to something beyond the self and awareness of self”, related to beliefs, values and purpose (King et al., 2014, p. 187) – that is, transcendence. King et al. (2014) found in their extensive research in North America that transcendence was indeed one of three dimensions of spirituality, as I claim it is of religiousness. A distinction may be made in the content of beliefs in that religiousness implies adherence to a particular institutionalised worldview with its attendant rituals, beliefs and authority sources. But both process and content do appear otherwise very similar, aligning with Hemming and Madge’s (2011) fourfold description of religious identity. Given the similarity of process and content and the commonality around connection with ‘something beyond self’ I therefore considered that both spirituality and religiousness were likely to be represented in student responses to Bell’s Measure of Religious Identity. In follow-up student interviews it was expected that alternative belief systems might emerge in

those students who were spiritual rather than religious in the context of their religious identity.

Conclusion: An Integrated Model

Theorists have defined identity as Narrative Identity: “internalized integrative narrations of the personal past, present, and future” (McAdams, 1996, p. 295) or Status Identity: an “internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history” (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). Each approach is an explanation of the process of resolving the three classic dilemmas of identity utilising complex mental processes “shot through with valuating practices” (Bamberg, 2011). They thus yield a form of order (Eide, 2012) enabling people to make sense of their lives through values-infused meaning. Both also concede a place for content. Waterman captures this evaluated and ordered content of identity as, “a clearly delineated self-definition comprised of those goals, values and beliefs to which the person is unequivocally committed” (1988, p. 187). Narrative Identity researchers focus on the internal story while recognising the social context supporting particular versions.

Processes of exploration of self-relevant information; commitment; autobiographical reasoning; and a myriad of unconscious intuitive responses to socio-cultural cues are all involved in both understandings. Kroger and Marcia explain these processes.

‘The achievement of ego identity involves a synthesis of childhood identifications in the individual’s own terms so that she/he establishes a reciprocal relationship with her/his society and maintains a feeling of continuity within her/himself. It represents a reformulation of all that the individual has been into a core of what she/he is to become’ (2011, p. 33).

These processes are different in some respects (see Table 3.3), a basic level of common processes and a focus on individual values and telos allow for a level of integration of the two approaches in the research of religious identity. For the purposes of this study, religious identity is understood through a ThCR lens as a unitary construct, experienced in the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain.

The strength of Status research lies in its capacity to capture a cross-sectional snapshot of the degree of reasonable commitment because of the inclusion of the exploration component. As a complement, the Narrative approach focusses on the story told by the individual and therefore brings to the fore individual agency, albeit exercised in response to cultural guidelines (Goossens, 2001). Narrative Identity displays a more obvious telos that guides narrative choice and the interaction of big and small stories (Schachter, 2011). However, viewed through a ThCR lens, this form of identity is not just a “discursive construct” (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). It is grounded in ontological reality. Both big and small stories must have content (Eide, 2012). This study identified characteristics of this content in the religious domain as: affiliation and belonging; behaviours and practices; and transcendent religious/spiritual experiences, all grounded in a permeating framework of beliefs and values (Bell, 2009; Hemming and Madge, 2011; Hitlin, 2003).

A small association between both approaches has been established (McLean et al., 2014) so this study employed a tandem model for researching religious identity consistent with McLean et al. (2014) and Visser-Vogel et al. (2012). Waterman’s definition of global identity demonstrates the overlap between discrete global identity and global identity experienced in the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain by emphasising telos:

[Identity involves] having a clearly delineated self-definition comprised of those goals, values and beliefs to which the person is unequivocally committed...they are made

because [they] are judged worthy of giving a direction, purpose, and meaning to life.

(Waterman, 1988, p. 187)

However, this definition of global identity also alerts us to the unique aspect of religious identity, as Waterman incorporates telos but lacks what I term ‘embodiment’, a sense of relationship that goes beyond the cognitive and volitional into the richly affective. I claim that paradoxically religious identity, in common with spirituality, takes us beyond ourselves into transcendence while simultaneously incorporating an active, embodied role for us in doing and being. This usually occurs in relationship with a spiritual or specifically religious community (Hardy, Nadal & Schwartz, 2017). In Anglicanism it is held to be with God Himself.

In the next chapter I outline and critique some of the research in relation to the interaction of religious identity and curriculum. Contextualisation in the school is discussed in light of the 3 types of study on the impact of schools on adolescent global identity development identified by Verhoeven, Poorthuis and Volman (2019). They are “Unintentional, Intentional and Meaningfulness/Classroom Climate” (2019, pp. 35-36).

Chapter 4. The Interaction of Religious Identity and Curriculum

Macroscopic structures, like identity, emerge out of microscopic interactions,
i.e. out of real-time activities, dyadic interactions.
(Lichtwarck-Aschoff, van Geert, Bosma & Kunnen, 2008, p. 378)

Introduction

In the previous two chapters I outlined the key constructs relevant to this study: curriculum and religious identity. I suggested that students may experience curriculum that lacks a cohering central focus to support their meaning-making and that the transcendent, religious telos has potential to fulfil that function in the Anglican school. This may assist critique of the assorted ideologies that appear to drive individual subjects in the high school curriculum framework. My particular focus has been the History syllabus, which I argued in Chapter Two risks failing to accord religion or religious identity any significant role in events. I have suggested that the possible impact of secularisation on the subject of History may be significant for the Anglican school because it limits student meaning-making to de-religionised versions. By narrating a story of irrelevance it may marginalise transcendent answers to the key identity questions and result in epistemological dualism.

Research on the curriculum's interactive role in relation to religious identity variously conceives religious identity as global identity experienced in the religious domain or discrete religious identity replete with content. Many of the studies on the links were conducted through a sociological lens. Those using a more complex psycho-social lens usually lacked a focus on religious identity as a discrete construct, instead emphasising the unitary construct (de Bruin-Wassinkmaat et al., 2019). They often studied Israeli or Dutch students of Christian, Muslim or Jewish faith. These studies reflect their particular social and

educational context where the socio-cultural factors affecting religious identity may be more significant than intra-psychology processing. The present study understood the external socio-cultural and the intra-psychology aspects as functioning in a “permeable” tension with values as the core of the flourishing life, the telos. (Hitlin, 2003). Studies that considered identity in global terms were included on the basis of Marcia’s claim of identity as an underlying unitary construct and its apparent dominance by the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain, given that domain provides a meaningful internal structure to support synthesis and coherence (Kroger & Marcia, 2011).

The interaction of curriculum with the content of student identity as recounted in Narrative Identity has also largely been undertaken through a sociology lens. Studies have been undertaken to explain whether and/or what 21st century adolescents believe (Madge et al., 2019; Mason et al., 2007; Singleton et al., 2019; Smith & Denton, 2005; Smith, 2011) but the interaction with school curriculum is not a particular focus. Some North American research has given voice to students and teachers in Christian schools; but they largely focus on the by-products of religious identity such as service (Van Brummelen & Koole, 2012) and some appear to be a form of apologetics for their faith tradition. In the UK context, Cooling (2019) and Green (2009, 2012, 2014) have advocated Bourdieu’s concept of habitus to explore competing narratives in schools. Green in particular has given voice to students’ experience in faith-based schools, the privately-run Academies of England, and closely examined the role of religion-focussed areas of the curriculum. From an Australian Catholic perspective, Rossiter (2007) has emphasised the communal nature of interpretation and understanding in teaching and learning. On that basis he poses a general question for schools: What are the cultural resources for development of meaning?

Potential impact of schools

Verhoeven et al. (2019) in their integration of 111 studies from a variety of theoretical perspectives identified 3 types of study on the impact of schools on adolescent global identity development. They were “Unintentional, Intentional and Meaningfulness/Classroom Climate” (2019, pp. 35-36). Lesson differentiation, teaching strategies, teacher expectations and peers’ stigmatization were all found to function as a hidden curriculum. Unintentional impact was mostly identified in formal education contexts in school while intentional strategies were mostly implemented in extracurricular situations like camps. They concluded that identity-developing strategies were not generally integrated with students’ daily learning. Of most relevance to this study was their claim that research on schools’ role in developing historical identity was “non-existent” (Verhoeven et al. 2019, p. 55).

Early research had optimistically suggested some cultural resources that might promote Status Identity (Waterman, 1989). Erikson’s initial suggestions of history-focussed curriculum areas was expanded to include:

- Social expectations such as a classroom atmosphere that encouraged multiple perspectives;
- Exposure to alternative identities;
- Modelling;
- Social perspective-taking to understand self and others;
- Self-reflection through writing activities in poetry (but not journaling!);
- Cognitive skill and decision-making processes such as values clarification and
- Deliberate psychological education to personalise learning about human development.

(Waterman, 1989, pp. 391-2)

It was an assumption of this study that curriculum interacts in important ways with religious identity, especially given the comprehensive character of a school's curriculum when understood as planned, enacted/experienced and hidden. I thus identified four aspects for their potential links to religious identity understood in terms of Status and/or Narrative Identity. They are:

- school context;
- identity-enhancing subject content;
- pedagogical choices and
- teacher modelling.

School Context

School context and school-work are second only to family as important to students' experience of life (Kaplan & Flum, 2012). Despite this, there has been little empirical research on the impact of school context on global identity (Sinai et al., 2012). It does appear that a school in which students are considered holistically and feel safe impacts positively on student perception that learning is meaningful, a major aspect of global identity development (Rich & Schachter, 2012). Students in such a school can explore identity alternatives and anticipated challenges to their personal identity with confidence. This is especially so when twinned with teachers who are caring, supportive role models (Rich and Schachter, 2012) who allow student voice to be heard and respected as they reconstruct their story in the context of the enacted curriculum (Faircloth, 2012).

In relation to religious identity specifically, this safe atmosphere, along with “meaningful” religious studies has been found to act in a “mediating relationship between

teacher functioning and student religious identity” (Cohen-Malayev, Schachter & Rich, 2014, p. 212). A safe space does not necessarily imply lack of challenge, however. Armet (2009) found for example that “high tension religious environments” were effective in retaining sixteen year-olds in a faith tradition into their twenties. Although these environments were churches, there may be a similar effect for the overtly religious school. What is most conclusive in the Israeli context is that schools as well as teachers do affect the religious identity of students even after adjusting for the religiosity of parents (Cohen-Malayev et al., 2014). Students need to feel they can trust the potential sources of their values, so the school as a safe space that supports exploration is very important for their religious identity development (Cohen-Malayev et al., 2014; Minnaar-Kuiper & Bertram-Troost, 2020).

The school context should also be expected to affect the content of student religious identity described in terms of affiliation and belonging, behaviours and practices, beliefs and values and religious and spiritual experiences (Hemming and Madge, 2011). It is in the Anglican school that a story of the flourishing life incorporating each of these aspects is recounted and lived out in community. This study expected therefore that it might play a role in each school’s curriculum.

Identity-Enhancing Subject Content

The role of religious content areas within the formal curriculum as implied by Hemming and Madge’s four characteristics is highly contested within the Anglican schools of my experience. Nevertheless a number of related initiatives have been demonstrated as enhancing global identity. They include setting the social expectation of multiple answers to various problems (Waterman, 1989), incorporating complex personal problems, providing

models and requiring written reflection (Sinai et al., 2012). However, the specific type of task may impact on the effectiveness of written student reflection. Waterman and Archer for example found in using English as the context, that poetry writing was an effective vehicle but not journalling (1979, in Waterman, 1989).

In relation to the processes of religious identity development, some links have been found between specific interventions and student exploration. Sinai et al. (2012) proposed a conceptual framework for intervention comprising three aspects:

- triggers that alerted students to discrepancies in current identity commitments;
- a sense of safety communicated by the teachers and
- scaffolds for engagement such as reflective questions or texts.

Using this framework they found that an Israeli poem in the Literature class made the self salient to one third of the students and could be understood as a trigger for those students. The failure to trigger of two thirds of students seems to confirm that catalysts for explorative activity vary according to the context, personal circumstances and relationships in students' lives (Layton, Hardy & Dollahite, 2012). Students did register a sense of caring from teachers leading to some exploratory actions after triggering. However, initial exploration failed to lead to further questioning in a more extensive process of exploration. It may be that these interventions were simply making the topic more relevant and interesting for some students. They concluded that the identity exploration process was unpredictable due to the unique and dynamic nature of personal and contextual variables with different aspects of a lesson triggering for different students (Sinai et al., 2012).

Researching in public schools in the United States, Robert Kunzman (2006, 2015) emphasised the necessity of complementing the affective with factual/analytic content to support religious identity development. A core component, the ethical imagination, is

developed he claimed by processing information about history and culture, creedal beliefs, apologetics and diversity of interpretive frameworks, topics often covered within subjects such as History and Christian Studies in Anglican schools. Alternative suggestions such as the study of developmental psychology (Rossiter, 2007) have also been made to promote self-understanding as one component of religious identity.

A more recent study has found that relating the content of any discrete Religious Education subject to students' lives is very effective in promoting the development of their worldview (Minnaar-Kuiper et al., 2020). It has been recognised for some time that linking content of school subjects to students' sense of self is an effective motivator (Flum & Kaplan, 2006). This may be due to the cognitive and affective aspects of engagement with learning that agrees with their identity schemata (Faircloth, 2012).

However, Green (2009) cautions that while a specific RE subject (in her case, Tutor Prayers) enhanced biblical knowledge in an English Academy school, the reshaping of student worldview was not an inevitable outcome. Instead, the subject was thought to act in a "symbolically powerful role in the intentional ethos" (Green, 2009, p. 455). It may be that the RE subject was not accorded what has been called the "credibility of rationality" (Cooling, 2012, p. 91). Perceived personal relevance may then be secondary to the subject's broader contribution to religious identity development: that of supporting the official ethos by promoting rational thought about the role of religion as meaning-maker. This to Cooling is "to construct meaning by interpreting the world through the lens of worldview" (Cooling, 2012, p. 93). It may also be an appropriate emphasis as an aspect of community life in a pluralist society, focussing on critical thinking and reasonableness rather than "metaphysical differences" (Kunzman, 2017). This potentially links Christian Studies in Anglican schools to the rest of the curriculum in all its forms. It accords Christian Studies a central role in any

curriculum framework that aims to contribute to a “plausibility structure” by according belief in the transcendent a degree of rationality.

Pedagogical Choices

Teacher pedagogical choices have also been studied in relation to religious identity.

Dialogue that focuses on personal meaning in relation to learning (Flum & Kaplan, 2006; Kaplan & Flum, 2008; Miedema, 2010) and encounter with religious diversity (Miedema, 2010) have been linked positively with religious identity formation. However, the approach taken within the body of research is highly dependent on the researchers’ understandings of identity in terms either of internal psychology and mental processes or socio-cultural role (Faircloth, 2012). Focussed on Status Identity, teacher pedagogy that emphasises problem-solving and encourages decision-making and critical thinking (Sinai et al. 2012) has been found effective.

A new generation of Narrative Identity researchers have focussed on a more cognitivist model of autobiographical memory while recognising socio-cultural factors (Baddeley & Singer, 2012). Curriculum interventions related to cognitive processing have thus become as important to Narrative as Status Identity. For example, tasks which encourage the ability to consider alternatives and commit to responsible choice (Kaplan & Flum, 2006) support students to exercise autobiographical memory as well as explore and identify self-relevant information. The Youth on Religion Study (Madge et al., 2019) in the U.K. gave voice to student perceptions of their Religious Education subject and three quarters of those interviewed saw it as a key source of information about religion. However, they often saw it as too fact-based and not as “informed, balanced and experiential” (Madge et al., 2019, p.

178) as they would have liked. They aspired to depth about actual beliefs of each world religion.

Within the subject of Christian Studies pedagogy that models a hermeneutical approach could play a significant role in teaching in this area (Pett & Cooling, 2018). Given that all students and teachers read the Bible through the lens of their worldview, students could observe and experience, reading text to apply it in the 21st century context. But this does require an awareness of one's worldview.

Yet it should not be thought that worldview understood as a component of identity is simply an abstract concept. Utilising the metaphor of the flourishing life with its commitment to a certain telos corrects this by emphasising the role of the affective. Learning to narrate a story rich with personal meaning is key to Narrative Identity so student critique, role plays, field experiences, art and literature should all have a place (Kunzman, 2015). They all contribute to the development of empathetic understanding by engaging the imagination and may be used to consider the religious identity of self and others.

Using doubt as a catalyst for triggering exploration has also been suggested by Baltazar and Coffen (2011). Students in the Middle School especially tend to question their religious identity, leading them to the possibility of exploring alternatives. Student autonomy is exercised as they question their past identifications and explore alternatives. Parables, plays, movies and the like have been found to present teachers with opportunities for dialogue around doubts (Baltazar & Coffen, 2011). It is interesting to note that Fisherman (2016) found that doubt around religious identity peaked in Year 10, decreased in Year 11 but never returned to the lesser level of Year 9. Year 10 would then appear to be the target year for triggering identity exploration by this means. However, it needs to be emphasised that doubt is not the only trigger (Layton et al., 2012). Different aspects of teaching and learning

trigger exploration for different students, indicating limited effect for any one curriculum intervention. Whatever the particular initiatives in relating pedagogy with religious identity, it is evident from the research that “pedagogy is coming back” (Miedema, 2017) as a focus in exploring religious identity and that highlights the role of the teacher in this area.

Teacher Modelling

Social context has been described as a co-constructor of global identity (Rich & Schachter, 2012), highlighting the importance of the student-teacher relationship in any school concerned for Bildung or the formation of students. Indeed, social interaction whereby the intuitive and cognitive are brought together may be necessary for any change in ethical stances (Haidt, 2007). The interaction of curriculum and religious identity appears to be heavily dependent on the quality of the student-teacher relationships that form the background to any interventions. Cohen-Malayev et al. (2014) confirmed this in relation to the subject of Religious Education. They found the subject does have a significant effect on religious identity, but that teacher impact was equally important.

The centrality of the teacher’s role for development of religious identity has been confirmed across many studies of youths from different faith backgrounds, including Muslim (Visser-Vogel et al., 2012), Jewish (Rich and Schachter, 2012); Christian (Green, 2012) and mixed religious/cultural (Madge et al., 2019). Teacher as a positive role model powerfully predicted student identity development amongst Israeli adolescents (Rich & Schachter, 2012) and this may be greatest in the middle years, especially in relation to “beyond-self purpose” (Yeager & Bundick, 2009). This effect goes beyond perceiving that the teacher is a caring person (Rich & Schachter, 2012). That it appears to depend on the gender and age of the teacher (Fisherman, 2011) strongly suggests a modelling process.

Conclusion

Although focussed on a generic understanding of personal identity development, Rossiter (2007) understood identity in terms of its links to “spirituality” in the faith-based school. He advocated that the content and process involved should be incorporated intentionally in the curriculum in four areas:

- The nature and function of identity and its processes and how they influence understanding and evaluation;
- theories of human development including the developmental tasks of adolescence;
- the relationship between cultural identity resources and the personal construction of identity and
- a normative/evaluative study of identity issues such as the shaping role of culture.

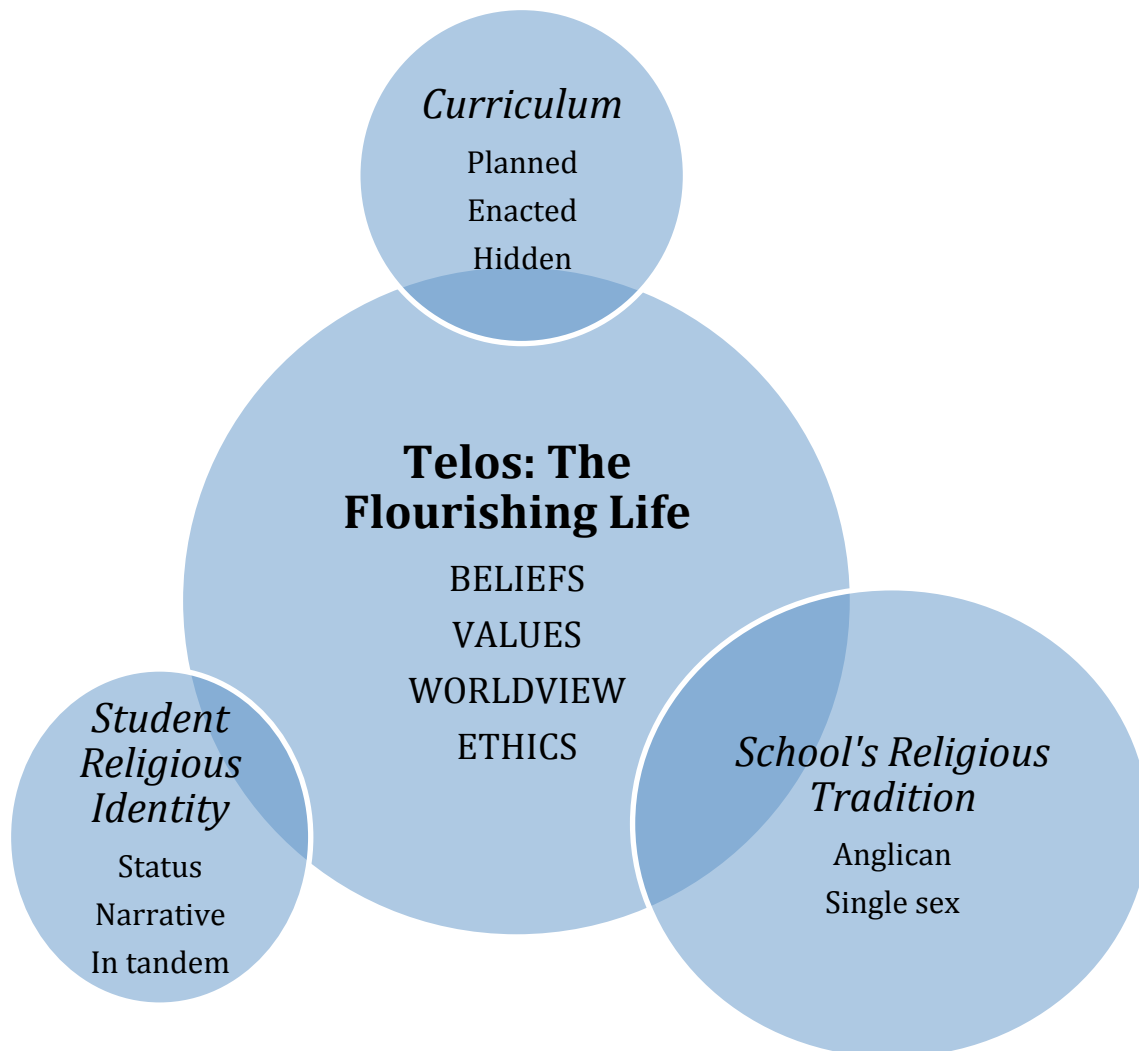
These areas reflect Rossiter’s concerns with the erosion of spirituality (which he understood in terms of values and commitment) in Catholic schools by the consumerist and “novel experience” orientation of Australian culture (Rossiter, 2007). It was hypothesised that a similar situation might apply to Anglican schools in Sydney Diocese in these key areas of religious identity, given that the schools share the same secularised cultural context.

However, the research described in this chapter presents no panacea for the development of personal or religious identity in the curriculum context. That different aspects of a lesson can lead to exploration triggers for different students (Sinai, Kaplan and Flum, 2012), indicates the uniqueness of each context and student experience. Further, attention to both subject content and pedagogy is needed if curriculum is to effectively tap into the cognitive and affective aspects of identity (Miedema, 2010). Finally, teachers need to be aware that radical rejection of previous identifications may lead to student distress (Cohen-Malayev,

Schachter & Rich, 2014), so any intervention that promotes exploration should be implemented very cautiously with full acknowledgement of student agency. This would seem to apply especially to teacher modelling.

In the next chapter I describe the founding religious tradition of the two schools in this study. Anglicanism in Sydney Diocese has some unique characteristics that affect its relationship with the schools in its purview. I endeavour to explain the Diocese's story of the flourishing life in terms of its theology and practice. A comprehensive list of characteristics of Sydney Anglican Diocese is presented as one basis for examining the alignment of each school with the religious identity of their founding tradition.

Chapter 5. Religious Tradition



Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored the research on interaction between the two key constructs of religious identity and curriculum. Religious identity understood through a psycho-social lens has been mainly researched as a unitary construct operating in the religious/ideological domain with a focus on processes. However, I incorporated a more specific understanding of religious identity in order to address the content, utilising Hemming and Madge's (2011)

four characteristics of religious identity. I also outlined curriculum in three modes: intended and planned, teacher-enacted and student-experienced curriculum, and the hidden curriculum of culture and values. I concluded that ideological assumptions grounding curriculum may be problematic for Anglican schools, given the influence of secularism and neo-liberalism on mandated requirements in this area. The result may be that students experience conflicting stories of the flourishing life that fail to support the coherence and synthesis that a well-developed identity reflects (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). In this regard, a religious tradition may function as a resource for sense-making, ethical guidance or sociocultural systems for thinking (Liljestrand & Olson, 2016) and this is the subject of this chapter.

In this chapter I briefly explore a definition of religion focused on a transcendent telos that distinguishes it from the closely-aligned concept of ideology. The importance to Sydney Diocese of Reformed Evangelicalism is described in the context of its picture of the flourishing life. I then describe some unique characteristics of the Diocese and explore possible ways Anglican schools can deal with the challenge of interacting narratives of the flourishing life.

Defining the Indefinable

Definitions of religion are highly contested (de Muckadell, 2014). “Belief in spiritual beings” and “religious statements express the views of persons who as persons are involved in transcendence” (de Muckadell, 2014, p. 497) are examples of what are termed “real” definitions, expressing the essence of religion. Functional definitions, de Muckadell claims, are not as satisfactory, given that they presuppose a working definition even as they theorise. This appears to be the case in the semiotic understanding of Clifford Geertz which has been

particularly influential in promoting a constructivist understanding (Segal, 2012). Religion to Geertz is:

(1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. (Geertz, 2003, p. 90)

Geertz seems to assume that religion is entirely humanly-constructed and this does not align well with those religions claiming to be ‘people of the book’. Islam, Judaism and Christianity have a comprehensive written ontology founded on claims of supernatural revelation. The supernatural realm and a focus on experiences of transcendence seem to be absent from Geertz’s conceptualisation. His emphasis on religion as a phenomenon with an immanent focus aligns with liberal theology, rather than the Evangelicalism of Sydney Diocese (Piggin & Linder, 2018). On the other hand, Geertz’s recognition that religion brings a semblance of order to the chaos of life experiences (Geertz, 1993, p. 108) finds touch- points with Erikson’s epigenetic account of identity development. Erikson suggested that it was important that the trust of child in a parent develops into the faith of the adult because only the resulting perception of a “reasonably coherent world” enables the development of hope (Erikson, 1968, p. 106). This “vital need” he claimed is filled by religion’s rationale for and defense from evil and chaos. I understand this ordering process as an essential component of curriculum also, and Anglican schools may potentially align them to enhance student well-being.

Many theorists in the Christian tradition affirm the usefulness of narrative for capturing

the richness of a religious tradition (Kaye, 2005; MacIntyre, 2007).

Tradition is the process which creates a story, or a narrative, for a community. It provides for a memory which is housed in institutions within which the life of the community flourishes and is sustained. (Kaye, 2005, p. 13)

However, possibly reflecting a ThCR understanding, Anglicanism also recognises a role for paradigmatic truth in the form of theological propositions, albeit contextualised within and derived from the meta-narrative. These may take the form of creeds that have been suggested as general guides for faith-based intellectual life in the academy (Noll, 2011).

For the purposes of this research, then, religion was understood as belief in a transcendent realm, involving:

- devotion and commitment to God as a source of order and meaning in the universe;
- consecrated rituals and symbols;
- biblical statements of dogma and principles of conduct; and
- a coherent, imaginative narrative of the good life, expressing its unique beliefs, values, worldview and ethos.

Religion and ideology

The concept of religion shares similarities with that of ideology, particularly as “a framework of beliefs, perceptions and practices with which both individuals and groups make sense of the phenomena, events, actions and relationships in the world and by which they represent these to others” (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 32). The framework that supplies order and meaning differs, however, in its purported origin and telos. Ideology generally emphasises a material telos, often cementing the interests of groups or individuals (Smith & Lovat, 2003) and is thus inherently secularised and political. Religion is generally

understood as having a transcendent telos accompanied by certain ritual practices and affiliation with a religious institution. Anglicanism stresses that humanity is essentially religious, created for relationship with a personal yet transcendent source of order and meaning, a Creator-God. In this study religion and ideology were recognised as closely-related ways to reflect order and bring coherence to the curriculum. Indeed, neo-Eriksonian researchers generally group religion in the same domain as ideology. Of further interest to the study was the claim that there can be no neutrality in curriculum (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Educational choices are based on an understanding of what one needs to live a flourishing life, which are in turn based on one's belief and values-infused framework of meaning, the central focus of ideologies and religions.

Theological Grounding of the Story of the Flourishing Life

To my knowledge, little has been written about Sydney Anglicanism sociologically from the perspective of an insider with the exception of Kaye (2005) who claimed the narrative was grounded in orthodox Christian beliefs yet impossible to understand in isolation from its origins as the established religion of England. Although never officially recognised in Australia, Anglicanism occupied a certain hegemonic role until well into the 20th century (Cameron, 2016; Jensen, 2011) and this study was alert for possible remnants of that role in Anglican schools. This hegemonic role was originally expressed through its partial integration with the functioning of the civil authorities. Clergy who became magistrates is but one example. Other denominations, particularly Catholic, were assigned a lesser role of influence in tandem with a general assumption of a Protestant Evangelical values canopy.

The importance of theology

Sydney Diocese draws from the tradition of Reformation Anglicanism, championed by the

martyred Archbishop, Thomas Cranmer. Leading apologist for Sydney Diocese, Rev. Dr Michael Jensen, claims, “Cranmer’s Reformation bequeathed to the English church a particular theological outlook that cannot be eclipsed in any description of Anglican identity” (Jensen, 2012, p. 93). This Reformation perspective set in place a framework of creedal orthodoxy as the paradigmatic Anglican approach to a reading of the Bible and hence to church doctrine and practice. The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordinal reflect Cranmer’s understanding of the Bible as God’s Word, assuming prior authority over all church formularies and traditions, the latter seen as mere products of human reason. This remains the theological stance of Sydney Diocese, with concomitant claims of being Protestant, denying the “real presence” of Jesus Christ in the elements of the Holy Communion and holding a modified Calvinist view of the sovereignty of God (Jensen, 2012).

This stance is highly contested by other dioceses to the extent that Sydney Diocese has been portrayed rather hysterically as a “threat to world Anglicanism” (Porter, 2011). This is essentially a theological dispute indicating there may be no one, decontextualised Anglican identity. However, the historical claims of the Christian story about the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ remain the criteria for orthodox Christian belief and hence properly basic to the global Anglican version of the flourishing life. Michael Jensen would add to doctrinal orthodoxy the practice of two sacraments (baptism and Holy Communion) and church order based on episcopacy as necessary to Anglican identity (Jensen, 2012, pp. 96-7). Specific reference to these key areas of doctrine and ritual proved useful in exploring Anglicanism in the story of the flourishing life promoted by the two schools in this study.

Sydney Diocese’s unique aspects may be understood as attempts to indigenise an essentially English church without compromising the Reformed theology of the founding

documents (Cameron, 2016, p. 11). “Doctrinal parameters” or “a core of orthodoxy” remain essential for Sydney Anglicanism (Jensen, 2012, p. 91) and these are Reformed Evangelical. Sydney Anglican identity then involves a commitment to a story based on a set of theological beliefs, a way of thinking about life and ethics and a rich history. It provides specific answers to the two identity questions of ‘Who am I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’

Who am I?

The person of God the creator, redeemer and sustainer is the main focus of this picture of human flourishing. It is an understanding of the flourishing life in terms of relationship with God and neighbour as contained in Jesus Christ’s invocation,

‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Matthew 22: 37-39, NIV version).

This is predicated on a belief in the status of human beings as created yet fallen from a position of grace and in need of atonement and justification through the God/man Jesus Christ. Derived from belief in revealed Biblical truth, at times its version of the flourishing life may seem too abstract and theology-laden, far from a conceptualisation of a flourishing life as a rich imaginative vision. Yet in its narrative is a core belief in the nature and place of love, claiming, “Only the unconditional love of God made known in free salvation can birth a selfless love for God and others in the human heart” (Null, 2017, p. 56).

It was Cranmer’s view that unconditional love is the hallmark of Christianity and he embodied it as the centre of a flourishing life (Null, 2017). But, according to this perspective, the process begins with the need for humankind to be saved from the innate selfishness that is said to corrupt every part of a person. The offer of “divine free forgiveness” thus exerts a drawing power, an “allure” (Null, 2017, p. 110).

This understanding of the flourishing life sees the human person in a loving relationship with their creator through “justification by grace alone through faith” (Jensen, 2012, p. 93; Thompson, 2017). However, the faith that cements this relationship is not seen as equating to virtue, although it is required to accept divine forgiveness. It is instead constructed as dependence on God and a willing reception of his promises that relegates rituals and institutions, that otherwise may seek to promote self-justification, to secondary status according to Michael Jensen (2017). Nor is this faith promoted as without accountability. The commands to love God and neighbour of Matthew 22 are held to strongly indicate otherwise.

Although Jensen suggests this may have a positive impact in promoting a less ritualistic and moralistic approach, it also makes this version of the flourishing life perhaps less visible in school life. One is led to ask what the Anglican perspective of the flourishing life looks like in the Anglican school if it may not be seen in traditions and rituals, the areas included in many definitions of religion.

An embodied community. Michael Jensen partly provides the answer himself in terms of a counter-cultural approach to identity. I have previously stated that the flourishing life is embodied and lived out. Jensen claims that no longer are performance, ethnicity or status the basis for identity. He focuses rather on the corporate identity of the church as an embodied community, the “people of God” who proclaim “Jesus is Lord”. Further, this “Lordship of Christ” can only be understood in terms of “justification by grace alone through faith alone” (Jensen, 2017, pp. 148-149).

A church that loses sight of the cross as its very constitution loses its identity and becomes something else entirely. (Jensen, 2017, p. 150)

If the traditional cultural markers of a religion are no longer applicable, theological markers appear to take their place in Sydney Anglicanism. Commitment to a particular ontology and anthropology are integral to that.

Creatureliness. Former Sydney Anglican clergyman, Andrew Errington, demonstrates how the theology of the Diocese may be used to understand identity. “Identification”, he states, “is more than an individual matter. It is also a social reality” (Errington, 2017, p.1). It requires recognition and agreement in the context of a community. In the faith community of the Anglican church, that identity is seen within the “parameters of creatureliness”. As created beings, he claims humans ultimately find peace in being known and loved by their creator-God. Further, he reflects Diocesan conversionism by understanding Christian commitment as becoming “new creations” with a new identity as “beloved children of God through Jesus Christ” (Errington, 2017, pp. 4-5). However, Errington seems to have adopted a sociological rather than psycho-social lens to understand the processes involved and he perhaps illustrates the way that the Bible is used by Sydney Anglicans to apply to 21st century contexts. The approach is similar to that of theologian Brian Rosner, although the emphasis is quite the opposite. He uses Catholic philosopher Charles Taylor’s ideas of the “buffered self” and the “porous self” to explain how individualistic ideas of the self-made person have subsumed external family and community influences in identity formation. He again affirms that “true freedom is found in knowing God as your Father... [and] finding your identity in being known and loved by him” (Rosner, 2017, p. 5).

A fundamental problem. Diocesan schools could be expected to reflect these theological commitments about the nature of people in their educational policy and practice. However, former Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Peter Jensen, has lamented the lack of an articulated theological understanding of education in his Diocese as a “fundamental

problem” (P. Jensen, 2009). Efforts to address this resulted in the publication of a short book that included a chapter on theological anthropology (Cairney, Cowling & Jensen, 2011). Yet no research has been undertaken to my knowledge as to what impact this articulation has had on practice within Diocesan schools. Practice may remain untouched while implicit theological understandings operate in the background.

It is of course debatable to what extent it is possible or even desirable for the Anglican school to be a community that lives out a Jesus Christ–focussed version of the flourishing life. With their open enrolment policies, Sydney Anglican schools do not have a majority of students entering the school committed to the Anglican version of the flourishing life. The lack of knowledge of the theological fundamentals of Sydney Anglican education as outlined by Jensen (2009) must compound the dilemmas for staff attempting to develop such a community. Nevertheless, Sydney Anglicanism suggests a school may still aspire to be a community of persons who are created for relationship with their creator and each other, whether or not community members acknowledge this in its fullness.

What is my purpose?

Purpose is an interrelated component of identity and the narrative of a flourishing life. It flows from answers supplied to the “Who am I?” question. The Sydney Anglican understanding is a comprehensive yet contestable vision of the purpose of human existence implying both service of others and promotion of the Christian faith. Adopting a psychology lens, King explains a similar approach in what she terms a “developmental teleology” (2016, p. 215).

Jesus Christ is the perfect image of God, and becoming like Christ as distinct persons is God’s intention for all of humanity. [This] occurs through and results in mutual, reciprocal relations with God, humans, and creation. (King, 2016, p. 215)

This telos is not a destination but a dynamic that has an eschatological direction (2016, p. 220) with immanent implications. Although she is not directly addressing the Sydney Anglican context, her practical theology offers an understanding of students that honours their uniqueness as well as their relationships including a role for creation. These aspects make her statement of direct relevance for students' studies. Given that part of the role of Sydney Anglican schools appears to be preparing students for a meaningful life of active service, one would expect some similar account to provide the formally-recognised telos for the curriculum meta-narrative. Again, this presents particular dilemmas to open-enrolment schools that are perhaps compounded by the unique nature of the Diocese. For Sydney Diocese has a distinctive ecclesiology that contextualises its ontology and anthropology as I discuss in the following section.

Distinctives of Sydney Diocese

Reformed Evangelical

Originally staffed by chaplains from the evangelical Anglican group that morphed into William Wilberforce's Clapham Sect (Cameron, 2016), Sydney Diocese is strongly Evangelical. It was built on a "determination to survive" originating in the resistance encountered in attempting to minister to "convicts and gold-diggers" (Jensen, 2012, p. 11). This combativeness was reinforced by clergy who came from Ireland and saw themselves as Evangelical Protestants opposing the significant number of Roman Catholics in the colony. One of the defining aspects of Sydney Diocesan identity is then a certain militancy of style (Cameron, 2016; Porter, 2011) derived initially from its Evangelicalism.

Scottish historian David Bebbington, in his famous 'Bebbington Quadrilateral', referred to Evangelicalism as having four main priorities:

1. Biblicism: a reliance on the bible as the ultimate authority in faith and practice;
2. Conversionism: the necessity for spiritual rebirth through personal faith;
3. Activism: commitment to personal involvement in society and the church; and
4. Crucicentrism: the centrality of what is regarded as the “redeeming work” of Jesus Christ in His life, death and resurrection. (Cameron. 2016, p. 13)

I outlined above the theological grounding for these Evangelical priorities and these priorities are all evident in Sydney Diocese (Cameron, 2016). However, some of the leading churchmen who were responsible for the founding of Diocesan schools in the 19th century were not always clearly committed to the Evangelical movement and often preferred a Via Media (Cameron, 2016). It was thus expected this might persist in the vision and practice of such schools. I also considered that other characteristics of the Diocese might militate against Reformed Evangelical identity in the school context. Cameron, for example, lists seven characteristics that she claims must be “taken as a whole” to develop an adequate picture of Sydney Diocese. These are:

1. Commitment to the centrality of the Bible.
2. Militancy.
3. Academic training of clergy in conservative theology.
4. Prioritising Reformation over Anglicanism.
5. Decentralised power structure.
6. Concern for social justice.
7. Active youth work. (Cameron, 2016, pp. 6-11)

However, taking these as a whole was not thought to preclude the possible dominance of one characteristic in the school context.

Commitment to the centrality of the Bible.

Biblicism is the non-negotiable heart of Sydney Anglicanism. The Bible is held as the authority above other possible sources including reason, tradition, church canons or liturgies or church leaders. The implications of this for the Diocese and its schools include an emphasis on all forms of verbal communication, but especially the sermon (for example, in school chapels). Interestingly, Cameron (2016) includes liturgy as an expression of biblical commitment, although Sydney Diocese is known for its de-emphasis on formal liturgy (Porter, 2011). Michael Jensen refers to liturgical practice as one of those “secondary matters” (Jensen, 2012, p. 96).

Judd and Cable (1987) claim the 1962 Constitution, which changed the name from Church of England to Anglican and allowed liturgical experimentation, undermined the role of the reformed Prayer Book in Sydney Diocese. With its liturgies, prayers and 39 Articles, The Prayer Book had been “the expression of Reformation heritage and liturgy” (Judd & Cable, 1987, p. 307). In its absence, multiple interpretations of what it means to be Anglican became possible, including more literalist or more liberal approaches to interpretation of the Bible. Thus multiple interpretations were expected in the chapels and Christian Studies classrooms of the two schools in this study.

Militancy

As a consultant working with the Anglican Education Commission for several years, it was my experience that the historical militancy of the Diocese has contributed in a small but significant way to the shaping of Diocesan schools. Militancy was evident in many Heads’ firm insistence on independence from the Diocese due to a certain level of distrust. This may be due to theological or style differences with the Diocesan hierarchy. But it may also be

influenced by the decentralised power structure adopted by the Diocese as an expression of its congregationalism, as I discuss later. Whatever the cause, a certain level of militancy was evident in the suspicion with which the Diocese was viewed and the preparedness to oppose its leadership. How this might have impacted on the version of the flourishing life espoused by the schools was of interest in this study. For example, did it result in an individualistic or theologically unorthodox story?

The academic training of clergy in conservative theology

Ordination to the priesthood in Sydney Diocese requires a high level of academic study, usually requiring a prior undergraduate degree to enter Moore Theological College. This level of academic theological study may reflect the love of knowledge and learning instilled in historic Anglicanism by the Christian humanism of pre-Reformation thinkers such as Erasmus (Nazir-Ali, 2017) who famously said, “Let us kiss these sweet words of Christ with a pure affection. Let us be newly transformed into them, for what we study shapes how we live” (Null, 2017, p. 53). In relation to spiritual formation, the Reformed Evangelical emphasis on academic study of the Bible is not necessarily reflected in recent understandings. I have already referred, for example, to MacIntyre (2007) and Smith (2009) and their use of classical and Catholic theology in their emphasis on cultivating virtue by habit. Each school’s approach was expected to be nuanced in its emphasis in relation to Reformation doctrines and current trends. Nevertheless, the academic approach of the Diocese does reflect the general prioritising of academic achievement in the Diocese, including its schools, as attested by their websites and my own experience. However, the Diocese’s focus on conservative theology and social mores is perhaps not shared by its schools.

The Diocese holds socially conservative views on gendered roles and its definition of marriage (Porter, 2011). It opposes the ordination of women to the priesthood, based on an understanding that the church should reflect the complementary yet different roles of male and female in the home. This is despite Jensen's claim that "societies that have been more influenced by the Christian gospel have tended to embrace a much more egalitarian and companionate version of marriage" (Jensen, 2012, p. 140). The impact on the identity of students was expected to be substantial if the school upheld these Diocesan understandings, indicating a need to collect data in both a boys' and a girls' school.

Prioritising Reformation over Anglicanism

Perhaps confusingly for Diocesan schools seeking to establish their Anglican identity, Cameron claims that the Diocese sees itself primarily as a "scion of the Reformation" and secondarily as "Anglican" (Cameron, 2016, p. 9). For example, celebrating the 500th anniversary of Luther's role in the Reformation, the Principal of Moore Theological College wrote emphatically on the ongoing importance of the Reformation (Thompson, 2017). The first point of his essay is "We are too quick to forget our inheritance", the inheritance being, "We are heirs of the Reformation" (Thompson, 2017, p. 2). He then unpacks the meaning of the '5 Solas', the Reformation meme of 'alones'. They emphasise a soteriology based on scripture not tradition, only achieved by faith, through God's grace, only through Jesus Christ and lived to the glory of God alone. In the rest of the article there is no celebration of the Anglican Church either generally or in its Sydney version; just lessons to be learnt from the Reformation so his emphasis is telling.

This prioritising of Reformation over Anglican may be one step away from denying a specifically Anglican identity and does appear to have had an impact on Diocesan schools. For instance, many of the older schools refrain from using "Anglican" in articles on their

websites. However, prioritising Reformation implies a close attention to particular doctrines about the nature and needs of people. As this has rarely and only relatively recently been addressed in suitable academic depth (Cairney et al., 2011) it is not clear whether or how Anglican schools have taken up the challenge to question their assumptions and modify their practice in response.

Decentralised power structure

Being conservative, Protestant and Evangelical has implications for the role of group vis-à-vis individual identity. A Protestant version of individualism may be promoted in Sydney Diocese by its emphasis on worship, discipline and order as contextualised in the local church. Although this originated in the Diocese's founding by Evangelical missions that promoted provincial autonomy (Nazir-Ali, 2017), it was compounded by clergy theological education in the latter half of the 20th century. Former principals of Moore Theological College viewed the denomination as a "service structure" and a "fellowship of churches" (Jensen, 2012, p. 81). "Church" as a term was relegated to the activity of meeting together, thus affording the local congregation an element of independence not seen in many other Anglican Dioceses.

It perhaps also resulted in a sort of fragmented individualism, lacking a consensus of what it means to be Anglican in its schools. In my work for the Anglican Education Commission it was apparent that most Heads of schools had little firm idea of what it means to be an Anglican school. Indeed, "the problem of the identity of Sydney's Anglicans *as Anglicans* still remains" (Jensen, 2012, p. 89). This leaves heads of schools with little guidance in relation to school vision, direction and practices that might reflect and reinforce Anglican identity; although two heads have recently been appointed who have a theology degree from Moore Theological College.

The effect of reprioritising identity into Christian, then Protestant and finally Anglican may be compounded by the “extreme congregationalism” of Sydney Diocese. It stems from the emphasis on the local church assembly at the expense of an official structure of authority (Bishop John Reid, as quoted in Cameron, 2016, pp. 195-6). Power and authority in Sydney Diocese are decentralised and leadership distributed amongst empowered local clergymen and laity, as evidenced in the push for lay administration of Holy Communion. Anglican schools across Australia also often operate largely independently from their Diocese with some few attached to the local parish (Moody, 2010, p. 2). Semi-independence from Diocesan priorities is a very real condition of many Sydney Anglican schools and in that they are simply reflecting a powerful and unique characteristic of Sydney Anglican identity.

Concern for social justice

Historical movements, such as the abolition of the slave trade, were driven by Evangelical Anglicans who acted counter-culturally as the outcome of their view of the flourishing life (Nazir-Ali, 2017; Jensen, 2012). Sydney Diocese has a history of a progressive approach to social inequality and support for the marginalised, including action on behalf of refugees or asylum seekers (Judd & Cable, 1987; Cameron, 2016). Its domestic welfare arm, Anglicare, claims that its identity and mission are contextualised within the mission of the Anglican Church as “called by Jesus’s example to respond to human need by offering loving service and seeking to address injustice in our society” (Anglicare, 2017, p. 1).

In relation to Diocesan schools, the Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation has sought “To provide affordable, quality Christian Education”, thus working for the common good of society, according to the Reformed Anglican vision of the flourishing life. However, given that older, high-fee schools are rarely accessible to students of lower socio-economic status, it seems the Diocese, at least in its education provision, lacks a clear voice on some systemic

issues. This presents obvious challenges to understanding and practising a distinctive Anglican religious tradition in an Anglican school.

Active youth work

Sydney Diocese has been characterised for most of its existence by very active youth work (Cameron, 2016; Lukabyo, 2018), partly the result of its intellectual vigour. The gospel of Jesus Christ is seen to give coherence to the Biblical narrative, and youth of the Diocese have been traditionally urged to place themselves within this meta-narrative. This has led the Diocese to emphasise the urgency of evangelism (Cameron, 2016) for all church members and most organisations.

While this has had a positive effect on numbers of church adherents (Cameron, 2016), the place of evangelistic youth work in Diocesan schools is highly contested, with implications for student positioning and agency. Particularly relevant to this study was the possibility that a focus on evangelism, narrowly conceived, might encourage epistemological dualism and discourage students from regarding their subjects as sites for exploration of contestable faith and belief issues.

To summarise, I understand the following characteristics of Sydney Anglican identity as most relevant to Anglican schools:

- Bible-based
- Gospel-centred and conversionist
- Reformed Protestant Evangelical in theology and low church in ceremony
- Highly educated
- Loosely structured
- Socially conservative in gender issues; yet concerned for social justice
- Militant.

Links between the Diocese and its Schools

Although theoretical attempts have been made to relate particular Christian denominations to curriculum at both school and university level (Hughes, 2005), there appears to be little focussed research across intersecting aspects of the school context, such as curriculum, religious tradition and student religious identity. Understanding a religion as I have above in terms of devotion to God, certain rituals and biblical propositions embedded in a narrative of the flourishing life offers a clear structure for identifying where it is functioning in the school context. It highlights the personal experience of students embedded in the practices and beliefs of a religious community while enabling data collection on these aspects

I have also outlined distinctive elements of Sydney Diocesan truth claims and how they are expressed in its understanding of the nature and purpose of people. However, each school will be interpreting these elements differently, perhaps with little recognition or articulation of their unique contextualisation. They may see no need to explore their educational offering as a site of potential conflict between narratives of the flourishing life.

This is an important issue as the institutional identity of the school community is hugely formative of students' personal identity (Wardekker & Miedema, 2001).

Nurture in community

Faith-based schools in Australian pluralistic democracy have traditionally had the right to nurture students in their faith tradition. It is contested by critics of faith-based schools that critical openness and autonomy are irreconcilable with nurture in a faith community. Elmer Thiessen claims though that critical reflection and hence growth to autonomy always occurs “within the context of a convictional community” (1993, p. 131) and is, in that sense, tradition bound. This has echoes of Jensen's emphasis on an embodied community in relation to Anglican identity and also of conceptualising a school as a moral community with “binding” moral foundations (Graham & Haidt, 2010).

Conceptualised as a community, the Anglican school may potentially reject the traditional transmission approach to socialisation into a religious tradition. Vermeer advocates that socialisation be constructed instead in terms of the “formation of personal identity” (Vermeer, 2009, p. 209) with implications for teaching and learning. However, this refocuses the goal of education as developing the processes of identity formation, not the content of students' actual religious identity (Vermeer, 2009) which may be rather limiting for Anglican schools eager to pass on their tradition. It may also be the case that the convictional community of the school may be nurturing students in a version of the flourishing life that does not quite align with that of the Diocese.

Loose coupling

It is perhaps an implication from an understanding of Sydney Diocese as “loosely structured” that Diocesan schools will not necessarily reflect the holistic identity of Sydney

Diocese. Denominational schools develop their own institutional identity depending on “the way schools interpret their own position and mission” (Wardekker & Miedema, 2001, p. 36). This institutional identity has the potential to support students’ developing personal identity; but the quality of this support appears to depend on three factors:

- their interpretation of the religious truth claim,
- their conception of the nature of education,
- and their view of cultural differences as content of education.

(Wardekker & Miedema, 2001, p. 36)

While this finding is limited by its source in The Netherlands, which is dominated in education provision by church schools, it does seem inevitable that the truth claims of the Diocese will be given a unique interpretation in the school context.

Benefits for identity development

My story and multiple stories. I understand that institutional identity impacts on personal identity through socialisation into a community and culture that has a moral core of values. With the focus of this study on stories of the flourishing life, the Anglican school is recognised as a possible site of challenge for the student’s personal story. They may encounter richer, more complex versions (Wardekker et al., 2001, p. 38). They may be confronted with multiple sources of stories such as the internet, literature, or “religious scriptures, which embody entire worldviews and values systems” (Mason et al., 2007, p. 50). They have the opportunity to compare their life to paradigms or ideals and seek to make sense of their own experiences in a meaningful and creative Narrative Identity (Mason et al., 2007). Certainly, there is potential for students to be challenged to interrogate their story.

Experience and involvement. There is an important practical aspect to this as well. Students have the opportunity to experience and join religious traditions, rituals and roles

(Wardekker et al., 2001). Indeed, such involvement has been found to aid general identity formation. In a study based on Marcia's Status Identity theory, 418 older adolescents tracked over a ten-year period demonstrated significant relationship between their involvement in local communities and religious organisations and their identity development (Hardy, Pratt, Pancer, Olsen & Lawford, 2010). Interestingly, while both avenues for involvement resulted in decreases in identity diffusion, community involvement was associated with identity achievement while religious involvement was more associated with foreclosure, indicating perhaps less exploration (Hardy et al., 2010, p. 133). Nevertheless, of relevance to Anglican schools is the potential for students to "experiment with ideologies in practical contexts" (Hardy et al., 2010, p. 133) to advance their commitments.

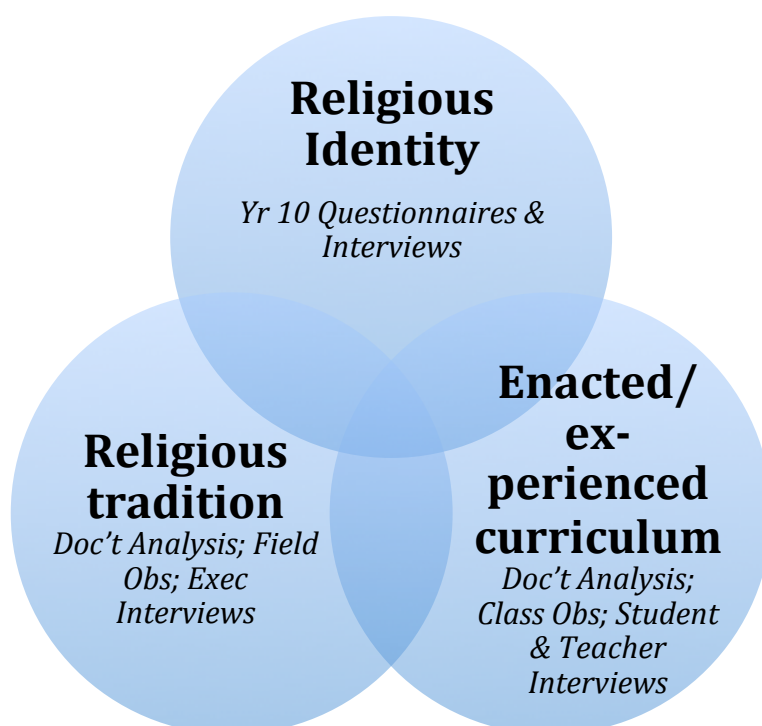
Caring and contradiction. Students have multiple opportunities to learn 21st century skills in the Anglican school as they are confronted by the many contradictions between worldviews, lifestyles and practices (Wardekker et al., 2001). In particular, they often have a supportive environment for considering the many alternatives and nuancing the differences. Informational input is recognised by Anglicanism's academic emphasis to be important in this. However, this is never just an abstract intellectual exercise. In a study out of Stanford University, beliefs about the world and other people were found very important in exploring identity in relation to "other-oriented purpose" (Quinn, 2014). Students were classified according to whether they had a vision of a world that could be changed by their efforts or of a world where they felt their input would change nothing. Their sense of agency and/or care was found to impact very much on what Anglican schools would understand as a sense of purpose around "service for others". Encountering and handling contradiction between worldviews and lifestyles within a school appears to be a holistic skill supported by an environment that fosters mutual care.

Conclusion

A ‘thick’ picture of two schools’ versions of Sydney Anglicanism was one sub-goal of this study seen through the lens of ThCR. This involved exploring the social structures of the school, going beyond an approach limited to examining discourse only (Edwards et al., 2014). The resulting case studies aimed to demonstrate how Sydney Anglicanism helped give form to a range of educational activities in the embodied communities as contexts for student identity formation. Questions were anticipated such as: What various accounts of the flourishing life were at work within the school community? How are Anglican schools dealing with potential conflicts between its religious tradition, curriculum offering and student identity? Do they even consider the impact of the curriculum in its various forms on a student’s deeply held sense of self? These questions helped guide the reflexive nature of this study.

In the next chapter I outline the methodology of the study as mixed-methods. Although the major lens adopted was a narrative one, a measure of Status Identity was employed as well as Narrative Identity to give an initial picture of the Year 10 students at the two single-sex Anglican schools. The various issues that impacted on the process of data collection and interpretation are explained, including my role as an insider/outsider in the research.

Chapter 6. Methodology



Understanding religious identities will require that we listen for stories in all their dynamic complexity (and) situate them in the multiple relational and institutional contexts in which contemporary people live their lives. (Ammerman, 2003 quoted in Sonnenberg et al., 2016, p. 224)

Introduction

In the previous chapter I sketched a picture of the Anglican faith as it functions in Sydney Diocese. In particular, the theological grounding of the Diocese in Reformation Evangelicalism was emphasised for the answers it supplies to the two key identity questions. I further suggested that for the purposes of this study, the Diocese may be recognised as having six strong emphases flowing from its answers to the identity questions. I then explored potential links between the institutional identity of the Diocese and that of its schools, based on the recognition of schools' nurturing role in a type of confessional

community, albeit perhaps only loosely linked to the Diocese. Potential benefits for student identity in such links were suggested in the expectation that they could be used in data analysis as indicators of dynamic interactions.

In this chapter I seek to trace the steps taken to explore the interaction of curriculum in all its forms and the religious identity of students in the context of two Anglican single-sex schools. Seeking to understand curriculum and religious identity as interacting in a specific religious, gendered and socio-economic context was a complex task. I endeavour in this chapter to outline the rationale for my choice of research methodology and to explain some limitations in practice.

Theoretical Framings

This research has been conceptualised as a mixed methods multiple-case study involving two same-sex Anglican schools. It is grounded in the meta-theory of Theological Critical Realism (ThCR) and informed by its philosophical insights. I adopted a narrative lens on the understanding that narrative more or less reflects an underlying reality from a ThCR perspective, but still enables the voice of each participant to contribute their perception of the flourishing life.

Strategies adopted were cross-sectional and retrospective. Although a cross-sectional design may not be very strong for identifying change processes (Neuman, 2014, p. 44), this is not necessary to understand student religious identity at one point in time. The study offered an in-depth description of each school's functioning as the three narratives of the flourishing life (student religious identity, the curriculum and the school's religious tradition) interacted. In addition, it retrospectivity enabled the recognition of other possible

factors at work in students' religious identity such as family background. Both approaches are supported by my ontology, Theological Critical Realism.

The Theological Critical Realist lens

The mixed methods nature of this research is grounded in a Critical Realist (CR) understanding of epistemology that acknowledges the complementary role of qualitative and quantitative methods. Combining extensive quantitative and intensive qualitative approaches in CR research is said to “provide the best of both worlds” (Edwards et al., 2014, p. 244). A case study approach was thus adopted that focussed on more than the interpretive tradition. This is consistent with some recent identity research strategies that recommend an intricate interweaving of quantitative and qualitative methodologies (McLean & Pasupathi, 2014), and also of Status and Narrative Identity.

Secular versions of critical realism ask the central question: what must the world be like if we are to have knowledge of it (Edwards et al., 2014)? Knowledge developed by fallible human minds is said to depend on the structures of the world itself. It aims to limit the perceived weaknesses of strong forms of social constructivism that are understood to offer a weak explanation of how identity is developed and accepts all discourses at face value. CR then “uses elements from both social constructionism and realism” (Edwards et al., 2014, p. 48) while affirming the agency of evaluating humans. Ontological realism, epistemic relativism and judgemental rationalism are its key epistemology markers (Edwards et al., 2014). Alister McGrath summarises the balance:

Reality is apprehended by the human mind which attempts to express and accommodate that reality as best it can with the tools at its disposal—such as mathematical formulae or mental models. (McGrath, 2002b, p. 195)

This will inevitably involve the values-based “fiduciary framework” of the knower (Polanyi, 1962, p. 266). However, this was not understood as a one-way process in this research. Rather, it was an ongoing constant interaction and revision of strategies and my interpretive framework in light of my “apprehension” of reality in each school. This highlighted the need to question my own assumptions about the nature of persons as well as those that grounded the curriculum, the religious tradition and student religious identity in each school.

I adopted a theological version of CR as I judged it offered the best form of faith-based epistemology, where presuppositions are declared and acknowledged, including for example a commitment to a sustainer-creator God who made a meaningful world (Edlin, 2015, p. 5). The intertwining of truth-seeking and perspective, and the limitations of fallible human beings, is acknowledged and accommodated. ThCR thus allowed me to find a place for the transcendent in student experience and an authoritative role for the Bible’s version of the flourishing life, centred on a Biblical anthropology.

At the same time, I was cautioned to adopt an attitude of epistemic humility in light of human finitude and to resist any positivist claims. Metaphors become particularly important in correcting a tendency to positivist surety for they can offer imaginative ways of thinking about and getting closer to particular aspects of reality without pretending to be exact mirror images of that reality. In this study curriculum, religious tradition and religious identity as stories of the flourishing life share some functions as imaginative metaphors accessible through a narrative lens.

The narrative lens

Narrative has many meanings in research including “a type of qualitative data, a form of inquiry and data gathering, a way to discuss and present data, a set of qualitative data

analysis techniques, and a kind of theoretical explanation” (Neuman, 2014, p. 494). In focussing on the various stories of the flourishing life as an expression of religious identity, this study utilises narrative in most of these modes. It is in the education context “a means to capture the situatedness, the contexts, and the complexities of human action in teaching and learning” (Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002, p. 3).

One key idea in this research reflected Clandinin’s emphasis in narrative inquiry as it relates to “the interaction of particular children and teachers’ lives within particular... contexts” (Clandinin, 2006, p. 49). I extended the idea of interaction beyond individuals into the broader narrative of the interaction of religious identity, curriculum and religious tradition, the school’s expression of the latter informing much of the school context.

Consistent with Clandinin’s narrative lens regarding the researcher’s role, I negotiated “relationships, research purposes, transitions” (2006, p. 47) as a participant in the ongoing stories of people and places. In this, I sought to practise an ethic of “negotiation, respect, mutuality and openness to multiple voices” (2006, p. 52) as a reflection of best practice in narrative inquiry as well as my theological anthropology. This compounded the formative effect of both the research questions and the data collected towards a sense of co-authorship (Polkinghorne, 1996, p. 366), a “process of collaboration” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 4).

In line with a secular CR perspective, I rejected an exclusively constructivist approach to participant narrative by recognising that stories are always about something (Eide, 2012). They bring meaning to the real, lived experiences of the individual in context. Narratives are not necessarily to be taken at face value as if every perspective is equally effective in capturing that reality, and therefore equally valuable (Edwards, 2014). All are filtered through a personal lens that may distort the perception of reality to an unreliable degree. I

thus considered the practical application of CR in its theological form as a more nuanced approach supporting:

- a concept of joint creation of truth, rather than mere personal construction;
- narration as embodied phenomenon;
- interaction of world and narrator;
- analysis and joint creation of common ground between narrator and researcher;
- plurality of experienced facts (based on Eide, 2012, p. 156);
- exploration of a spiritual component as a possible “underlying mechanism”

(King, 2003).

A Multiple-Case Study

I considered that case study was the appropriate way to capture the richness of the interaction of religious identity and curriculum within each Anglican school. This is consistent with Schachter’s claim that the higher order thinking involved in identity development is situated in “complex and fluid social contexts” that are best explored through case studies and narrative (2005, p. 157). Case studies relate quite specifically to some one thing in a natural setting: a “focused and bounded phenomenon embedded in its context” (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014, p. 11). This aligns with Flyvbjerg’s claim that research as understanding about phenomena requires a context (2006, p. 236), an embedding in a case. As such, case studies potentially offer a complex, holistic, vivid account with the “ring of truth” (Miles et al., 2014, p.11). Conducted over an extended period of time, they are able to explore process, the how and why of phenomena (Miles et al., 2014), particularly where the researcher has little control over events (Kohlbacher, 2006).

I take the position that assuming a narrative lens is consistent with a case study approach for several reasons. Case study accommodates a focus on the meaning people make of themselves in the school context, best explained in narrative form.

Emphasis on people's lived experiences (locates) the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives and (connect) these meanings to the social world around them. (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014, p. 11)

Preserving a unified picture of the data of each case also depends on a holistic narrative description. Case study thus accommodates great detail in a dynamic pictorial narrative of the flourishing life functioning in each school. However, Flyvbjerg cautions that the case study narrative never involves "conceptual closure" (2006, p. 238). In this it appears to align well with that sense of ambiguity, incompleteness of events and recursive element of "storylines" (Ewing, 2013, 2016) in curriculum. In many ways, the comparative case studies began a storytelling process about Anglican schooling.

A comparative approach to the two school case studies and the four nested student case studies was also employed. Comparative case studies understood from a ThCR lens seek to balance the specificity of one context with a recognition of wider mechanisms and patterns (Edwards et al., 2014). These functions were more relevant to the researcher's role in data collection and analysis than to other participants in the research.

Research Questions

This study focussed initially on one main research question: How does the History curriculum interact with the religious identity of Year 10 students in two same-sex Anglican schools? To do so, it utilised five subsidiary questions as shown in the figure below. In the process of collecting data to explore these questions, the original focus on History was

expanded to include Christian Studies, both understood as exemplars of how the curriculum interacts with religious identity.

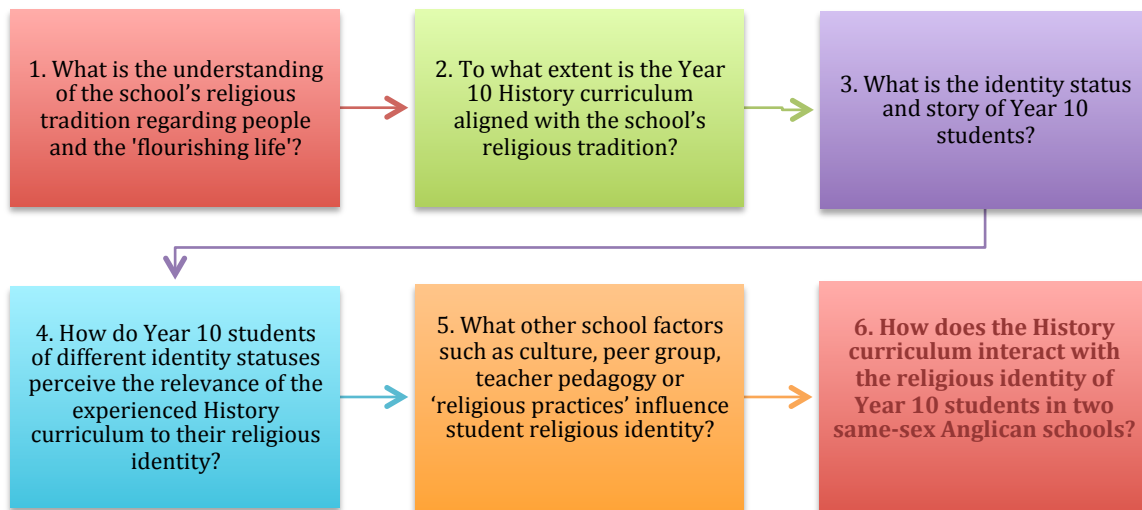


Figure 6.1: *Interacting Stories*

Research Strategies

Unfortunately, there appears to be a lack of knowledge about the appropriate methodology for research on the religious identity of students, although quantitative approaches dominate the studies (Sonnenberg et al., 2016). Consistent with Miles et al. (2014), I claim that quantitative and qualitative methods can be complementary approaches to research, especially given the complexity of gathering data on the often-ephemeral vision of the flourishing life referred to in religious identity. The quantitative source of data was a validated survey of student religious identity, the Bell Measure of Religious Identity. Qualitative sources were consistent with Yin's (2016, pp. 138-139) identification of four

types of data collection methods: interviewing, observing, collecting and examining, and feeling.

Given the specialised nature of the psycho-social construct of religious identity and the broad field of interaction indicated by the curriculum's three modes, I anticipated that strategies would be given a particular focus and form based on identity research. For example, Yoder (2000, pp. 100, 103) recommends that in order to capture a fuller picture of the social aspect of the psycho-social construct, interviews should be expanded to identify barriers as well as opportunities for identity formation. By doing so, disempowered students who were previously ignored in research are identified and given voice (Yoder, 2000, p. 99). I thus adopted a semi-structured interview schedule and sought to participate as much as possible in a non-threatening conversational dialogue with students and staff in which they were able to share their personal barriers and opportunities.

Questionnaire

This research takes the view that there are two routes to identity formation: the narrative and the paradigmatic. For the paradigmatic route, this study surveyed students with a questionnaire administered in class: the Bell Measure of Religious Identity (2009). This measure in turn was based on the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status-II (Adams, 1998), the most validated measure of Status Identity (Bell, 2009, p. 103).

Bell's measure contained three parts, the first two related to implicit and explicit salience of religious identity (RISa). The first part was coded narrative content, the second a ranking of identity domains (Bell, 2009, p. 129). Scoring of identity salience was done simply by judging if any "religious/spiritual content is included and in which order the religious content lies compared to the overall list of descriptors" (Bell, 2009, pp. 129-130). For comparisons such as between the two schools and for tracing development, a domain

specific Status score is recommended (Goossens, 2001, p. 683). Hence Part 3 comprised eight items on religious identity and four items on lifestyle/global identity from Adams' EOMESI-II measure. Bell added a further 12 new religious identity statements and four lifestyle/global identity questions. Students were required to choose their level of agreement with each statement through a six-item Likert scale. A simple additive process produced Religious Identity Status (RIS_t) in the context of global identity.

The debate around what exactly Status Identity measures and its relation to Erikson's original theorising has been discussed in Chapter 3. Marcia's original measure was a structured interview to be administered in the context of a warm relationship by an interviewer trained in psychosocial theory and interviewing techniques (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). It was meant to be a more holistic assessment of Status than might be forthcoming from a paper-based questionnaire. Nevertheless, it is thought that the questionnaire may indicate the underlying identity structure (Kroger & Marcia, 2011). For the purpose of this study, it was administered to Year 10 students on the understanding that interviews would complement the questionnaire and accommodate students who may have developed their identity via the narrative route. It was expected that this combination would provide a rich picture of student religious identity.

Student and staff interviews

Interviewing is one of the major four methods for data collection listed by Yin (2016) for case study research. Three key characteristics of the qualitative interview are: not strictly scripted, entailing a social relationship, and comprising open-ended questions (Yin, 2016, pp. 141-143). The interviews conducted with both students and staff were semi-structured around open-ended questions that aimed to "depict a complex social world from a participant's perspective" (Yin, 2016, p. 143).

Elements of difference between adult and adolescent participants were recognised in both questions and interviewing style. Questions on the student schedule related to their perception of the multiple versions of the flourishing life in the school. They were chosen for their developmental appropriateness in relation to identity development. The teacher questions related more to their role in student identity and that of the school generally. Both schedules were evaluated externally, being approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Sydney.

Interviews were conducted in a conversational mode in which I remained cognisant of how my reflexive self (Yin, 2016, pp. 285-286) was impacting on each interview. In particular, in relation to identity formation, I was conscious that the “mutual construction of meanings” (Edwards et al., 2014, p. 111) could be formative of some aspects of student Narrative Identity. However, consistent with a ThCR approach to interviewing, I also sought to recognise the “social contexts, constraints, and resources” (Edwards et al., 2014, p. 111) acting on myself, students and staff. According to CR researchers, this involves

A non-relativist conception of these social relations and structures, and thus an evaluation of the adequacy of competing accounts of this social reality, albeit one that often emphasizes its layered and complex character. (Edwards et al., 2014, p. 111)

Student interviews. To research more salient aspects of religious identity, students were invited to a personal interview on the basis of their Status Identity assessed by the questionnaire. Answers to survey questions may reflect subconscious, culturally-determined thought structures because they require little conscious effort (Morris, 2013) so student interviews were considered necessary to validate and elaborate on questionnaire responses. Each interview was guided by a semi-structured schedule that gave a loose structure to student worldview, ethos and experiences (Diefenbach, 2009). Questions related to teacher

influence, student vision of the flourishing life, roles adopted in social groups, interaction with the Anglican religious tradition and impactful lessons in History classes. These questions were refined after a trial interview with a Year 10 boy from a boys' school of similar socio-economic status to that studied.

Initial questions in the interview were focused on student responses to the questionnaire to gain a more intensive understanding of each student's operating identity story (OIS). However, I was aware that there was no guarantee that students would share with an interviewer/authority figure such a deeply-held story. Indeed, they probably were unaware of many of the details of it (Polkinghorne, 1996). Nevertheless, in seeking to explore the two key identity questions, the student interviews did offer an opportunity for students to elaborate on aspects of their religious identity, especially the content of their beliefs and sense of purpose.

Further limitations of interviewing related to practical issues. Access to students was a particular concern in William Cowper College. Unlike Catherine Hamlin College, the boys' school would not allow the researcher to address Year 10 classes to explain the research and motivate participation. The Participants' Information Statement and introductory letter were sent via email and the two respondees became the two nested case studies at Cowper. At the girls' school, Catherine Hamlin College, the girls were eager to know about the research process and to participate in all data collection strategies, so selection of students depended on Status Identity achieved in the questionnaire.

Staff interviews. These were again conducted in conversational mode at Cowper, but less so at Hamlin, although a similar semi-structured schedule was followed. This was partly due to being able to record interviews of all relevant staff at Cowper but having to write down answers given by the History and Christian Studies staff at Hamlin. Consistent

with Yin's (2016, p. 139) fourth data collection method, "feeling", I detected unease in the teachers as if they were being tested by each question. In this they may have been expressing some social approval bias. However, both data recording methods did capture thoughtful, salient views that contributed to the rich case studies.

Teachers' values and their personal search for answers to the identity questions affect their orientation to their subject matter, forming their personal unique hidden curriculum. Interviewing teachers about pedagogical and informational choices observed in the classroom aimed to uncover that personal hidden curriculum, an important component of the actual curriculum in its interaction with student religious identity.

Secondary data analysis

Cultural context and the interpretive role of the researcher must be acknowledged for their role in the collection of data in qualitative research (Neuman, 2014, p. 372). Observing the general environment of each school offered many examples of their understanding and application of Anglicanism and offered valuable contextual information to clarify data collected in interviews. Consistent with Yin's (2016, p. 139) emphasis on "collecting" in case study policies, mission statements, teaching and learning programs, photos of school charts and historical artifacts were all used to identify particular themes (Neuman, 2014, p. 49) and categories, including both "manifest" and "latent" aspects (Kolbacher, 2006). Although overt religious symbolism was easy to identify using this strategy, uncovering assumptions and detecting a holistic narrative of the flourishing life was slightly more problematic. Isolated, more latent aspects of the story may well have been active in school traditions or rituals although unarticulated. Nevertheless, documents such as the Stage 4 History programme were compared with texts such as strategic plans, and to check

alignment of key themes and assumptions and develop a more accurate picture of the school's version of the flourishing life in its interaction with curriculum.

Classroom observations

These were carried out with a structured in-class observation schedule coding key assumptions and ideas related to “the flourishing life” as observed in worldview and ethos. Consistent with James (2015), I focussed on key areas identified as relevant to student religious identity in the classroom. These include the nature of discussions, sense of safety, free expression for students, teacher making particular push for one outcome, who is setting agenda, and criteria for successful dialogue (James, 2015, p. 11).

However, in observing the curriculum as enacted in class and experienced by students I also looked for pedagogical practices that have already proved helpful in supporting general identity formation. These included setting complex personal problems, exploring models, self-reflective writing, decision making and critical thinking (Sinai, Kaplan and Flum, 2012, p. 196). Data was used in concert with that gathered from document analysis and student and teacher interviews to gain multiple perspectives about the implementation of the curriculum intentions in relation to the schools' religious traditions.

As noted in Chapter Two, the subject of History was chosen for observation both as an exemplar of how the curriculum interacts with religious identity as well as being a crucial subject in relation to religious content. Interestingly, Connelly & Clandinin (1990) also accord history a “special role to play in shaping narrative studies in the social sciences” due to its temporality. In Hamlin the Year 10 History class observed included the four interviewed students, enabling collection of data unique to each nested case study. In Cowper, only one of the boys was represented in the History class observed.

As the data collection progressed, it became evident that the selection of History classes alone for observation was too limiting in relation to the research questions. It was reported by staff and students of Cowper, the first school studied, that much of its religious identity was promoted to students by the Christian Studies curriculum. I then gained permission to observe the same group of boys in their Christian Studies class and was granted similar access at Hamlin.

Triangulation

Immersion in a religious tradition is thought necessary for real understanding and critique, requiring more, according to Neiman, than “supposed neutrality” (2000, p. 217). However, this insider observation raises the need for attention to the personal dimension of the study. As a practising Christian, I was conscious of my own bias, particularly towards verification, which is general in case studies (Flyvberg, 2006, p. 234). Yin claims that triangulation may be thought of as a frame of mind “that helps to keep your eyes and ears open for corroborating or conflicting ideas or data” (2016, p. 161) so I sought to develop a frame of mind that was consistently conscious of my ontology and its dynamic in my data collection and meaning-making.

I also used evidence from multiple sources and occasions (Yin, 2016). Class observations were conducted in each school of both History and Christian Studies at different times. Interviews with the class teachers offered their perspective of the lessons. The students who were interviewed for the nested case studies were also able to contribute their understanding of what had occurred in the classes and its impact on them. It was also necessary for confirming my analysis to take account of the way the strategies for data collection directed the content of that data and seek in that moment to allow the participants perspective to be clearly heard.

Sampling and Research Design

Two Anglican schools in Sydney Diocese, Australia, were chosen for this study, one girls' and one boys' school. As there is little research on the effectiveness of the moral purpose of Sydney Anglican schools and they function within a pluralistic society that requires transparency to support democratic virtues, they present a unique group for research, suited to purposive sampling (Neuman, 2014, pp. 273-4). The school sample incorporated consideration of gender, given the key role of social context and interaction in the process of identity formation (Gee, 2000, p. 121) and the general influence of gender on identity processes (Cramer, 2000, p. 68).

Six schools were originally identified as possible participants: three boys', three girls'. It was proposed that one school would be chosen randomly from each of these categories although I was hoping to avoid schools with which I had had a family or professional connection. This proved impossible, as the practical issue of various levels of gate-keepers in independent schools proved to be a major factor. As both schools are classified as independent there were no approvals required external to Principals' approval.

Access to the two schools that acceded to the research was negotiated initially by phone calls to the executive charged with examining such proposals. Information about the study was disseminated at meetings with school executives and teachers selected by each school and did not include either Principal in the planning or implementation.

The research was designed with the Bell questionnaire as the first strategy and was administered to a Year 10 Christian Studies or History class in each school in order to select four students as nested case studies. Year 10 was chosen for its significance in identity development (Meeus, 2011, p. 88). Adolescent changes in physiology affect every aspect of their being at this age, leading to intense "self-related engagement" (Sinai et al., 2012, p.

196). Various aspects of identity such as self-concept, personal values, interests and career goals assume an important role in the teaching and learning process (Kaplan & Flum, 2012) although these often remain unacknowledged. With the development of abstract reasoning, students are more capable of both introspection and perspective-taking, supplying the capacity to examine their commitments (Sinai et al. 2012) and be actively involved in the narrative process. It is, however, a limitation of this sampling that students were given the option of opting out. I judged that those who felt confident in their views of life were far less likely to opt-out, thereby skewing the sample towards those with Achieved Identity Status.

Nevertheless one student was selected randomly from each of four Statuses (Crocetti et al., 2013, p. 2) in the girls' school. They were then invited to be interviewed to explore their religious identity and their experience of the big story told by the curriculum about the flourishing life. This offered flexibility but also the potential for picking up important factors that weren't obvious in the questionnaire or that were specific to that school. In the boys' school, only two students were given parental approval to participate in the interview and therefore became the two nested case studies in that school. Neither of them was a member of the Year 10 Christian Studies class in which the questionnaire was administered, so each completed it prior to interview.

Classes in Year 10 History, usually containing the interviewed students, were then observed, followed by interviews with the teachers involved. As it became evident that Christian Studies classes had a flow-on effect to those in History, I also observed classes in that subject. Chaplains and Principals in both schools were generous with their time and I interviewed them at length to gain their perspective of how their school functioned in relation to their religious tradition. Finally, multiple observations were carried out and

documents and artifacts collected while moving around the school to establish the context for the two case studies.

Ethical Issues

Ethics approval was granted by the Human Ethics Research Committee of Sydney University for the project (See Appendix 1). Confidentiality of the schools was preserved by naming them after significant Anglicans. Anonymity was generally possible for participants. However, at Hamlin individual students in each Status were identified by the researcher for follow-up interviews. Confidentiality was preserved by presenting aggregated results (Neuman, 2014, p. 155) and never disclosing individual results beyond what was necessary to identify potential interviewees whose identity was then protected.

Consent was sought from parents/caregivers by means of a Participant Information Statement and informed consent was also obtained from students for the completion of the questionnaire and the follow-up interview, given that they were identifiable on the questionnaire. This was done by means of a letter issued by the school and reflecting the format and guidelines of Sydney University. Informed consent was also obtained from all staff interviewed. Undergirding these formal ethical aspects of the research, an ethic of narrative inquiry infused by my theological anthropology directed my approach to the research.

Data Analysis

Transcription and coding

Transcription of oral data was undertaken initially through an automated transcription service, then corrected online for the sake of accuracy (Adler et al., 2016). Personal correction by the researcher was necessary because it was recognised that “the contextual

and connotative nature of meaning is enormously complex” and therefore required immersion of the researcher in people’s stories (Adler et al., 2016, p. 147).

All data was coded in three phases, initially based on theoretical understandings of religious identity, curriculum and religious tradition and expanded in the first phase twenty areas were identified. In the second phase, pattern coding was undertaken to determine categories. The third phase involved re-immersion in the data in concert with memos that captured “categories or themes, causes/explanations, relationships among people and theoretical constructs” (Miles et al., 2014, pp. 99-100). Examples of all phases may be seen in the Appendices 7-9.

Combining qualitative and quantitative aspects

Given the mixed methods nature of the research, in order to integrate the findings effectively, a mixture of analyses was employed (Yin, 2016, p. 308) while retaining an emphasis on both paradigmatic and narrative approaches to identity formation. Quantitative data from the administration of the Bell Measure of Religious Identity (2009) was tabulated based on Bell’s marking scheme, resulting in a simple additive approach to Identity Status. Given that the questionnaire was envisaged only as the means to select students for interview, this was judged sufficient.

However, the quantitative data were subsequently used in two additional ways. Firstly, the number of students in each Status was used to triangulate with staff and student interviews in relation to religious identity formation. Secondly, qualitative data were compared with individual questionnaires to give an integrated picture of global and religious identity for each student selected for a nested case study.

“Qualitative researchers study meaning” and this is always situated (Heard, 2002, p. 81). The conceptual framework of “the flourishing life” was adopted and incorporated

worldview, ethos and a transcendent telos situated in the distinctive sites of two Sydney Anglican schools. The construct “stories of the flourishing life” was used as the major analytic lens to understand the interaction of the different versions told by religious tradition, curriculum and religious identity. The contextualisation of a tradition within a school is often problematic, being so dependent on staff and structure; however, a rich picture of the multiple versions of the founding story was developed in each school through using the narrative lens of the flourishing life.

Trustworthiness

In this study the quantitative aspect of the questionnaire was incorporated in the narrative of the case studies on the understanding that there was “extensive construct validation” for the Statuses (Waterman, 1988, p. 190). However, consistent with narrative researchers, this comparative multiple-case study adopts criteria that differ from objectivist validity, reliability, and [generalizability](#). [In evaluating validity, for example](#), “Readers are asked to make judgments on whether or not the evidence and argument convinces them at the level of plausibility, credibleness, or trustworthiness of the claim” (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 477). [It may be hoped that a case study becomes a](#) paradigmatic one, but this is never pre-determined (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 232) and not necessary for trustworthiness. Narrative approaches are not concerned so much with causality, but with a holistic overview. They therefore adopt criteria related to adequacy of the explanations that have been developed as a response to the meaningful narrative (Polkinghorne, 2007).

In this way multiple cases may become a “natural basis for generalization” due to their ‘fit’ with the reader’s experience (Stake, 1987, p. 64). Alternatively, the rich in-depth account could promote some “theoretical replicability” (Yin 2003, pp. 5-9), perhaps

providing insights into identity theory in the Anglican school context. “Validation” rather than “validity” is then demonstrated when the “concepts, methods and inferences” of a study can be used for others’ theorising (Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002, 19).

This may be consistent with the approach of secular critical realism where researchers seek to generalise about propositions not populations and have a commitment to both truth and “thick” explanation (Edwards, 2014, p. 25). I have previously indicated that ThCR shares with CR the potential to act as an underlabourer by requiring researchers to articulate the role of their presuppositions in structuring meaning (Hostettler, 2010; Shipway, 2011) and to correct them and any truth claims in light of the “real world”. In this study I sought to research and narrate in a way that balanced the reflexive with active truth seeking as I sought to make tentative truth claims.

If one may speak of validity in this multiple-case study, it may be seen in terms of reflexivity where there is constant interaction while collecting data and seeking to relate it to the research questions. As stated above, I was conscious of my role as researcher impacting on the phenomenon being studied as well as my own meaning-making and I sought to minimise any bias that may have resulted, especially any confirmation bias (Flyvbjerg, 2006) stemming from my own faith position as the former principal of a faith-based school.

During the study I took certain practical steps to support the trustworthiness of the research. I have previously mentioned triangulation of various forms of data in the research design. All aspects of this design were critiqued externally by the university’s ethics body, HREC, including the schedules used for teacher and student interviews and the questionnaire. As recommended by Carcary (2009), a research audit trail was maintained in two forms. Hard copy of all data and logs of the research steps were kept as a physical audit

with much being kept on the university's data research management site. An intellectual audit traced progress in thinking about the research and took the form of peer review of ideas with my supervisors as well as memos and notes on transcriptions.

Conclusion

Flyvbjerg (2006) claims that both case study and survey method are required in the social sciences. Consistent with this view, this research was designed as a comparative multiple-case study incorporating a questionnaire. This measure indicated the spread and intensity of religious identity in each school and how the two cases varied (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 241). In the following chapter I narrate the story of the flourishing life encountered in William Cowper College in three versions: that of the school, the curriculum and the students.

Chapter 7. William Cowper College Stories of the Flourishing Life

Sometimes schools like this are very intimidating to Christians.
You know these are socially powerful schools. (Paul)

The Story Told by the School

The Socially Powerful School

William Cowper College is indeed a “socially powerful” school as described in the above quote by its Headmaster, Paul, during his interview for this study. It is said with no sense of hubris, simply with regret that teachers with a personal faith are not inclined to apply to teach at the school. But the approach taken by the school to develop students’ religious identity cannot be understood apart from this context. At the time of the study around 1500 students were enrolled K–12. Its Index of Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) would be considered high (ACARA, 2017).

The college occupies a site within the 30 kilometre circle of affluence surrounding the city of Sydney, Australia. It maintains an open enrolment policy, not setting any academic standards or faith membership for enrolment. However, its clientele appears to be largely Anglo-Australian and this is confirmed by staff. In common with most of the other independent schools within the thirty-kilometre zone, it has long waiting lists for student entry despite tuition fees of over \$30,000 per year. William Cowper College’s story of the flourishing life is unavoidably dominated by material privilege due to the composition of its clientele, its siting and its obvious resources. However, both Paul and his staff, while accepting the reality of their clientele, do challenge any sense of entitlement about this privilege. They appear to be quite active in seeking to instil a sense of empathy and purpose, related to the common good. Posters in the school, for example, noted the work of William

Wilberforce and his leverage of his social position to abolish slavery. Its nature as a “socially powerful” school must impinge on the identity of students as well as staff; although it is interesting to note that initial coding of physical site and resources became almost irrelevant. Perhaps this indicates that students took their environment for granted. Certainly, to walk around in the uniform of a private school is to declare a sort of ownership of a site and reinforces one’s social standing as well as school allegiance. However, this may have been ameliorated by being surrounded with posters suggesting *noblesse oblige*.

The Independent Christian School

William Cowper College is what is termed an ‘Independent school’ in the Australian context, which tends to give it more social cachet than, for example, the low-fee systemic schools of the Catholic or Anglican Churches. However, Cowper still receives per capita government grants from both the state and federal governments in line with funding policy of the last 40 years. Potentially, tying of compliance to funding was thought to perhaps impact on two key areas relevant to this study. The first was curriculum development contextualised in a faith-based school; and the second, selection of staff able to model its ethos and preserve foundational beliefs and values. This presents the Anglican school with the dilemma of the competing rights of applicants who may not share this ethos. Each faith-based school must find solutions in order to survive in a competitive public/private marketplace now dependent on government funding.

Cowper is (to a certain extent at least) governed by Sydney Anglican Diocese. It maintains close links with the Diocese, yet it exercises a certain independent authority. Ironically, in this it may be simply reflecting the Diocese’s prioritising of decentralised, congregation-based structures along with perhaps even a tendency to a certain militancy of

style, both attributes of Sydney Diocese discussed in Chapter 5. This is despite being governed by a School Council, some of whose members are Diocesan appointments. While strategic direction and policy is said to be their responsibility, management is delegated to the Head who has considerable power to shape the direction of the school and the understanding of its Anglican identity.

Arguably, William Cowper College's identity is understood more in general Christian terms rather than specifically Anglican. As the Chaplain, Peter, says,

We would identify much more as Christian than Anglican, very much so. We don't really talk about Anglican traditions... We're going to have Ash Wednesday service coming up... we would talk about the church calendar, not the Anglican church... We wouldn't as a matter of just normal discourse talk about being Anglican; but I don't think that's a policy decision... I think it's just the way that we see ourselves as a Christian school rather than first and foremost an Anglican school of which we are. (Peter)

In many ways these understandings do reflect the nature of Sydney Diocesan Anglicanism, which prioritises Evangelical and Protestant over Anglican. For example, at the time of the study Cowper's website focussed mainly on its identity as a Christian rather than a specifically Anglican school. Aspirations were expressed in relation to Christian faith without any mention of Anglican particulars apart from the school's Anglican origins. The overwhelming emphasis was on a general, Bible-based understanding, rather than crediting Anglican scholars or identifying a particular Anglican ethos or set of practices. This is in contrast to Sydney Catholic Independent Schools such as St Ignatius, Riverview, whose website emphasised their link to foundational principles of their religious tradition: Jesuit Catholicism. These were expressed as Ignatian Principles that could be applied to

educational practice in most schools; nevertheless they were referred to in the context of a Catholic/Jesuit framework of understanding and interpretation. Only two references to the generic term ‘Christian’ could be detected in their online promotional materials: Christian values and Christian leadership (*The Jesuit Tradition, n.d.*).

This lack of discourse about Cowper’s nature as an Anglican school could be problematic for its direction, leaving a values and beliefs vacuum to guide the culture. But this this did not appear to be the case, as the school did reference its traditions, holding up old boys as models and clearly emphasising the Christian foundation of its ethos. Photos around the school told a story of gentlemanly Christian faith. The 2018 emphasised both a Christian cultural perspective and Christian character.

The Headmaster, Paul, was clearly committed to Christian faith and articulated it uncompromisingly. In relation to setting the direction of the school from Christian foundations in a hostile cultural environment, he stated:

I don’t feel as pressured about that as some people do and I think that’s because the parent body by and large got sick of me and they’re not going to try to oppose it. In my first couple of years I had some pushback on the overt Christian stance the school took. It doesn’t happen to my face anymore. People just realise they’re not going to win. (Paul)

However, the connection to the Diocese and the school’s Anglican identity remained even for Paul “a challenging question”. Chaplain, Peter, affirmed the complex nature of the relationship. It was “interesting”, yet warm, given that many clergy were old boys of the school. There is caution, however, in how he explains the Cowper understanding of its place in the Anglican Church. He doesn’t want to presume to put words into the Head’s mouth, but hints through uncomfortable body language and scrambled sentences that “a few little

kind of tensions” exist between the Head and the Diocese. The Headmaster’s shaping of a semi-independent Anglican story is a major aspect of the flourishing life story of Cowper and is forthrightly Christian.

The Sydney Anglican School

William Cowper College as an Anglican school has an historical and theological heritage. As I outlined in Chapter 5, the Anglican religious tradition understands the good life in terms of a love relationship with God and neighbour made possible through His Son, Jesus Christ and contained in the invocation

‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ (Matthew 22: 37-39, NIV version).

Paul confirmed the agreement of the school with this core of Anglican identity. It is an expression of the ‘gospel-centred and conversionist’ Diocese with Jesus Christ as the heart of a flourishing life. This depends on the acceptance of the Bible as the source of revealed truth which is strongly advocated in the Sydney Diocese. At its core it is an understanding of humanity that is both essentialist and theological, a “Biblical anthropology” (Jensen, 2011). Staff recognise this dual emphasis on Bible and gospel as part of the school’s Anglican heritage, as reflected in the Chaplain’s account:

I love the rich heritage of the Sydney evangelical... high authority of scripture...
deep love of thinking theologically about issues... deep wanting to be connected.
(Peter)

However, its unique nature, opposed to secularised versions of humanity, presents dilemmas across the school. Self-identified “non-Christians” such as teacher, Gavin, seek to nuance the story of a flourishing life with more inclusive boundaries.

I think that there is a pretty substantial set of staff and boys for whom that (a flourishing life) means being a good Christian... I think that's the Headmaster's point of view and... the official ethos of the school. When I have those conversations it tends to be bigger than that for me because a lot of our kids aren't Christian and... framing that conversation in a purely Christian sense turns them off and prevents them from accessing the same kinds of issues. That's a line I walk.

(Gavin)

The School Strategic Plan seems to support this approach by explaining the flourishing life in broad and general terms. It is however related in part to the spiritual nature of people, an Anglican Bible-based anthropology. It is an unclear aspect of the Cowper story as an Anglican school, the importance of which becomes evident in the consideration of the curriculum later in this chapter.

What is clear is the very Anglican focus on academic achievement. Staff and students affirmed the academically competitive nature of the school. Teachers value “thinking” and identify subjects as being “academic” rather than in terms of their moral purpose. At times they appear to be setting up a contestable binary of the academic and the formative. Students value their intellect, often listing it as a major part of their implicit identity. Streamed classes ensure that competition is maintained between students to conserve their place in class and preserve ‘smart’ as part of their identity. Values such as respect for authority and diligence were identified as going hand-in-hand with this lauding of intellect. A certain intellectualism has always been a major aspect of Anglican identity, yet the fruits of this heritage, as well of its weaknesses, are generally not identified in relevant subject areas. The History teacher, for example, elucidated no more than Henry VIII as part of the historical Anglican story.

Another aspect of Cowper's story that has been identified as Anglican is family membership. Initially it may appear strange that the Christian Studies teacher, Christine, first identified Anglicanism in terms of her family, but the results of the Questionnaire indicate the power of family membership. This is especially so in relation to faith tradition. A family culture of Anglicanism would then be significant. Part of this 'family' focus is also perhaps found in the way Peter identifies various 'old boys'. Connections in the school family are an important component of Cowper's story.

Traditional practices such as liturgy, use of the prayer book, hymns and 'churchy' architecture are more iconic symbols of the school's Anglican identity. The Chapel is seen generally as the "physical representation of Anglicanism" in the school (Christine). However, these traditional practices to a Diocesan insider such as myself do not necessarily reflect 21st century Sydney Anglican identity. The Head realises this, but he has a broad understanding of Anglicanism. This allows him to identify his school as representing one strand amongst a number that can legitimately be called 'Anglican' if not of the Evangelical Sydney variety. He reserves the freedom in his role as spiritual head of the school to determine this.

The Hierarchical School

There is a prevailing sense in the school that strong authority is needed for the advancement of its holistic educational vision. The Headmaster's role is pivotal to every aspect of the school, including management and moral purpose. Similar to the English church academy schools of Green's (2014) research, there are at least two hierarchies functioning in the school, managerial and theological, although they take rather different forms. The management hierarchy is typical of independent schools and I address relevant issues below in relation to the curriculum. The theological hierarchy is perhaps less obvious in the

school's story. However, Paul, as a fully committed man of faith, sees his role as centred on the school's Christian purpose. He claims, "The Christian energy of the school is driven very hard from the top". The Chaplain sees this as leading to a time in the school's development in which its Christian foundation has been renewed and students know clearly that the executive staff are supportive of it in terms of a personal set of beliefs.

Despite its lack of discourse around being Anglican, William Cowper College reflects its heritage in the style of leadership, which is why I anonymised the school with this name. Rev. William Cowper worked tirelessly as an Anglican rector in the fledgling colony of New South Wales. "He concentrated on Gospel ministry in his parish, thus setting the pattern [for] most Anglican evangelical ministers in Australia" (Piggin & Linder, 2018, p. 96). He ministered in an era that valourised the role of the Anglican Rector contextualised within a certain Judeo-Christian-Classical understanding of civilisation (Piggin & Linder, 2018). His example bears similarity with Paul's practice as he leads his executive staff to consider issues from a Christian worldview, preaches in Chapel, pastors both staff and students, mandates student service in the curriculum and models "a Christian gentleman" In all these, he claims the role of the spiritual head of the school.

I wouldn't tolerate another view, because in the end I've seen so many schools where the Head will say 'ah the chaplain does the spiritual stuff'... and in the end what that says is it's irrelevant. (Paul)

It is not a far reach to understand this construction of his role as the educator's version of the ideal, authoritative, perhaps even militant Sydney Anglican Rector, but with challenges of a different nature. He sees the main challenge as the danger of his school being "completely colonised by the secular culture" with faith becoming "a token". Paul expresses this as the school existing in a "post-Christian culture" where people "want the kingdom of

God without the king or God”. These are theologically-loaded statements that many of his staff would perhaps not agree with.

Certainly, a type of theological hierarchy exists under the umbrella of Paul’s leadership. At times, it entwines with the managerial hierarchy. Senior executive members, for example, are all known to have a personal Christian faith. Paul appoints Christian teachers where possible, all other things being equal. Teachers report that staff who have no faith or a different faith are very aware that they are required to align their ethos with that of the school. A theological hierarchy of some sort appears unavoidable if the Head is driving a strong Christian vision with a preference for Christian staff. Teachers are generally known for their “faith status” by students and colleagues and appear to be ranked as evangelical Christian, other Christian, other faith, agnostic or atheist in that order. Students acknowledge Paul’s role as leader of the school ethos and generally affirm him as the apex of the theological hierarchy, the acknowledged spiritual leader. At times they appear to understand it in terms of character education or a dominant personality, rather than in terms of the Sydney Anglican view of persons. It is also significant that “Anglican” does not seem to be included in the theological hierarchy. It simply does not occupy a space in the discourse of the school culture.

The Headmaster’s assembly and chapel addresses lay out the school’s identity as he enacts his role as the spiritual head. Values or moral education topics presented by him have a varied reception by students. Quoting Alistair MacIntyre, he speaks on assembly about “manly” character which he sees derives from virtue, not preference or taste:

From... my perspective... the good life looks like a life lived in faith and obedience to Christ. But for other people in our schools they will still pick up that the good life is to have a focus on other people, to believe that certain behaviours

are right and virtuous and worthy and helpful to both the individual and their community and family. (Paul)

The Headmaster is the embodiment of the Cowper Boy become man. He embraces his responsibility as role model enthusiastically.

I think that a lot of what I do and say and how I act is subconsciously or consciously playing out of ‘If you want to see what a Christian man ought to look like, it ought to look something like me’. Now the caveat on that is of course I’m not claiming perfection. (Paul)

However, it might be asked if students feel some confusion about what is Christian and what is simply personality, a significant issue in the students’ understanding of their identity.

The Story told by the Curriculum

Promoting neutrality in an epistemological framework

There appear to be multiple uses of the word ‘framework’ in the discourse and practice of Cowper which makes it quite difficult to trace what might give the curriculum’s story of the flourishing life some coherence. However, I have identified three possible understandings, though they may at times be aspirations, not currently identifiable in the school’s practice.

The first is a general set of beliefs that are identifiably Christian. The second is that of a coherent, theology-based curriculum framework that suggests some faith-based implications for teaching and learning and incorporates all subjects. The third is that of a pedagogical, class-focussed framework.

The Chaplain indicates the first understanding of framework in his assertion that “our Christian framework impacts on all our policies, all our programs” (Peter). He may simply be referring to Christian beliefs being evident in documentation. Statements of a Christian

nature are indeed found throughout the general school documentation; although there is no evidence of this in the Stage 5 History program. He may also be referring to Christian beliefs as formally expressed in explanations of the school ethos. Ideas of humanity and purpose are essential to curriculum development choices and to student religious identity. The school's articulation of a Christian belief basis for these is filtered through the faculty heads and the teachers and transformed in the curriculum as enacted in the classroom. The school's foundational beliefs are possibly even filtered out in this process.

It may also be that the implications for education of the school's foundational beliefs are simply not thought relevant to their subject and therefore not explored by staff. The teaching and learning profile pictured below is one example. Character-based Attitudes and Thinking Skills appear on the matrix, but it is a matrix without a consideration of the role that personal beliefs, values and worldview might play in thinking and interpreting. It is a missed opportunity to support the exploration of a form of belief-based coherence across the subjects, which could form a sort of Christian version of the syllabus Cross-curricular Priorities.

This first possible understanding of framework is also reflected in the concerns of Christian Studies teacher, Christine, that the character education program lacks sufficient articulation of what it is to be male and female. "Having a sufficient framework is actually crucial to any kind of foundational meaning in that program" (Christine). Peter confirms that there was little input around a Christian anthropology in this program, with the school ethos simply assumed to be driving its development. It is also assumed that the general approach of virtues education is compatible with Christian thinking. Presumably this theology-based framework could potentially have been impacting all subjects, grounded as they all are in some understanding of humanity.

This points to the second understanding of framework in its potential for student religious identity. I have previously referred to the role of a faith-based plausibility structure in promoting a religious ethos. Students need to hear a coherent, plausible story of the flourishing life with direct relevance to their lives. Ideally, this plausibility structure is reflected in a curriculum framework that addresses the issues presented by secularisation while retaining the integrity of the subject areas as knowledge disciplines. It may also be reflected in the way that the subjects are integrated around a central story, each narrating a complementary aspect of it. Without this cohering central story a dualist separation of sacred and secular can be interpreted by students as implying that religion is irrelevant to their immediate concern to gain a successful Higher School Certificate mark. Instead, a curriculum framework of subjects that acknowledges a biblical anthropology would appear to be a desirable aspect of Sydney Anglican education with perhaps Christian Studies as the central focus. Christine says,

I think that Christian Studies should be the foundational place, the centre of thinking. And Christian Studies has the capacity in the school to be the kind of cornerstone of how do we think and understand and value and therefore what do we do? (Christine)

She further notes the desirability of more formal links between Christian Studies and the subject areas. As a History teacher as well, she has reviewed all the middle school programs so she could relate Christian Studies lessons to the rest of the curriculum. Staff are still free to do this, but it is not “in the infrastructure” (Christine). It is therefore only possibly seen in the enacted curriculum in the classroom rather than in program documents.

The third understanding I have identified refers to deliberate teacher pedagogical choices. It is available for teachers who perceive the gap presented by lack of a formal moral and

theological framework to integrate student studies in the curriculum. Christine refers to her approach to teaching as setting up “a neutral framework with a Christian focus” (Christine). It stands as the centre of her manifesto. “My goal is to create a framework in which they can question and wrestle with the big ideas and concepts” (Christine). She complements this with modelling the good life and applying the Bible in order to understand what that might mean. She gives the example of suffering as a biblical way of encouraging a good life in opposition to a prosperity gospel. Given her emphasis on the role of the Bible, it is not clear whether she is referring to a framework of beliefs, worldview and ethos to guide student meaning-making from a faith basis or simply a safe space for discussion of difference in beliefs. But she has raised it in the context of identity development which she sees as happening no matter what is taught. If this is the case, it must be considered whether there is actually such a thing as a neutral framework, albeit with a Christian focus. Every framework points ultimately to a telos, an understanding of the ultimate purpose of a flourishing life. As it reflects the valuing of educators it must be considered of contestable neutrality. This includes the pedagogical approach of the teacher. Respect for the agency of students and the content and methodology of the subjects must remain central values for all teachers as they are the hallmarks of a Western liberal education, particularly in a pluralist society. However, given that the old values canopy of Judeo-Christian Western culture is in tatters, the story told by the curriculum may be that secularisation as a vacuum devoid of beliefs is possible, even preferable, for a flourishing life.

Forming students deliberately

In the two subjects observed, History and Christian Studies, multiple opportunities presented themselves in the planned curriculum for the further development of religious identity. This could be in topics chosen, pedagogy or skill development. Christian Studies is replete with

topics that directly reference identity issues. However, in History there does not appear to be any deliberate programming to explore ‘Who am I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’ This is despite there being some key areas in the Stage 5 Syllabus and included in the planned curriculum. Making of the modern world; WWI; WWII; Rights and freedoms; The Holocaust; Migration and national identity; Vietnam war and Terrorism were examples. However, the program documentation is so brief that there are no suggestions as to how these topics might explore student concerns or how they might be used to align with the school’s moral purpose. This is despite the role of beliefs and worldview in each of these topics and therefore the relevance of Anglican thought. Consideration of such alternatives is essential for students to explore before committing in multiple identity domains. A consideration of any moral purpose inherent in the History syllabus was not included in the planned curriculum.

However, this moral purpose becomes very evident in the enacted curriculum where students are challenged about who they are in relation to variously distressing events. Formation is happening unavoidably and at times quite deliberately in the History classroom. The selection of Year 10 History topics and the pedagogical choices of the teacher ensure this. There is a deliberate attempt, for example, to deconstruct students’ preconceived ideas or stereotypes around race and religion. “We have to break this idea... of what terrorism means”, says Gavin to his class. Images of Osama bin Laden are replaced in his introduction to the topic by images of Nelson Mandela and others unlikely to be tagged with the terrorist label. In light of other topics, students relate to me that they have indeed been questioning who they are. This has especially occurred in lesson on The Holocaust and the teacher confirms how difficult the students have found the unit. He does not resile from the personal challenge involved in its study, stating, “It’s a really hard unit for them because of the issues

they have to confront about themselves as well”. This self-identified non-Christian teacher encouraged a holistic response driven by the values he brought to the unit through his own sense of identity. He has intentionally prepared for this outcome but has not documented this as an outworking of the school’s Christian ethos despite its essential agreement with that ethos. He may be typical of staff who appear to be trusted to get on with planning for teaching and learning within a ‘neutral’ framework that in reality forms a values vacuum to be filled by the teacher. General observation around the school showed that some attempts appeared to be made indirectly by other teachers. “Understanding others” appears in an English unit and “identity and gender” in a History assessment, but these are not necessarily incorporated in any planned curriculum document that I was able to access.

Gavin explains this as “dialogue is not really happening” between any issues in History and the school ethos or founding and current beliefs. He has seen no reference to the school’s Anglican identity, for example, even in very obvious topics such as the Tudors which he taught in Year 9.

We don’t teach stuff obviously that directly contradicts the school’s Christian faith [and] values. I think some of my colleagues in Ancient may, if they’re teaching Near Eastern stuff where the Bible is used as a textual source. I think there’s the potential for trouble there. (Gavin)

So he sees problems rather than opportunities in such a dialogue and is not inclined to plan for it. Even links at a basic level, such as advocated by the Christian Studies teacher in her thinking about a curriculum framework, are not implemented. It is likely that this affects the students’ capacity to make meaning of their studies by referencing an external telos in an integrated way and thus hampers their religious identity development.

Thinking skills, so necessary for autobiographical memory and interpretation of experience, are being actively taught in classes. But, again, they are not linked deliberately to opportunities for identity development, nor to deep analysis of belief-based assumptions. While they do not appear in the History program sighted, the thinking skills do form a part of the profile discussed in the previous section and it is presumed that these guide pedagogical strategies. Nevertheless, Gavin is deliberately choosing strategies that promote skills related to moral purpose without highlighting it to students or encouraging them to uncover the underlying values and beliefs. He states,

What they come out of it believing it just doesn't matter to me at all. But I want them to have some kind of understanding... and be challenged by the ideas that they come into contact with... and thought about who they are. (Gavin)

It must be asked if students are being given opportunity to explore plausible alternative worldviews or just having their current identity undermined in the context of subjects such as History. Actual choices in curriculum seem to be based on "academic" criteria informed by a dualistic, outdated modernist paradigm of value-free knowledge that has been transformed to incorporate the values of the particular teacher.

Despite this anachronism, more curriculum planning that is aimed to uncover and explore assumptions of a subject's story is contestable within the school. Peter, for example, is cautious, quoting a simplistic understanding of attempts at another Anglican school to implement initiatives in exploring Christian perspectives in the curriculum:

We're not a school that I think has done a lot in terms of Christian education so you go to somewhere like [other Anglican school] where they've worked very hard... to implement teaching a Christian education type thing... I don't think that... in Maths

we look at a circle and the circle is round just like God's love is round. We're not trying to force a Christian [view]. (Peter).

Nevertheless, he thinks that there is an opportunity to engage with the subjects in order to help students understand themselves in the context of their world, seeing Maths and Science as "things that God has created" (Peter). It is unclear what role he sees for human agency in Maths and Science rather than God personally creating them. He may simply be reflecting a modernist, naïve realist understanding of knowledge and the disciplines, a sort of 'thinking God's thoughts' after Him minus the interpretive work of humanity. Whether this is the case or not, students are being confronted by a plethora of worldviews. What is unclear is what tools they are being given to evaluate their effectiveness and whether staff are aware of the formative power of their personal values in the classroom which I refer to in the next section.

Modelling 'Cowper Boy'

Such challenges seem very distant from William Cowper College, especially when you enter the classroom of highly-motivated and intellectually gifted Year 10 boys. There is a great sense of vibrancy, even joy in their being empowered to use their academic and creative gifts. It is difficult to capture the atmosphere of a classroom where learning is taking place for the sheer fun of it. But that is what the History teacher manages while verbally sparring with his students. Gavin has allowed me to observe his classes because he thinks he is "a pretty good teacher" but also a "bit of a show-off". Nevertheless, the History classes of this teacher offer a snapshot of how this school functions as a teaching and learning community that identifies with Anglican foundations within a post-Christian and pluralist culture. The teacher is the central and energetic focus of the class at all times.

Again, personality is a significant factor in how Cowper students develop their global identity, perhaps even their religious identity. In the case of Gavin, he is a model of

“Cowper Man”, in the mould of the personality-plus Headmaster. This is especially evident in how such a man relates to other men, albeit adolescent students, and directs them to a goal. The teacher positions himself within a very male hierarchy. He is the fun facilitator, the cleverness channeler, the director of learning, the sage on the stage, a promoter of joy in learning. This is evident in his language and his physical posture at the front centre of the room. He wants his students to feel “comfortable with expressing ideas” and he deliberately encourages tangents from the lesson when he considers them valuable. Reflecting the process of identity development, students position themselves in response to his model and verbal stimulus. He calls students “gentlemen” and “chaps” and refers jokingly to “boys’ stuff: bombs and guns” as being “cool” in a mocking tone. The boys respond with loud witticisms and sarcastic rejoinders to each other, all the while expressing themselves confidently. Questioning is encouraged in class but at times it borders on cynicism in a context where boys seem to be attempting to prove their cleverness.

An almost totally teacher-centred extraverted pedagogy means that individual students have very few opportunities to interact with the teacher and develop identity through close narrative encounters, the small stories that accumulate to form the big story. Instead, labelling by the teacher appears to happen in front of the whole class. Students are referred to as movie experts, or sporty types. Yet the boys respond positively as if this is part of the ‘game’ of the classroom, even if the labelling at times is a sort of gentle mocking of the student. The resulting class culture reflects a certain understanding of masculinity in Cowper. As the Head affirms, this is a deliberate response to what are regarded as false accusations of widespread toxic masculinity: “I totally reject that as a man that is reflective of me” (Paul). Instead, the virtues chosen for the character education program, explored in the next section, seem to sum

up what it means to be a man for this school, with the addition of an extraverted, even effusive personality.

It is to be expected that a female teacher in Cowper would have a rather different experience in the classroom. She cannot be one of the boys, although Christine claims she spends little time on the issue, questioning whether it is even possible to teach about masculinity.

I think we as humans cannot articulate what it is to be female or male in that full and comprehensive understanding... that's a part of the curse of this epoch of time.

(Christine)

Yet she affirms the distinctive nature of her role as a woman in the classroom.

I think I'm human first and gendered second... But I do think that it's important for them to see articulate, relational women. (Christine)

Being a woman in a boys' school does appear to affect the tone of the classroom, or perhaps it is the nature of the ethics topic. There is no sense of camaraderie or loud personalities dominating the room. Her relationship with the students is very different from that of the History teacher. Students enter quietly but seem to want to engage with her and the lesson. The lesson initially appears to be about the possibility of a universal and objective moral code. However, whether it can be used as support for the existence of God is the ultimate goal of the lesson and teacher beliefs are very much driving this lesson. This is particularly around the nature of humanity. She doesn't really allow student understandings of this to remain unchallenged although she appears to be open to their suggestions. Her aim is Christian apologetics, so she has planned a highly-structured lesson with a logical flow. She moves from famous examples of approaches to morality to engagement of students in a confrontation with evil, the posing of key questions, reference to a biblical/philosophical

definition, student contributions about implications, a video from Prager U on objective morality/the existence of God, and a written response from students. Her goal is a belief-based response to the lesson but she is implementing a largely modernist paradigm that tells a story of a logical faith countering the evil in the world as its vision of the flourishing life. She does seem to elicit very personal comments from students at the end of the lesson, with boys keen to share that morality involves relationships and the common good, perhaps reflecting the impact of their character education program.

As a teacher with a personal Christian faith, this female teacher does not generally disagree with the belief basis of the school; however, students confirm that some atheist teachers struggle to affirm the school ethos. Some declare quite openly to the boys their disagreement with specific aspects of its ethos. This is despite the Head's guidance as to how they might support it and it being a requirement of all employees.

It is clear that the way topics are taught depends on teachers' personal values and ethos. The more self-aware admit this could be problematic.

This is hard because I have a personal ethos which is I want to create kids who think about and understand different worldviews including Christianity and privileging Christianity's position based on the school they're at. But it's much more about broadening minds than it is about pushing a specific agenda... (forcing) kids to confront moral, ethical and ideological issues. (Gavin)

Any possible role for religious identity development that aligns with the school's Anglican identity would partly depend on an alignment of the school's and the teachers' values. The latter are enacted in the classroom to give powerful form to the lessons, especially because there is something of a vacuum in the more formal areas of curriculum planning.

Character Education

The formal curriculum prioritises character education as a major if not central component of the educational offering of William Cowper College. This is accepted in the school as the most effective means of catering to their moral purpose with integrity given their clientele of mixed religious background. In the planned curriculum, the formal character education program called was written by a staff team, led by a teacher with a strong Christian faith over ten years ago. It of necessity assumes a view of human nature and purpose as it promotes certain virtues. I have previously discussed the strong move amongst certain Christian scholars to apply Aristotelian ideas of character formation to the school situation, building on the landmark analysis of Alisdair MacIntyre. The Headmaster himself references MacIntyre as one of his influences. The Chaplain also appears to be supportive of the character education program while conceding that there was not a lot of “theological shaping” of it. “Certainly it doesn’t have a great deal of Christian content”, says Peter. He claims instead that there is an implicit Christian framework, designed around Aristotelian thinking, and he celebrates its effectiveness.

I think that we’re effective in terms of the school producing a particular boy of a particular character. So you talk to different people outside of the school and there is a mould that we produce at the school of a boy of a particular character. (Peter)

Cowper Boy is a “good person”, although not necessarily a person of Christian faith. He has “a keen sense of standing up... if someone needs a seat” (Peter), polite, and looks you confidently in the eye when shaking your hand. These are seen as some of the manly attributes of Cowper Boy. The Headmaster’s Assembly, vertical house system, Christian Studies and Chapel all play a role in this according to Peter. It is a very traditional understanding of formation, with identity-related issues considered well outside the

mainstream curriculum. Indeed, the flourishing life is understood by the Chaplain, Peter, in terms of a well-being program that they are implementing in the future with an emphasis on the physical, the mind and connection to God and others. The latter has been added as icing on the program cake by Peter.

However, the links between, for example, the virtues and their possible Christian foundations and connotations are not clearly articulated. The overarching focus is on cultural examples that align with classical understandings. Indeed, the virtue of ‘humility’ regarded essential by early church fathers (Kallenberg, 2011) does not appear on the program although Paul emphasised it in interview. Given the Anglican belief in what is termed common truth, classical understandings are considered valuable but subject to ‘higher truth’, namely biblical. The Headmaster’s epistemology is here relevant, expressed in an apologia for active world engagement:

We’re all human beings participating in God’s world at one level because we are human... without necessarily denying the necessity of special revelation and salvation.

But I think that’s an Anglican view. (Paul)

However, it may lead to confusion over what is a specifically Christian moral framework as distinct from Aristotelian, and thereby compromise a clear understanding of the Bible-based message of Sydney Anglicanism. MacIntyre himself was aware of the implications of accepting Aristotelianism without significant modification, claiming that Christianity posits a transcendent telos, beyond this life. Aristotelian understanding of telos seems to refer to a type of life in its material present (Kallenberg, 2011). To adopt the lens of the flourishing life then highlights certain weaknesses in fulfilling the moral purpose of Anglican schools in a virtues-focussed context.

Further, the historical personage of Jesus Christ as the traditional Anglican ideal model of virtues is not emphasised in the character education documentation. Grace and truth are key aspects of this model of manhood. The Gospel of John mentions these in each of the first four chapters when referring to Jesus and they appear to be foundational to a biblical understanding of noble character. There are many areas of challenge for adolescence in the 21st century and uncovering and articulating links to the school's faith tradition, focussed on Jesus Christ, is not an easy project.

The Head himself indirectly highlighted this lack of articulation of the link between classical and Christian approaches by lamenting the unfinished task of explaining the Christian "faith basis" of society's current "moral agenda". "Racial justice, gender equity, concern for the environment" he sees as part of an agenda originating in the Christian faith. Referencing Mark Sayers, a Christian writer about cultural issues, Paul claims:

The culture we're in couldn't be possible without Christianity because Christianity sets up the norms... in a post-Christian culture, they want the Kingdom of God without the King or God. (Paul)

It may be the case that a similar challenge exists in the area of character education, with the Christian telos needed to modify and give substance to the virtues.

The Story Told by the Students

The Bell Measure of Religious Identity offered a snapshot in time of student identity as well as the salience and centrality to student identity of multiple domains. I explained its limitations in Chapter 6. Its strength lies in the opportunity it gives students to express their identity in ways that are complementary to the picture of the flourishing life that emerges from observation of the enacted curriculum. The two nested case studies both exemplify and particularise the varying narrations at the heart of student identity. The story told by the

students is dominated by five somewhat interrelated areas. These are personality, connection, the future, personal faith and character.

Personality is the core of the embodied human being

Cowper boys were observed as well-mannered and confident, characteristics which perhaps reflect school social status as much as expectations of behaviour, given their social advantages as outline previously. None of the Year 10 class selected for the survey were reluctant to express their thoughts and feelings directly in their responses. Given this level of confidence in the Questionnaire responses, students' 10-word responses to the "I am..." of Part 1 may be the closest that we can get to the core of student identity, the OIS (Operating Identity Story) referred to in Chapter 3 on p. 82, 83 and 88. As recorded in Table 7.1, *Personal Characteristics* (either *Personality* or *Physical Appearance*) were most salient, with 13 students listing them as #1 and 141 mentions overall. Out of a possible 250 responses in Part 1, only 5 mentioned *Religion*, 3 being Christian, 1 atheist and 1 apatheist. Christian was most salient to the student who listed it in his second box. Beyond the simple count of religious or spiritual students, the few mentions of *Vocation* or *Political/ethical* reinforces the conclusion that the Eriksonian *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain was not particularly salient to how these Year 10 students understood themselves and their purpose. They did not see a spiritual core at the centre of their lives and were therefore less likely to live according to any faith-based worldview. Instead, *Hobby/Sports/Leisure*, *Ethnicity* and *Gender/sexuality* were all rated #1 equally. *Hobby/Sports/Leisure* appeared to occupy the space often taken by *Vocation* in relation to sense of purpose. These were of a type with *Physical Appearance* as aspects of Cowper Boys' embodied being. So, this aspect of the student story is one of embodiment as well as personality.

Table 7.1: *Questionnaire Part 1: implicit identity domain responses*

Category	Box 1	Boxes 2–10	Total
<i>Personality</i>	8	97	105
<i>Hobby/sports/leisure</i>	3	37	40
<i>Physical appearance</i>	5	31	36
<i>Ethnicity</i>	3	13	16
<i>Gender/sexuality</i>	3	8	11
<i>Education</i>	0	10	10
<i>Age</i>	1	8	9
<i>Intelligence</i>	2	7	9
<i>Family/friends</i>	0	7	7
<i>Religion</i>	0	5	5
<i>Political/ethical</i>	0	4	4
<i>Vocation</i>	1	3	4

Connection to family and friends is of central importance

Many of the personal characteristics listed by students in the Questionnaire reflected a warm concern for relationships, both with family and friends. For example, 8 out of 25 students self-identified as ‘kind’ in *Part 1*. Other words indicating connection and relationship were ‘caring’ (3 mentions), ‘empathetic’, ‘helpful’, ‘accepting’, ‘loving’, ‘generous’, ‘compassionate’, ‘considerate’ and ‘faithful’. In *Part 2*, students nominated *Family/friends*, which was not particularly salient in *Part 1*, as centrally important to their identity. Table 7.2 lists the top 3 rankings for each category. *Personality/personal characteristics* and *Hobby/sports/leisure* were ranked second and third. Interestingly, 2 students ranked

Family/friends #9 and one #10. The Cowper Boy's story also values connectedness within the school community. Students identified themselves 13 times in *Part I* as 'fun', 'funny' or 'sense of humour', all indicating the value of life together. Classroom observations and interviews confirmed this, with fun together being an important aspect of the enacted curriculum for Year 10.

Table 7.2: *Questionnaire Part 2: centrality of identity domains: top 3 rankings*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Students allocating ranking</i>	<i>Total of top three rankings</i>
<i>Age</i>	1	0	1
	2	1	
	3	0	
<i>Education</i>	1	2	6
	2	1	
	3	3	
<i>Ethnicity/cultural group</i>	1	0	4
	2	1	
	3	3	
<i>Family/friends</i>	1	6	20
	2	7	
	3	7	
<i>Gender/sexuality</i>	1	2	6
	2	2	
	3	2	
<i>Hobby/sports/leisure</i>	1	1	13
	2	4	
	3	8	
<i>Personality/personal characteristics</i>	1	12	17
	2	4	
	3	1	
<i>Political/ethical</i>	1	1	4
	2	3	
	3	0	
<i>Religion (personal faith or church membership)</i>	1	1	2
	2	1	
	3	0	
<i>Vocation</i>	1	0	2
	2	1	
	3	1	

The future is rich with options

Part 3 of the Bell Measure of Religious Identity was intended to gauge the level of exploration and commitment undertaken by students with the matrix resulting in a ‘Status’ as discussed in Chapters 3 and 6.

Table 7.3: *Identity Statuses*

	<i>Explorers</i>	<i>Non-explorers</i>
<i>Committed</i>	Achieved	Foreclosed
<i>Non-committed</i>	Moratorium	Diffusion

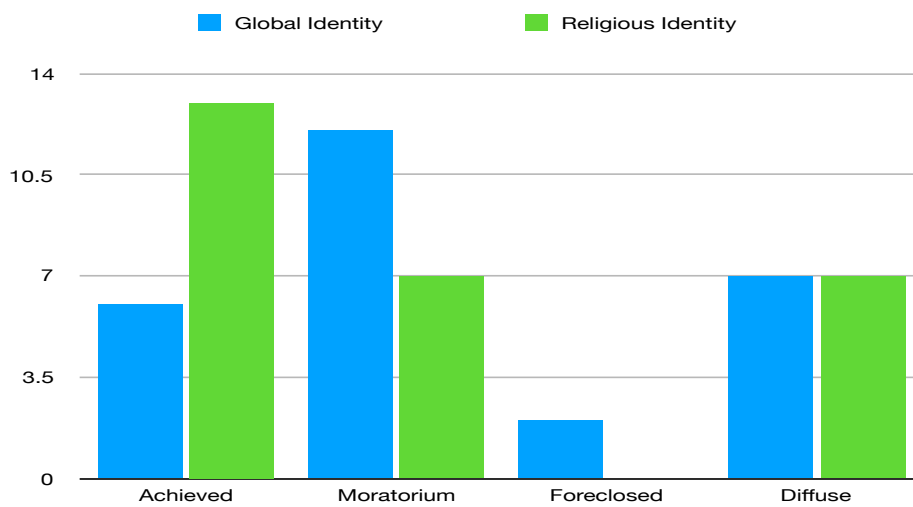
Achievement is not the major Status of these students in global identity, but when combined with Moratorium, 18 out of 25 students were or had been actively exploring identity alternatives. Only 9 were rated Foreclosed or Diffuse and therefore failing to explore options. This runs contrary to the finding that in both global and domain-specific Identity, there were roughly equal numbers of late adolescents who stayed in Foreclosed or Diffuse Status as those who developed an Achieved Identity Status (Kroger, 2007). That might reflect a change in social expectations of identity exploration and commitment in the past 12 years. More likely is the recognition by Cowper students of their privileged position in being able to choose at their leisure from many options, coupled with an awareness of their personal agency. Moratorium Status indicates that they were still actively exploring identity options across multiple domains. This could have occurred within the school. Six students were allocated to

Achieved Status in global identity and 10 to Moratorium. In religious identity, however, the 13 Achieved Status students did not indicate commitment to the Christian faith, when checked against their responses in *Parts 1* and *2*. Given that there were only 2 foreclosed students in global identity, it seems that most students were still actively exploring who they are. The flourishing life for these students is rich with options, seemingly unlimited by many external or internal factors.

Table 7.4: *Questionnaire Part 3: Global and Religious Identity Statuses*

Table 1

Status	Global Identity	Religious Identity
Achieved	6	13
Moratorium	12	7
Foreclosed	2	0
Diffuse	7	7



Personal faith or church membership is somewhat irrelevant to the good life

The Cowper Boy has considered religious faith. Many have chosen to reject it. Few accept it. The large number of boys whose Status was ‘Achieved’ (13/27) in religious identity suggests that the school has presented them actively with faith alternatives and they have exercised their agency in rejecting them. That became evident when implicit salience and centrality responses were compared with Status. There were only 2 responses indicating its implicit salience and only 2 indicating that religion was one of the top 3 areas of importance to who they are. *Ethos* and *Sense of Purpose* also ranked poorly in centrality. Given the close alignment of those terms with *Religion*, I concluded that the ranking of *Religion* was not the result merely of a misunderstanding or rejection of the term. It was described in the Questionnaire as ‘personal faith or church membership’, not in terms of ritual or moral framework etc. Only 3 students allocated it a top 3 position and 19 of 27 students ranked it #8, 9 or 10. However, students may have been generally willing to explore alternatives and reconsider commitments as no students registered a Foreclosed Status for religious identity and 7 registered Moratorium Status. At that moment, in Year 10, the student story appears to be that transcendent faith in the form of a religious commitment is somewhat irrelevant. This is despite being challenged in areas of great theological significance in some of their subjects as will become more obvious in the nested case studies.

Focussed on being a person of good character.

It appeared that the school’s character education program that emphasised additional qualities as well as selected classic virtues may have had significant impact. The relational/connection terms referred to above seem to indicate this. Further, in addition to the 7 students who identified as ‘male’ in *Part I*, students also used the terms ‘nice’ and ‘emotionally driven’

which are the opposite of classical warrior virtues. ‘Determined’, ‘courageous’, ‘brave’, ‘honest’, ‘trustworthy’ and ‘respectful’ indicate the role that more traditional virtues play in the student story. Students saw the importance of these virtues while not linking them with religious identity. This does raise the issue of the source of their understanding of the morally-loaded phrases used in relation to the character education program. I take up the issue of the promotion of a particular type of masculinity in later chapters. How this plays out in the life of a student with ‘no religion’ and one with a Christian faith is exemplified in the following two nested case studies. The two students interviewed presented quite differently in their experience and understanding of Cowper and their religious identity. I have named one Jason and one Charles to preserve their anonymity.

Two Student Case Studies

Jason, the Commercial Pilot

Jason’s experience of William Cowper College is as a key member of the rugby team, so he has found a significant place in the life of the school. His implicit salient identity in *Part 1* of the Questionnaire was dominated by aspects of personality. “My personality is basically me... without it I’d just be very similar to everyone else” (Jason). He treasured his uniqueness, yet ironically differed from his peers’ ranking of personality/personal characteristics only in allocating it first place above family/friends. Unsurprisingly, Jason saw people generally through the lens of personality. He described people as “Interesting, surprising, sometimes ambiguous... every person is different... unique”. He did not use the theological language of ‘image of God’ which the school would advocate as the core of human value, but did express an understanding of the complexity of human beings.

“To enjoy it”, “To do what I want to do” encapsulated his understanding of the purpose of life. So his ideal life was styled like a tropical vacation amongst a “nice community” in the Caribbean from which he could operate as a commercial pilot and retain contact with his family. It was essentially a hedonistic vision for the flourishing life. However, he was keen for me to know in the interview that it is not “about the money”. He wanted job satisfaction, a job he could love with family at his side. Indeed, family figured largely in his Questionnaire and interview. He stated, “I love being in my family.”

Indeed his family remained the biggest influence on his life, including on his moral framework, on his “actions and stuff”. School friends and the school’s “education and values” were also mentioned in this regard. When asked to paint a picture of the Cowper Boy, Jason described a person of strong Christian faith, with qualities and traits of outlined in the character education program. To these he added humility, honesty and “favouring kindness”. To the extent that he agreed with the importance of these traits, he has become part of the discourse around the school’s character education program. He owned, at least to a certain extent, the vision of the ideal Cowper Boy, with a strong sense of the relational nature of the school’s culture.

However, Jason was reluctant to agree that the school has had any impact on his understanding of life purpose:

Well I don’t know about influence, but it’s given me chapel and stuff, more information that I can look upon. It hasn’t really influenced it but it’s kind of shown a different perspective. (Jason)

He did agree though that it had presented him with alternatives for exploration. He also conceded that he had been changed “a little bit I guess” by the culture because “It’s just like a good environment”. He described what he valued in this as fun, everyone getting along, sport

and enjoyable competition. In this he was aligning his sense of purpose in life with a selective understanding of the school culture.

However, this alignment did not recognise the foundational relevance of religion to the Anglican school's culture. He expressed no links between the two. His answers to *Part 3* of the Questionnaire, estimating his Status, were revealing. Both in global identity and religious identity, answers reflected Moratorium Status. He was still searching and was not committed. However, in religious identity, he tended towards Diffusion, indicating his searching had not involved particularly strong effort. He claimed that he had thought about faith and who he is, including questioning his family's religion, and he affirmed he had not completely finished consideration of "what religion means to me". Who he is, his future purpose, his personal beliefs, his faith were all shown to be open to development; although he claimed that the latter is of little concern to him.

It may be that the labelling of a faith tradition as 'religion' had led to some ambiguity in Jason's answers as he had emerging spiritual beliefs that could be termed 'religious' and he was quietly keen to share them with me towards the end of the interview. Again, it was not the school's influence, but his family's that was crucial. He and his mother had recently discovered their Indigenous heritage and he was seeking to understand this as a form of spirituality. Although religion had never been "a big part of his life", he claimed he was a spiritual person. When pressed, he could not yet articulate clearly what this meant for him. "I dunno, I think, I just feel, um, like the more connected to everything". At first, he disconnected his feeling 'more connected' from his moral framework, only later conceding that his spirituality might be linked to his ethics. "If it were some choice to do with another living thing... because I feel like I'm connected though not connected" (Jason). His broader heritage he claimed had influenced him to understand "what life is about" although he was

hesitant to grant his Indigenous heritage more than “a little bit” of influence on his life. How much this was impacted by the very homogeneous Western European nature of the school is open to question; although he claimed that some other students knew of and accepted his Indigenous heritage.

Given his Indigenous heritage, middle school History, especially Australian colonial history, would seem perhaps confronting to Jason. Instead, he saw the subject as functioning in two ways: as a low-key challenge to his personal identity and moral framework and as a confirmation of his values. He was quite reflective in understanding the general way History has impacted on him:

Reflecting on the mistakes and achievements in the past and how other people have lived their life... I guess that's a main indicator as to how to live yours. World War 2 stuff and the actions of the people in that time period makes you think 'Would I do that if I was in that situation or would I not?' You realise how hard it would have been to try and make the right choice. (Jason)

He found the choices that people have been faced with “confronting”, but at the same time he felt empathy for them. World War 2 engendered empathy for what I presume was condemned at Nuremberg, while Australian colonial history only engendered condemnation for equal barbarity. The exploration of settler–indigenous clashes in Year 9 History confirmed to Jason that “what they [i.e. the settlers] did was wrong”. Although he didn't mention it in relation to Year 9 History, his emerging Indigenous identity would be rightly expected to exert some influence on his evaluation here. He also mentioned in passing his love for the subject of Art as a creative outlet and a repository of worldviews. His tone indicated he was genuinely enriched by its study and yet again he mentioned his personality. “Some subjects you do, it

just like kind of reveals your personality type.” So he felt affirmed in his creative side by his study of Art.

Jason seemed to be seeking his ‘place’, not situating himself in a role that is dictated by others (as a Rugby player, for example) but treasuring his uniqueness, expressed in personality. He was spiritual, rather than religious, with feelings dominating his account of his spirituality as ‘connected’. Nevertheless, he could see certain links between Indigenous understandings of spirituality and his moral framework. Family, friends and fun were the main focus of his life. Yet, he hasn’t abandoned the quest for personal meaning and appeared to be supported by this in the school, whose culture he partly embraced. His subjects at different times challenged and affirmed his moral framework and empowered him to express himself creatively. All the while he was being introduced to the ‘different’ and the ‘unique’ which he valued, not the least in the area of worldviews. In many ways, Jason was seeking to be a person of good character, a Cowper Boy, grounded in a complex and holistic understanding of what it means to be human and to live a flourishing life of his own conceptualising.

Charles, the Medical Missionary

Charles was seen as atypical in many ways by staff. This may have been due to his personality, Christian faith, intellect or interests. He was not particularly sporty. He was in the streamed top class for all subjects and prized his intellect, placing it as the second aspect of his implicit identity. This was affirmed in his classes where he was referred to for opinions on a variety of topics including the nature of moral frameworks.

Charles identified as a Christian. However, as confirmed in his interview, his personality was the most salient aspect of his identity, being mentioned most often in *Part 1* of the Questionnaire. In this he was typical of his peers. He listed “Christian” as the sixth component

in his implicit identity. Male, 15, smart, introverted and socially awkward precede it.

However, *Religion* was ranked second in identity centrality in *Part 2*. It is significant that he felt some guilt about not ranking it first.

I feel like it should be number one... the most important part of who I am. But... at the moment my personality does seem more important to me. And I'm much happier and wishing that I did think my Christianity should be the most important part of my identity. (Charles)

He seemed to have struggled up to that time with aspects of his personality, perhaps in interaction with others in the school community. He thought, for example, that his being passionately opinionated could be a “mixed blessing” because he can also be judgemental. In this he displayed a high level of self-awareness and expressed a concern to be fair by hearing both sides of the story.

In describing his sense of purpose, he shared with Jason the desire to pursue an enjoyable job and to have family close by but differed from Jason in recognising a strong link between his faith and his vocation. He had a vision for his life that involved helping, teaching or researching, perhaps as a medical missionary. The purpose of life he described as “serve and honour God and live in a way that points to him” which he understood as agreement with a lifestyle found in the Bible, “trying to follow its commands and stuff as best I can”. Indeed he mentioned lifestyle several times in the interview. He labelled as nominal, for example, those boys who claimed a faith but failed to live it out and was critical of other students finding Chapel boring. Both Chapel and Assembly he claimed were useful forums for discussing ethical or moral issues. He was the only student in Christian Studies to articulate the need for a moral framework in society to support the common good, so he appeared to have thought through multiple implications of his beliefs.

However, according to *Part 3* of the Questionnaire, he was still considering his beliefs and felt the need for some autonomy from his family. He did have a clear idea of what religion meant to him, although he was not completely closed off to further consideration. His religious identity Status at this point in time was Achieved tending towards Foreclosed. Yet he was prepared to discuss different worldviews because religion was very important to him and he still rated as Moratorium Status in global identity.

Family once again figured largely in the student's life. Charles's family was strongly Christian and appeared to be the source of his religious identity and moral framework, playing a similar role to Jason's. His tendency to Foreclosed Status would support this. He has perhaps explored within a limited boundary of alternative worldviews. However, he has not felt oppressed or stifled in his belief choices and contrasts his lack of rebellion with that of other children of Christian parents. In interview he often referred to his family's influence in relation to his values, his church and his future.

Charles's understanding of religious identity was in terms of a conversion experience, "being changed from one thing to another... from one worldview of faith to another". For him that implies close connection. "Christianity is like being in a relationship with God." In this he reflected the evangelical emphasis of the school's story of the flourishing life and felt supported by the school. However, only Christian Studies classes rated as a source of support for belief in the curriculum offering because of its use of the Bible. Even here, Christian Studies was included in the definition of curriculum only on the basis of it being assessed. Significantly, he recognised the role played in his development by atheist teachers who "disagree with things or might condemn some things in the Bible". For him, the majority of teachers were either agnostic or atheist; but they represented an opportunity for him to consider alternative worldviews and he was tolerant of their beliefs because he still learnt a lot

from them. One of his current teachers, for example, “is quite blatantly opposed to a lot of the school’s values. She’s a good teacher but she’s quite vocal in being against... ideals and stuff.” It was perhaps a measure of his commitment to a particular religious identity that he could be so sanguine about this.

In other ways, he did not appear to be aware of how the curriculum is impacting on his understanding of who he is. When challenged about the nature of humanity, he understood it as “intelligent, competitive, with a great capacity for good or for bad”. He only concedes when asked later in the interview that the subject of History has challenged him to see this complex moral nature of humanity. In the unit on the Holocaust, he was confronted by the personal, humanising stories of the victims. He had been confused by “a nice guy” becoming merciless executioner and generally repulsed and horrified by the events. He questioned his own identity as a fellow member of humanity.

Last term I thought a lot about humanity and the idea that the entire nation becoming this horrible views. I thought a lot about what it means to be human. Are humans like intrinsically good or intrinsically bad? And how do your political views relate to your personal kind of values? (Charles)

This is a rich source for identity development. He articulated a process involving feelings, ideas and beliefs. Nevertheless, he did not appear to make the further link between curriculum and his theological belief, especially in the area of a biblical anthropology. As the History teacher has confirmed, he expected his students to do this themselves.

Charles has taken many thoughtful steps towards an Achieved religious identity. It is evidenced by the active links he maintains between his faith, current lifestyle and future purpose. Yet, this is not without some questioning of his priorities, particularly in his self-awareness around personality. Unlike Jason, he was eager to credit the school as well as his

family for his development in the area. He appreciated the agreement between home and school values and the emphasis on character education as well as the provision of the extra-curricular activities that support the school's story of the flourishing life. However, he did not perceive the role that the enacted curriculum is playing in his own conception of this story.

Conclusion

The story told by William Cowper College is that of a socially powerful independent Anglican school that reflects one version of Sydney Anglicanism and is led strongly from its faith basis. It incorporates in its educational offering several different frameworks that contribute to the moral formation of students. No coherent attempt to investigate issues of religious identity was evident within the mainstream curriculum. Students are nonetheless impacted powerfully by the values and models of their teachers in the enacted curriculum. Cowper Boy is a person of noble character and many Year 10 students aspire to this. However, as the core of their identity, they position personality, in embodied form actively connected to family and friends. In a rich field of options for the flourishing life, many Year 10 students appear to have committed to the view that religion is irrelevant.

Yet, Cowper culture is powerfully at work narrating its story. Amidst all the carefully-curated pieces of memorabilia of William Cowper College is a profoundly moving photograph. Typical of all the boys' schools in the inner thirty kilometre zone, this school displays its cadet group proudly. They stand with various boyish expressions on their faces, just Cowper Boys. But they are pre-1939 army cadets and about to be engulfed by war. They would mostly have passed into history now; but the tradition of self-sacrificing noble virtues that they exemplify lives on. This is the story of the photo and who can deny its power to forge identity, even in the William Cowper College of the 21st century?

Chapter 8. Catherine Hamlin College Stories of the Flourishing Life

There's a huge proportion that are making enormous sacrifices to send their kids to school here. (Gloria)

The Story Told by the School

The step-up school

The schools of the inner thirty kilometre zone of Sydney are mostly limited in size by the cost of real estate. This helps to maintain a feeling of intimacy and this is the case for Catherine Hamlin College. Such an atmosphere may encourage, perhaps even pressure towards a 'ladylike' culture of gathering and conversing, albeit with lots of laughter. But perhaps it is this very culture that is appealing to the clientele who appear to aspire to character development or at least pastoral care as well as academic achievement for their children. This is all within an acknowledged Anglican community.

The school has the usual accoutrements of independent education such as a pool and gymnasium; but there is nothing particularly lavish about any facility and there is no Chapel as might be expected in an Anglican school. There is a certain feeling of being protected from the outside world, shielded by its fairly formal culture of dress and positional authority. Gloria, the Headmistress, has the view that this culture is an aspect of Hamlin's Anglican identity.

We're also conservative and so things like appropriate titles for people and appropriate dress. I've put that down to our Anglicanism, not necessarily our Christian aspect.

(Gloria)

It may be that a sense of protection supports a very relational culture. Certainly the school does narrate a story of the flourishing life as deeply relational. Student, Jenny noted, “For the most part, everyone’s really nice and really caring”.

Perhaps also the background of the students influenced them to join together, to relate in community. This is a high ICSEA school, although less so than William Cowper College. Indeed, many families are first or second generation immigrant families, speaking a language other than English at home (ACARA, 2018). Both the Chaplain, Jess, and Headmistress, Gloria, claimed that despite the ICSEA categories, this was not a particularly elite clientele.

There’s not a lot of arrogance. Most of them come from a middle-class hard-working background. There’s not much entitlement that you sense from the girls. (Jess)

This may have impacted on the way that students treated each other in both playground and classroom. They were perhaps conscious of their families’ precarious foothold on affluence in a very expensive city and therefore sought mutual support. “It’s just like a feeling of unity and togetherness”, said student Jenny.

There seemed to be a widespread culture of gratitude. For example, the Hamlin girls were observed thanking their teachers as they left the classroom at the end of lessons. Staff mentioned that many students were conscious of the hard work required of their parents in sending them to Catherine Hamlin College. Those students I interviewed confirmed this quite spontaneously, an indication of their lack of feelings of entitlement. Parents have achieved a certain standard of living that enables them to send their girls to the school. They have worked hard, “making enormous sacrifices”, and the school’s response is to support them by aiming for a high standard in everything.

A stimulus to set the bar high for personal goals and work hard to achieve them was visible throughout the school. Noticeboards and posters emphasised students' potential to participate in and influence a global academic tradition. The HSC results were also clearly advertised .

Yet it was not just the story of fine academic results that attracted families to the school. It was also perhaps a certain demonstration of the level of achievement of the family in being able to send their daughter to the school. In this, the physical site probably played a part. Han described how the site made her feel: "So the school is really clean... it looks nice, it makes us feel nice and makes us feel classy". Aligned with this were parental aspirations for their children as young women of good character. Jenny explained how this was important to her mother and subsequently to herself.

My mother, when she came to a tour when I was in Year 5 to see the school, would tell me about the Year 10 ambassadors who were so nice to her... so that's also like guided me because I wanted to be like that to other parents. (Jenny)

This is a story of the ideal student, the model Hamlin Girl, who was, for Jenny, that Year 10 student. Developing as an individual within a community based on Anglican norms is indeed a focus of the pastoral care at the college although "niceness" is not a term that is normally used in character development. It occurs again in the story told by the students. In this aspect of the Hamlin story it was balanced by a robust academic emphasis and defined in particular ways that relate to its identity as an Anglican school. High achievement as a reward for effort and maturity of character connected to a Christian community were the two flip sides of the *Step-up School*, a school with a strong moral purpose.

The Protestant School

Protestantism defines itself partly by what it is not, that is, by what it is protesting against. So it is with Catherine Hamlin College. Staff referred to Anglican traditions or rituals as “tiny little things”, peripheral to the main business of the school, including its religious framework. “If someone actually brings up are you Anglican or not I’m going to really question where they’re at”, stated the Chaplain, Jess. Exploration of the 39 Articles of the Anglican Church or the use of the Prayer Book in Chapel are specifically rejected, indicating a recognition of these as traditional markers of the church’s identity. The Christian Studies teacher, Esther, set up a contrast between biblical knowledge and “Anglican practices like baptism”. The Lord’s Prayer was the only thing she recognised as a valid ritual in the regular practice of the school, although whether it should be thought of as ritual is debatable and it is not the exclusive domain of Anglicanism. Further, she stated, “There is no Anglican perspective in the Christian Education faculty”. This absence from the staffroom could be expected to block efforts by staff or students to explore Anglican identity in any definitive way. Hence the statement “I don’t know what would make it Anglican actually” by Jess. These staff understood the school’s identity as biblical, gospel-focused and evangelical, and they also seemed to be protesting against a conceptualisation of ‘Anglican’ in terms of its history and traditions. Perhaps they feared adding anything to Bebbington’s Evangelical Quadrilateral of conversionism, biblicism, crucicentrism and activism; a definition I referred to in describing Sydney Diocese in Chapter 5.

But perhaps they were also reflecting their understanding of the processes of formation. Esther, for example, saw Chapel as a supplement to the Bible knowledge work of Christian Studies classes. It might be thought that ‘Knowledge in’ in this scenario would be expected to yield ‘faith out’; however within Evangelicalism there is a strong belief in the necessity of

immersion in the Bible to enable faith development and religious formation. Nevertheless, Chapel services are usually held to be of more importance. They fulfil the need for rituals that reinforce the community as Christian, or indeed Anglican, as well as provide an opportunity for further Bible teaching. The ritual practices of Chapel have been understood by scholars such as JKA Smith (2009) as another key to formation, focussed on the telos of the good life.

Chapel services were significantly less formal than in many Anglican schools, as I observed in one that was entirely led by students. However, Jess saw a central role for Chapel in concert with Assembly in setting the moral framework of the school in place. They were both, for the chaplain, “cultural influencers”, the key to students developing an understanding of who they are and their view of the world. These are both relevant to identity development in the religious domain, so it is quite important that the Chaplain articulated this vision for the function of Chapel. Nevertheless, there was a deliberate elimination from this understanding of identity any place for a distinctively Anglican religious identity. This was justified by reference to alignment with the theology of Sydney Diocese, which was claimed to be “all about how the gospel permeates through life” rather than “being Anglican or acting in an Anglican way”. This is essentially a theological justification which was repeated by staff in terms of subscribing to certain Christian beliefs. It is also an emphasis on the conversionist aspect of evangelicalism; and this emphasis was specifically promoted by the Headmistress.

Gloria was the influential core of Hamlin and, as such, her opinion of what constitutes Anglican identity was paramount in the dynamic story of the school. In identifying what was Anglican in the school’s story, she tended to distance herself, self-identifying as “a closet Baptist” who is “pleased not to have been home-grown” in either the Diocese or the

Anglican Church. She expressed that she is thus avoiding any possible “conflict” although she didn’t elaborate on what that might entail. At the same time, she claimed that the school’s identity was aligned closely with Sydney Diocese’s understanding, presumably originating in its own Protestant character. But even if it weren’t so aligned, the Head said, “that’s what we’d be calling”.

We, being an independent Anglican school, are allowed to call it as we see it in many ways, so we call it as a Bible-based evangelical Christian message. (Gloria)

Gloria appears to have tapped into the story of Sydney Diocese in its semi-alignment with Baptist theology of conversion. Over 7 minutes of the 42-minute interview was given over to the Christian ministry of the school in terms of gospel and conversion. In this she expressed feeling supported by her School Council whom she said were “extraordinary” for their prayerfulness and commitment to the Christian mission (Bebbington’s ‘activism’) of the school. Members of the School Council are required to attend a Protestant rather than Anglican or simply Christian church. Nevertheless, Gloria seemed to draw some of her organisational power from the Council as at times she used “we” to indicate this, as in “we call it as a Bible-based Evangelical Christian”.

The phrase “Bible-based” was used frequently in one form or another to describe the school by staff and students. A central expression of this emphasis was their teaching and learning framework which highlighted the role of the Bible. Grounding in the Bible as a major source of authority for general direction and teaching and learning was noted by many interviewees, not always favourably. One student, Ai, who was struggling to clarify her response to the faith claims of the school, stated: “The Principal is very like Bible-oriented so I feel like this school just follows that path”. This recourse to biblical authority is an important marker of Protestantism and was frequently referred to by staff and students, who

claimed it as a significant aspect of Gloria's leadership. It is perhaps this reliance on the Bible more than anything else that makes the story told by the school so distinctive; that and its emphasis on conversion. Christian Studies teacher, Esther, states in reference to the school's Anglican identity, "I see it as very close to Protestant beliefs". The theological basis of this Protestantism was encapsulated in the six posters relating to the booklet 'Two Ways to Live' that adorned the walls in one classroom. The poster was a useful summary of the conversion process as understood in the school. Catherine Hamlin College identifies as an Anglican school on its website, but in its day-to-day functioning it relates a generic Protestant story, having largely excised Anglican distinctives. This may account for the way in which it seeks to promote the role of women as leaders in the community, as people with great capacity, which I explore in the next section.

The Proudly Girls' School

In some ways, Catherine Hamlin College appeared to be a very different school to what one would expect in a Diocese that is predominantly conservative about the role of women and does not ordain women to the priesthood. Hamlin appeared to be training their girls for leadership through a carefully balanced offering of academic challenge, service opportunities and leadership training. In common with most girls' schools, their website espoused the benefits of single-sex education for girls. This is based on research results such as the finding that girls in single-sex schools are six times more likely to pursue STEM subjects and careers.

Again, typical of the websites of girls' schools, Hamlin's leadership-training capacity is emphasised. This is demonstrated in the area of spiritual leadership especially but not exclusively. Gloria proudly recounted how a prospective parent noticed that the leadership

of a Christian university group, in one year was led by four former students of Hamlin, convincing the parent of the worth of the school.

Activity for social justice was also promoted as a priority for student attention as leaders of the future. The History teacher, Mary, listed the careers that students had chosen in the past to demonstrate the success of the social justice aspect of the school: international law, social work and education rather than policing or carpentry. They were careers where leadership capacity is the key to success although none were STEM-related. These successful students were, however, used as models for the girls of using their voice in the service of the common good. That voice, claimed student, Fiona, is all about “Go women in power”.

However, this emphasis in the school’s story of power was not to be at the expense of order. Gloria suggested hierarchy and structure as aspects of Anglican education, placing Hamlin in a similar place to Cowper: by nature that complex mix of independent but Anglican. However, she noted that her staff either don’t know or don’t care about being Anglican. Combined with the independent nature of the school’s ethos, the Headmistress is situated in a particularly powerful role. I observed that the hierarchical structure internal to the school did not seem to reflect a pyramidal one. It was more like a series of concentric circles that compounded the power of the central person, the Head herself. As she said,

I think I know what I want and I’m not prepared to compromise... I’m tough really and

I’ve got nothing to lose. I’ve got an audience of one. (Gloria)

There were no staff blockages to data collection for this study. My experience was that the Headmistress had approved the study and it therefore would be facilitated by her staff in a co-operative and friendly manner. She provided the most powerful model of the Hamlin girl as

leader. Both as a model *per se* and the centre of power in the school community, she personified the women-in-leadership aspect of the Hamlin story of the flourishing life.

I have discussed above Gloria's influence on the school's Protestant construction of its religious identity in relation to its faith foundation. The Chaplain, Jess, confirmed that this was expressed in numerous ways in the functioning of the school, claiming Gloria was

the big cultural influence... as she speaks to the school... how she encourages the community... to act in the world to honour others rather than elevate yourself. (Jess)

Gloria's approach resulted in a very definite emphasis on service. Leadership was understood as directed towards benefitting others and the service program was the training vehicle for this. There was direct reference to action for the common good, a focus for a flourishing life.

The Strategic Plan also indicated the powerful role of the Head in guiding the school as she largely bore responsibility for development and implementation. The 2017–2019 version emphasised the type of 'common good' empowering leadership discussed above and the Head presumably was the major driver of it as she claimed she enjoys writing strategic plans and had already collected input from multiple stakeholders for the next version. She also implied that strategic plans originated in her vision.

There's a part of me that wants to make it say something like,

Catherine Hamlin College: Proudly a Girls' School. (Gloria)

So the theology-based educational philosophy of the Head appeared to drive the school, especially in the trinity of conversion, academic achievement and leadership/service. In this she is backed by her Protestant School Council. They are in turn heavily influenced by her as a result of delegating to her the role of developing the strategic plan of the school.

The Story told by the Curriculum

Dominated by its Teaching and Learning Framework

It would be erroneous to set up a separation between the school's story of the flourishing life and that of the curriculum. Their Teaching and Learning Framework appeared to act as the bridge between the two. As such, it occupied a dominant place in the rhetoric of Catherine Hamlin College. "[It] says so and that's all there is to it." "It's just who we are. It's our DNA now", said the Headmistress. To be construed as "our DNA" any teaching and learning framework must be thought of as thoroughly integrated or absorbed across the school. This indeed appeared to be the case, although not necessarily in an obvious or coherent way. In many ways it aspired to be the school's story, incorporating every aspect of the school's educational offering, including curriculum in all its forms. It appeared on the walls of classrooms, in discussion with staff, in the professional development program, sequenced across subject programs and prominently displayed on the website.

This framework, however, was not a simple structure of subjects such as might be suggested by both Jess and Esther, who saw Chapel and the subject Christian Studies as the centre of student learning. Rather, the framework was a layered approach to teaching and learning across all the school's educational offerings, beginning with a particular understanding of people as the basis. The clear articulation of this faith-based understanding provided strong potential for exploring issues of religious identity, especially regarding worldview and purpose. However, this potential was not always realised for reasons I outline below.

Framing a dilemma. The Teaching and Learning Framework was presented visually with clear Christian foundations with a specific spiritual goal of faith development and a

wholistic understanding of students. The otherwise hidden curriculum becomes partly visible in this framework in its declaration of the crucial importance to the school of biblical beliefs about people and their purpose.

God created humanity in his image... [with] an ability to engage with the world in a way that is different to any other creature. The ultimate expression of this image is declared to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ... If we are to know what it means to be human and to know how to live wisely in God's world, we need to know the ultimate expression of God's image – Jesus. (T & L Framework)

The meaning of 'know' is perhaps deliberately left ambiguous. There may be a suggestion of the Protestant emphasis in this, for biblical knowing may be understood as a profoundly intimate relationship brought about by conversion. Verses such as Acts 4: 11-12 are quoted indicating that this understanding of knowing is likely.

Jesus... is the cornerstone. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under Heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.

The implication is clear. A flourishing life of meaning and purpose is centred on Jesus Christ and His role is understood in conversionist terms. As Jess stated, it is "gospel framed". The documentation's articulation of a foundational role for the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ reflects Anglican beliefs. He is referred to as the model for the "fully human" being, loving others "so that others can flourish". The emphasis on love echoes that of Protestant Archbishop Cranmer. Jesus Christ's resurrection is said to enable a present and future telos: relationship with the Creator-God and restoration of the "created order". Human purpose is also quite deliberately related to this transcendent telos.

God has equipped us with the ability to perform this responsibility. He has given us minds that can study and understand the world and how it works... The Christian

understanding of education is to equip people so they can participate in humanity's

commission: to rule the world and take care of it. (T & L Framework)

This is a mandate for human action, a big story that depends on a universalist understanding of purpose. Responsibility, justice, righteousness and loving relationships characterised by service are said to flow from this understanding of person and purpose. In terms of the theological and anthropological framework of this study, it may be considered as a version of the good life dependent on relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

The question arises: to what extent do students see this purpose as applicable to them? Was the framework-infused curriculum story seen to be relevant to their 'real world' outside that protective space? Such questions suggest a dilemma for Anglican schools, who have open enrolment policies, such as Catherine Hamlin College. If its declared understanding of a flourishing life is based on a particular set of religious beliefs, how does the school accommodate with integrity students and families with a diversity of religious identities? How can staff support all students to develop in accord with the school's moral purpose without either effectively denying the school's foundational beliefs or eroding student agency? Student voice is particularly important in addressing this dilemma and those I interviewed did indeed raise their voices in relation to the issue. For her part, Gloria offered her own solution to managing the dilemma without solving it conclusively. This rested in her understanding of the practical functioning of the framework.

Promoting a vision. The Head saw the Teaching and Learning Framework as setting in place a sort of objective link between the school's Christian foundations and its day-to-day functioning.

It enables us to talk about Christianity and Christ in a way that is not seen to be cheapening it in a funny sort of way... these are the standards we set because we're a Hamlin Framework school and as such we follow Christ. (Gloria)

Here she seemed to be using it as a sort of reverse justification for being a Christian school, a firm if not immutable formal structure to the school's vision and one that would not upset parents.

The formal nature of the structure was reflected in the formality of its visual presentation on posters in classrooms and in the hard copy brochure offered to parents. It was presented in a beautiful, glossy booklet, replete with Bible verses and an attractive vision for teaching and learning. Its symbolism was noted by all staff interviewed who saw it as very important within the culture of the school. For History teacher Mary, it was "the foundation of the school", applied across planned curriculum, pedagogy and behaviour principles. It was recognised generally for its symbolic representation of Hamlin. An unchangeable DNA indeed.

However, a second understanding of the significance of the framework perhaps offers a less coherent account. This construction may be seeking an answer to the dilemma I described above around the diversity of religious identities in the Anglican school. For Gloria the Hamlin Framework "represents the educational package at Hamlin, recognising not all teaching and learning happens in the classroom". While not completely denigrating the central role of the classroom, she thus emphasised the many opportunities that students had outside the mainstream curriculum, including those that more directly aimed to develop their religious identity. This emphasis was affirmed by the interviewed staff who strongly suggested that questions of being and purpose were chiefly funnelled through activities such

as camps, service opportunities and weekly student Bible Studies as well as Chapel and the subject Christian Studies.

Yet Christian Studies teacher, Esther, was conscious of a certain amount of marginalisation from the mainstream curriculum, using the fact that the subject was not assessed as an example. Perhaps Gloria was indicating that a somewhat dualistic approach of separating the ‘mainstream subjects’ from the rest of the school’s offerings was an appropriate response to the faith-based school’s dilemma. The story of the curriculum, especially that enacted in the classroom, thus takes on a different tone, offering a sense of neutral space to students.

Furthermore, that vision seemed to be, at least partly, a negative response to attempts by other schools to link belief and practice but are “seen to be cheapening Christianity and Christ”. The Chaplain appeared to agree with this assessment:

Some people define Christian schools that you have to employ all Christian staff and have Bible verses at the bottom of your worksheets, but that is not how we define it. (Jess)

Leaving aside the vexed issue of employment of “all Christian staff”, I know of no Anglican or indeed Christian school that puts “Bible verses at the bottom” of mainstream subject activities. Jess appeared to be employing hyperbole to make a strong point regarding the school’s reservations about simplistic approaches. In this the Chaplain appeared to be agreeing with Gloria’s desire to avoid possible ‘cheapening’.

High standards were a key aspect of the curriculum vision Hamlin aimed to promote through its framework and this applied to avoiding any devaluation of these foundational beliefs. For Hamlin, the links between belief-based assumptions and the knowledge areas were seen as complex, requiring exploration at depth. The links are nevertheless real and

inevitable, especially in the enacted curriculum as it is formed by staff and students. As discussed in Chapter Two, I claim that there is no actual neutral space in curriculum in any of its expressions. It is not at all apparent, however, that the framework achieved this level of critique. There was a thorough articulation of a faith-based understanding of humanity, a theological anthropology at the heart of the curriculum story. However there did not appear to be a comprehensive educational philosophy derived from it incorporating the role of the subjects, apart from a possible pedagogical emphasis.

Nevertheless, as I observed in classes, the framework did impact on the curriculum, albeit in unstructured and rather vague ways. Jess's comment is informative in this regard: "We have this idea of the Christian foundations of our curriculum and how it seeps through". The choice of the word, 'seeps' is interesting and suggests some sort of leakage, perhaps accidental, perhaps unstoppable. A 'seeping curriculum' does not promote a particularly attractive picture of the flourishing life. Nevertheless, the larger picture of the framework's vision appeared to be that belief is foundational to every educational activity of the school, while not prescriptive in relation to teaching and learning. Yet, it did not completely lack acknowledgement of the impact of belief on the curriculum in all its forms. Teachers who themselves had an understanding of religious identity could initiate strategies to develop student religious identity framed within what was referred to as "a Christian perspective".

Making a space for Christian perspectives. The Teaching and Learning Framework did not mandate a particular way of exploring the belief issues at the heart of all subjects. Indeed, it did not mandate exploration at all. Nor did it clearly promote the inclusion of a consideration of the spiritual dimension of students that might have supported their exploration of religious identity. Instead, it recounted a story of possible ways to forge an optional link between its foundational assumptions and its approach to the subjects.

The identification of concepts and essential questions readily allows them to be discussed from a Christian perspective using the Bible and other scholarly Christian writings as text. (T & L Framework)

This link was reinforced later in the document when again in reference to key questions it states, “a Christian perspective to be provided and discussed as appropriate” (T & L Framework). This is a joint declaration that some Christian scholarship may be applied to subjects and that there is no ‘one’ Christian perspective. Teachers may explore ‘a’ Christian perspective on particularities of their subject. The professionalism of teachers and their differing versions of the application of their faith are thus affirmed.

The framework’s application to the classroom-focussed curriculum still appeared to be contestable. The question that naturally arises is to what extent the individual teacher understands the beliefs at the core of the school’s Anglican identity and how to use them within a scholarly tool to explore their subject area. To make space for optional opportunities does run the risk of leaving subjects secularised by omitting consideration of the spiritual. The teacher may find it too difficult to implement or lack a deeper-than-syllabus understanding of the area, including Christian scholarship. Jess indicated as much by stating, “It depends on the teacher and where they’re at with these things”.

Various strategies had been implemented to support staff to explore “a Christian perspective” in their subject area. New staff induction, staff Chapels and meetings of the leadership team were all mentioned as forums where this had been promoted. Particularly important for this study were internal professional development opportunities. One presenter had encouraged staff to ask “deeper, more thoughtful questions” and used Maths to demonstrate how a Christian worldview could be relevant. She was concerned to challenge

students to think globally about issues and focus on service and love of others, indicating the relevance of Maths to humanitarian aid.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the subject of History is a natural place for such key questions and concepts to be explored, helping students to further develop their idea of the flourishing life. My emphasis here is on exploration of alternatives, including what might be termed ‘Anglican’. This involves taking account of students’ spirituality and the ideological basis of subjects to foster exploration through appropriate pedagogy.

It does depend, as stated as assumptions of the framework, on a view of the person. The History program appeared to do this, stating that the framework’s epistemology had been “embedded into all teaching and learning programs, student assessment... and self-reflective practice”. By this they seemed to mean it was linked to the framework’s approaches to teaching and learning. Understanding an ‘embedded’ epistemology is not always an easy task for staff accessing any program. It may indicate assumed knowledge within the faculty in relation to the theological anthropology. It may also mean it is not really seen as impacting in any particular way on the curriculum, reflecting again the need for a more direct link between the assumptions of the framework and the planned curriculum.

How a theological anthropology might impact on the teaching and learning of that particular topic was not clear. The spiritual component of students might in this case be omitted from consideration of events and people despite the undoubted integrity of teachers seeking to support the school ethos. The Christian assumptions of the framework might in this case be understood as driving the extraneous aspects of the school culture; but remaining optional in the classroom in any scholarly form. It is possible to refer to a biblical or Christian worldview in a school’s ethos and not plan for coherence in a framework, nor

articulate how a theological anthropology might relate to an understanding of teaching and learning. This applies equally within the planned curriculum of a subject.

For example, the biblical assumptions of the framework are mentioned in the Year 10 History Program in the Unit *Australia at War* where it appears marked with an icon. But this icon does not then appear anywhere in the documented unit. There were no suggestions in the document of areas that might benefit from an exploration of belief issues in the subject such as possible religious motives driving the participants in historic events. The role of Catholicism in the resistance of South Vietnam to incorporation into the Communist North is an example that would have been particularly relevant to the religious identity of some Year 10 students I observed.

The History teacher did handle identity issues sensitively and effectively as they arose within the confines of the enacted curriculum and I discuss this in the following section. However, the lack of overt foundational thinking about this topic in the program did raise certain questions. For example, how may we know that the planned curriculum was actually based on the theological anthropology that was outlined in the foundation of the framework? Did teacher pedagogical and content choices derive from these foundations although they remained unarticulated? Or did the framework merely act as an underlabourer, setting exclusionary boundaries around a broad swathe of what is possible? What about the moral purpose of the subject in relation to student religious identity? Were questions of religious difference being explored as significant in developing historical perspective around people and events? Is a secularised plurality of perspectives such a dominating approach of the syllabus that no critique could challenge it effectively? Such questions remained unanswered in the limited time of the study. Taken together they seem to indicate a story of partial

omission of the spiritual aspect of humanity and their actions in history, resulting in a less vivid story of the flourishing life.

While this should not be thought of as intentional, it suggests areas that might enhance the complexity of the picture of the flourishing life. Without either moralising or inserting so-called evidence of God's providence, the subject of History could explore the many positive and negative contributions of the spiritual to people and events. This 'spiritual component' is after all strongly present in ideologies of all sorts, including capitalism, neoliberalism, communism and all the other 'isms' that helped give form to the 20th and 21st centuries. Understanding of them is deepened by exploration of this aspect of human beings. Despite these perceived weaknesses in implementation, the Teaching and Learning Framework exercised a discursive power within the school that gave much of the school's curriculum a definite belief-based direction.

Sketching a big picture of the Flourishing Life

The classrooms of Catherine Hamlin College were not particularly fun-focussed. There was a sense of joy and enjoyment of each other's company outside the classroom. But inside all was serious, diligent, achievement-oriented. "I think the girls get their identity from... this is a school that takes a lot really seriously" (Jess). This seriousness even appeared to be the case in the Christian Studies classes I observed. Living wisely is serious business; serious Hamlin business based on the universalising big picture of the school culture. Faith, for Hamlin, provided the motivating purpose of education, indeed of life in general, a picture of the flourishing life with a universal application, a big picture of what it means to be an image-bearer of God and to live out this purpose.

If this big picture was located in the Teaching and Learning Framework, the small picture was located in the classroom and corridors of the school. The small story told a different

story of the flourishing life, imbued by the contributing stories of the staff and students. The big story of the faith basis of the school was in a certain sense aspirational and visionary. The small story was actually a series of vignettes, enacted daily in the classroom and outside in other activities. At Hamlin, they were, ostensibly, aligned through reference back to the framework. But as I have outlined above, valid links were not always obvious in the planned or enacted curriculum.

Nevertheless, two key directions emerged in the data as very important in the picture of the flourishing life and these did appear to be incorporated effectively into the story of the curriculum. They were the search for wisdom and training in service.

Seeking wisdom. The Chaplain's stated educational philosophy incorporated the major elements of religious identity and suggested a link between beliefs and teaching and learning. Aligned with the assumptions of the Teaching and Learning Framework, it appeared to be influential.

My theology of education is that whether it be art or language or science in whatever way it's trying to help us to understand who we are or how we can function wisely in the world. (Jess)

To "function wisely" is an immediate purpose, a telos that has, according to the school's Anglican story, an ultimate focus on a 'future world'.

In the emphasis on wisdom in relation to purpose, the Chaplain reflected Old Testament stories of wisdom, such as that of Proverbs, Chapter 11. Honesty, humility, integrity, righteousness, generosity and kindness are there listed along with knowledge and understanding. There is an emphasis in Chapter 11 on common good as well as personal qualities. Taken as a whole, Proverbs refers to this as true wisdom. They all appeared in one form or another in the Teaching and Learning Framework. Grace, faithfulness, hope and

love for example were described more fully in terms of wisdom characteristics. “Grace”, for example, is said to be demonstrated by being gentle, forgiving, humble, respectful, thankful and appreciated of diversity. While “Grace” is given a salvific definition in line with the school’s Protestant leaning, the characteristics attached to it that perhaps relate to an understanding of wisdom did appear to be a driver of the pedagogy. Students were invariably treated with grace in classrooms, playground, Chapel and offices visited.

A further aspect of the pedagogy related to the nature of the school’s emphasis on academic pursuits. There was a strong emphasis on reasoning and its role in seeking wisdom. Esther, for example, in teaching two lessons on ethics, said, “How to convince students of the worth of the Christian view of ethics is my challenge”. In the classes I observed the young teacher attempted to do this via the presentation and critique of alternative worldviews. However, it was obvious to students that there was only one acceptable view, that of the textbook/workbook that they all had to bring to class. Rather than incorporating the different perspectives of students, encouraging a critique via implications or some other dialogic approach, the teacher seemed to take a right/wrong response to student ideas. It was fascinating to see several students attempt to add “community” as a category to the teacher’s list of motivations for choices regarding right and wrong. She simply ignored their suggestion, missing an opportunity to discuss the role of the individual in the context of the group, an important issue in religious identity. The ethical framework in the textbook had seemingly locked her into a teacher-focussed informational lesson with little real exploration of issues. The result was that there was no student expression of their personal beliefs, perhaps due to a lesser sense of personal agency. It should be noted of course that the presence of the researcher in the classroom may have had an influence on the pedagogy adopted for the lesson. Knowing that the research was

related to religious identity may have exerted pressure on the young teacher to set out an apologetic for the Christian faith more than usual.

Nevertheless, topics were chosen to align with the school's understanding of students' spiritual needs and related a story of a wisdom situated in a life lived in alignment with a biblical understanding. *Two Ways to Live*, a Protestant evangelistic poster, was on the wall of the Christian Studies classroom and a journal response was programmed in Year 8. Yet conversion was not the only focus. Year 7 introduced a broad theological foundation and world religions in Year 9 was said to engage students due to their different religious backgrounds. The ethics unit was planned to support wise decision-making in relation to the choices confronting Year 10 girls. Students were also presented with a challenge to develop the skill of empathy in relation, for example, to debates around abortion. But predominantly, the aim of the subject was Bible-based:

To give all the girls good and faithful understanding of the Bible and the gospel in particular and then how it applies to people's lives. (Esther)

Topics in the middle years for History were also chosen with a consideration of their impact on general identity including in the domains of ethnicity and religion. Indeed, the nature of the school's clientele matched to the syllabus for Year 10 History meant that many general identity and religious identity issues arose in the teaching of units and in choice of personal interest projects. The opportunities that were listed by the Head of History included:

Year 8 – Family History with the bringing to school of family artefacts, relating a journey and encouraging empathy.

Year 9 – White Australia included in the study of Movement of Peoples and Federation.

Year 10 – A biblical and archaeological exploration of Jericho.

Year 11 – Personal choice investigation: one example was an investigation of the historicity of Jesus Christ.

Topic choices thus aligned History's story with that of the school's broad vision for a flourishing life, especially in valuing students. However, the nature of the syllabus topics (White Australia, Vietnam etc.) predisposed towards exploration of identity more in the domains of ethnicity and culture. For example, in one class, Asian-Australian students were led to inquire about whether there was a racist element to the Domino Theory of the Cold War era: "Was the policy aligned with attitudes to Asians?" The teacher was affirming of the inquirer. "Good point. There could be some link, but mostly it was not ethnicity but politics and ideology that was feared" (Mary). The nature of the student's inquiry was very evident. The story of History for her was one in which her adopted nation had played an excluding role in the White Australia era to people of her ethnic identity and she needed to explore this. History teacher, Mary, reflected about the impact of considering such topics in History:

For some students it's accepting of their identity... that it's okay to be who I am. For those students that's the Flourishing Life, being happy in their own skin. (Mary)

The teacher was both a model and the agent for affirming the student's general identity at that moment. She confided,

I like to think I model the flourishing life. I am a strong believer, optimistic that 'everyone can', feeling life is good. It is important that you be optimistic and give them hope. (Mary)

Wisdom in the History classroom was not always focussed on a particularly biblical understanding of character, but also on a form of reasoning. The teacher emphasised

multiple perspectives, being informed and reasoning well from evidence as key aspects of wisdom in practice in her classroom and they were indeed in evidence. Her classes were a lesson in developing discernment, a helpful set of skills in evaluating identity alternatives and processing life events to make meaning through autobiographical memory. There was an overall acceptance of a diversity of perspectives and she actively taught to this goal with a generally positive response from students. To Mary's great credit she appreciated having her own values challenged by students. She recounted how she had presented the former ruler of South Vietnam, President Diem, in a less than favourable light and students had expressed opposition to that understanding, originating in their family identity. She used it to teach a "plurality of voices in History... leading to meaning-making and interpretation". Mary was concerned that the particular student's voice be heard but seemed not to want to explore deeper than family background to explain the student's stance. I referred above to the possible relevance of Catholic belief to the history of South Vietnam. Without a general investigation of this sort of identity issue which is experienced in the religious domain, the story of History can come dangerously close to being a cacophony of voices without any big story being heard. The key question becomes how does the big story of created human persons that is the core of Hamlin teaching and learning impact on the story of History?

Performing service. If Jess's idea of the relationship between the school's Christian foundation and the curriculum was that it "seeped through", Gloria's view was less amorphous. For her the story of the flourishing life was embodied in the chaplaincy team. They were a tool for "permeating" and to great effect. At every event, their role was understood to embody the gospel and the students were encouraged to follow their model of service which was held to spring from genuine love for others. Esther gave voice to this in her ethics class:

God gave purpose and order to the world in creation. That's how God loved us. We in return love God and others. This is really the Christian framework for ethics. Of course you don't have to be a Christian. (Esther)

In her attempt to be inclusive she used natural theology, an understanding of moral order as objective and given in creation. But she later appeared to contradict this, or perhaps narrow its scope, with a more conversionist stance. "The flourishing life is Christian life because lived for others". Nevertheless, as the Chaplain affirmed,

Service is a big thing that our school pushes and certainly in Year 9 it's all about service... Think beyond yourself into the world. (Jess)

A general role for the subjects is seen as supporting students to "serve and love people in deeper ways" and in this there is support in the subject of History as well as Christian Studies.

The History teacher specifically noted that she programs units on persons and events in order to explore models of how to make a difference. "Can we speak out for those who don't have a voice?" she asked. She was keen to share the results of this emphasis on service, or indeed the common good, hence her listing of various serving professions that students have pursued. This was not an account of service as necessarily self-abnegating. However, the serving careers, in human rights law for example, reinforced a story of power used to make a difference. It is an energising story of purpose, modelled and given impetus by Gloria from her own powerful position of service.

Opportunities to serve are key, so embedding the notion of service all through the school is very important so we have lots of service opportunities here (Gloria).

The curriculum story of Catherine Hamlin College was ostensibly structured around a Bible-based teaching and learning framework. If at times the picture that emerged was a

little sketchy, it was still one that sought to focus on a central understanding of people derived from the faith identity of the school. This gave the curriculum story a clear sense of purpose in its many forms. It was a focus on valuing each member of the community in a context of positive relationships. It was also a story of diligent young women being prepared for service to the world and seeking to express their own identity in many domains in the curriculum enacted in the classroom. Yet the sketch can become a clearer, richer picture of the flourishing life by acknowledging humanity's spiritual component and being alert to the opportunities generated by the religious domain of identity.

The Story Told by the Students

The story told by the students at Hamlin was a complex one. The Bell Measure of Religious Identity gave a limited but interesting insight into Year 10 students at one particular point in their school experience. A more complete story only emerged when the questionnaire was used to complement lesson observations (including surveys used as strategies by the Christian Studies teacher) and the perspectives told by the four students whom I interviewed. Two of these students became the focus of nested case studies to illustrate the story.

Work hard, stand proud, connect

Hamlin girls were unfailingly kind and well-mannered in their reception of me around the school. They reported being proud of their school, including the uniform and their environment and Year 10 were confident in their responses to questioning and observation. Again, as with Cowper, students' 10-word responses to the "I am..." of Part 1 may be the closest that we can get to the core of student identity, the OIS (Operating Identity Story). It should be noted, however, that there were some anomalies in the filling out of the survey in

that several students did not list a total of 10 self-identifiers in Part 1 and one student ranked four aspects as #1 in Part 2. As recorded in Table 8.1, taking Part 2 identity dimensions as the initial coding, *Personal Characteristics* was most salient, with 93 mentions overall. I therefore once again divided this response into different aspects as I had with Cowper results. However, Hamlin students presented a third addition to *Personality* and *Physical Appearance*. Twenty-four students listed a *Personal Characteristic* that referred in some way to *Diligence*. For example, “hardworking”, “dedicated to my studies”, “efficient but a procrastinator”, “logical”. In Fiona’s words: “If we do nothing, we’re nothing”. Only one student referred in any way to intrinsic intelligence, referring to herself as “smart”, so it may be that they are responding to a pedagogical approach that de-emphasised the intrinsic in favour of strategic application and personal responsibility for learning. In any case, Hamlin students reflected what Gloria identified as a characteristic of their parents. Ranking second with 31 overall mentions was *Education*, a result that complements *Diligence*. They were hard-working and aspirational. The student story of the flourishing life was in part that success may be achieved with diligent application.

The impact of the family was also present in the 12 students out of 18 surveyed who registered *Ethnicity* as one of the top 3 most salient aspects of their identity. All except one of these students used a descriptor that indicated Asian heritage. “Korean”, “Vietnamese-Chinese” and “Asian/Chinese/from Southeast Asia” were examples. This was a group of students who were very aware of this aspect of their identity, perhaps reinforced by the lack of a similar proportion of Asian-Australian teachers in this community. Some of these students perceived this aspect of their identity in terms of gender or appearance. These included, “one very Asian female” and “Asian with glasses”. Others seemed conscious of

potential challenges to their rightful place in the Australian community. One student referred to herself as “Asian”, but also “Grew up in Australia” as #6 aspect of her implicit identity.

As indicated in Table 8.1 there were 22 mentions of *Family/friends* in Part 1 of the Questionnaire, 17 instances of which referred to *Personality/personal characteristics*, but which indicated awareness of connection. For example, “nice”, “very loyal”, “kind-hearted” were listed, as well as direct references to family or peers such as “faithful to my friends”. There is therefore a lack of clarity and definition in relation to these categories. I interpreted them for their relevance to the student account of the flourishing life and in relation to their Status, rather than some objective measure. The result is that a triumvirate of salient identity markers for this Year 10 group appeared to be: *Education/diligence*, *Ethnicity/cultural group* and *Family/friends*. Work hard, stand proud and connect.

Table 8.1: *Questionnaire Part 1: Implicit Identity Domain Responses*

Category	Box 1	Boxes 2–10	Total
<i>Personality</i>	4	52	56
<i>Education</i>	3	29	31
<i>Diligence</i>	1	23	24
<i>Family/friends</i>	0	22	22
<i>Ethnicity</i>	3	15	18
<i>Hobby/sports/leisure</i>	1	14	15
<i>Physical appearance</i>	1	12	13
<i>Gender/sexuality</i>	5	6	11
<i>Age</i>	1	6	7
<i>Religion</i>	1	5	6
<i>Political/ethical</i>	0	6	6
<i>Intelligence</i>	0	1	1
<i>Vocation</i>	0	1	1

A homogeneous religious culture is encouraged

Out of a possible 180 responses in Part 1, six mentioned *Religion*, four out of 18 students identifying as Christian, one “atheist (for now)” and one “I am a child of God”. “Christian” was most salient to the student who listed it in her second box. Importantly, there was only one mention of *Vocation*, indicating that a sense of purpose did not appear to be particularly salient to these Year 10 students, despite the efforts of the school in inducting students into service. Nevertheless, there was a beautiful sense of purpose expressed by a student self-identifying as “Christian” as a second aspect of their salient identity. She identified as “Someone who wants to help people and devote my life in service”.

This awareness of the transcendent aspect of life appeared more obviously in Part 2 of the Questionnaire. Taken together as representing a unified domain, *Political/ethical, Religion and Vocation* ranked more highly than *Personality/personal Characteristics*. Only 11 students ranked *Personality/personal characteristics* in the top 3 domains of their explicit salient identity. On the other hand, 12 students ranked one of the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* identifiers in the top 3. How to account for the discrepancy between Parts 1 and 2? Does Part 1 represent the true underlying Operating Identity Story and Part 2 how students think the school would like them to respond? In fact, nine of the students, when asked in a class survey where they see themselves in 10 or 20 years, mentioned some form of service. “I want to volunteer around the world as well and help as many people as I can”, said Deidre. They do see the service emphasis of the school as important when they are pressed about their future, so the issue raised by discrepancy between implicit and explicit identity may simply be one of awareness of different levels of agency. A greater sense of choice was evident in Part 2 and student responses may therefore

have reflected a certain level of aspiration. In terms of the identity process, perhaps exploration was yet to be confirmed by commitment.

In this regard it should be noted that students were very conscious of, and at times resistant to, the way the faith basis of the school was explored. Jenny didn't feel she could voice her opinions.

Because it's an Anglican school and it's not really expected for you to not believe in Christianity. If I try to there'll always be an explanation ready but it still doesn't target where I'm at. (Jenny)

This to Jenny was "surface level", a failure to engage with her. Han agreed with this assessment, finding Christian Studies in particular as "more about teachers sharing their views". Both were conscious of pressure to believe and commit in light of the strong faith of many of their teachers, and especially of the Headmistress. This sort of pressure may have had an influence on the indicators of students' explicit salience. In any case, in Part 2, the Occupation/Religion/Ideology domain scored 12 rankings in the top 3 as in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: *Questionnaire Part 2: Centrality of Identity Domains: Top 3 Rankings*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>Student allocated ranking</i>	<i>Total of top three rankings</i>
<i>Age</i>	1	0	2
	2	0	
	3	2	
<i>Education</i>	1	2	6
	2	1	
	3	3	
<i>Ethnicity/cultural group</i>	1	2	6
	2	3	
	3	1	
<i>Family/friends</i>	1	3	6
	2	2	
	3	1	
<i>Gender/sexuality</i>	1	1	4
	2	2	
	3	1	
<i>Hobby/sports/leisure</i>	1	0	3
	2	2	
	3	1	
<i>Personality/personal characteristics</i>	1	6	11
	2	4	
	3	1	
<i>Political/ethical</i>	1	0	5
	2	0	
	3	5	
<i>Religion (personal faith or church membership)</i>	1	2	5
	2	2	
	3	1	
<i>Vocation</i>	1	1	2
	2	0	
	3	1	

Personal freedom trumps other ethical considerations

Han's statement "My whole moral ethics thing is more based upon personal freedom rather than anything else" might hint at the reason that some of the 11 students who registered Achieved in their religious identity in Part 3 of the Questionnaire appeared to reject a specifically Christian one. Comparison with Part 2 shows that six of these students did not refer to Religion in their top 3 rankings. How crucial a positive understanding of religion was to their identity was then in question. These students appear to have considered alternatives and rejected a transcendent worldview. Only two students gained a Foreclosed or Diffuse Status, indicating that the vast majority had explored or were currently exploring alternatives.

An interesting survey taken in a Christian Education class confirmed Han's emphasis on "personal freedom". Students were asked to identify how they made ethical choices (see Figure 8.2). Most popular was "The outcome and consequence for others and myself" followed by "Appearance to others". The foremost choice of students could perhaps be understood in terms of personal freedom. "Being caught" and "experiencing pleasure" were middle range answers. "Peer or parent-pleasing" and "fun" ranked lowest of all. Students were not given the option of some external authority such as community values, partly because the goal of the lesson was to promote what the teacher referred to as the Christian love ethic. External rules and laws were also discounted by the teacher as "living a bunch of laws" and "not appropriate" because of limiting and unrealistic expectations. But as Han has described in her interview, she has not only prioritised personal freedom but applied this principle in the context of a feminist and LGBTQI perspective which she knows the school does not hold. Her love ethic thus appeared to be a secularised version of the school's and

she perhaps represents a significant proportion of the students whose Religious Identity was Achieved, as was hers.

Table 8.3: *Questionnaire Part 3: Global and Religious Identity Statuses*

Status	Global Identity	Religious Identity
Achieved	7	11
Moratorium	9	5
Foreclosed	1	1
Diffuse	1	1

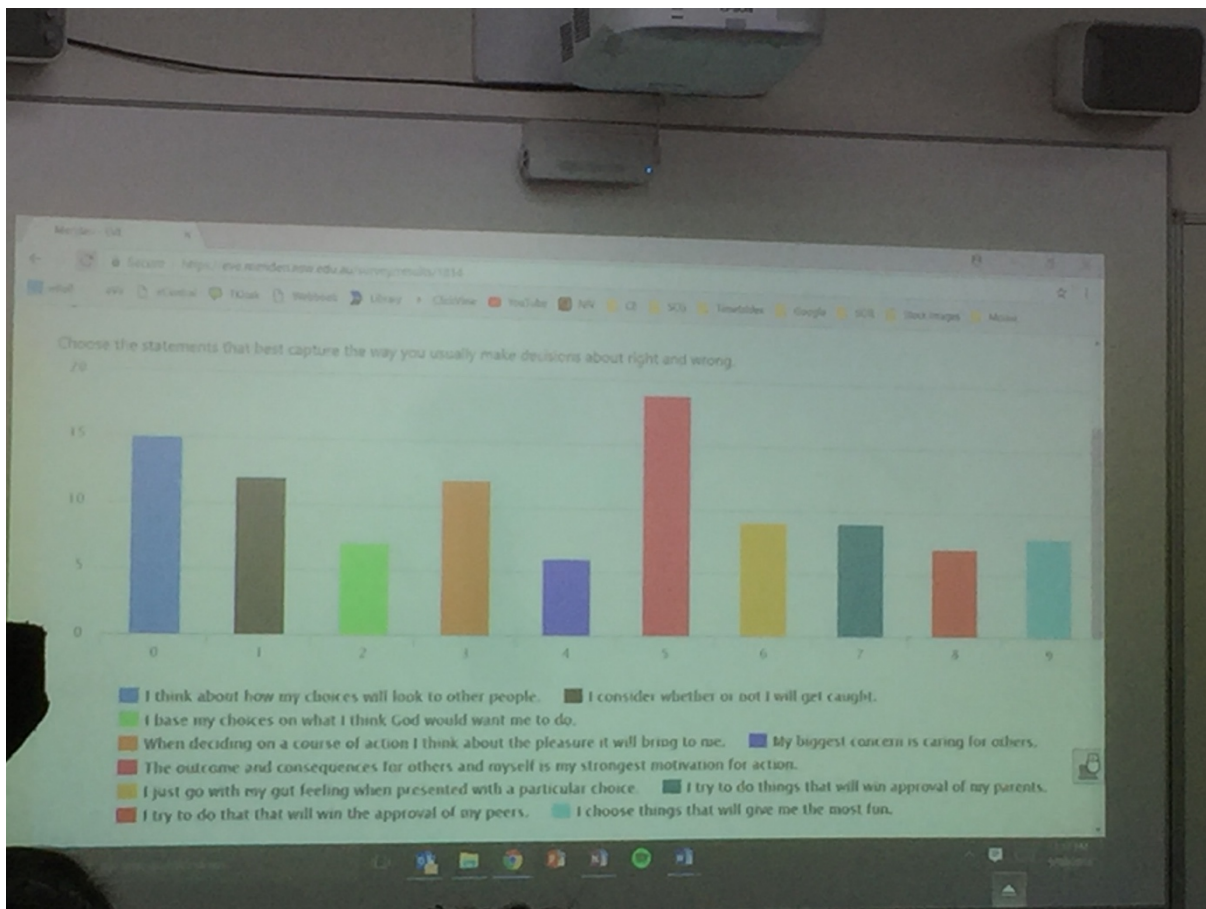


Figure 8.2: *In-class survey of basis of ethical choice*

Two Case Studies

Ai, the wistful artist

Ai is one of the nine students that identify as Asian in the class I surveyed in Year 10 at Catherine Hamlin College. She specifically mentions “Chinese” as the second word to describe herself and this appears to play a large part in her identity. This may account, for example, for her focus on appearance in her implicit identity. She lists “girl”, “Chinese”, “of short-average height” and “someone I can’t change in appearance” in her top 10 self-descriptors. The last phrase may indicate that she might want to change appearance, perhaps feeling she is seen as ‘the other’ in what is still an Anglo-dominated school clientele.

Yet she should not be thought of in limiting stereotypical terms with regard to her background. Her parents have sent her to Hamlin because of the breadth of the educational offering. They wanted her to improve her public speaking and did not want to condemn her to a pressure-cooker of academic achievement. Partly due to this, she gives her parents credit for a large part of who she is today. This may include her religious identity, for her parents attended church for a short time only. She currently self-identifies as an atheist and is quite articulate in describing her experience and reasoning, focussed on the school's role.

"It wasn't because of Hamlin that I dropped out of my faith", she claims. Education has always trumped religion in her mind and she rates education number 1 in Part 2 of the Questionnaire. She came to Hamlin without a well-developed personal faith and doesn't blame Hamlin despite thinking that some aspects of the Hamlin Protestant story of the flourishing life are problematic. She has vacillated in her high school career between belief and rejection of belief and now thinks "maybe". In line with this, religion is given a rank of 5 because she "considers it like averagely important". Ai is still seeking to resolve what appears to be a major issue in her life, especially in relation to school. "I want to (believe)", she says with some passion. There is a depth to her seeking. She reveals that although an atheist she is still open to belief in a God.

This is aligned with her Status in religious identity, which is strongly Moratorium, high on Exploration and low on Commitment. She strongly disagrees, for instance, with "When it comes to religion, nothing appeals to me and I don't really feel the need to look", which is the first statement in Part 3 of the Questionnaire. In Statement 7 she agrees that she is not sure what religion means to her, but she is longing to make up her mind at some time in the future. Agreement with other statements indicates she is confused and vacillating between options, very unsure of the outcome. Ai is narrating a very personal story of reaching out for

some way to believe in a transcendent being and she clearly enunciates the causes of her reluctance at this stage to commit to one option.

Her chief issue relates to the authority of the Bible, a cornerstone of Sydney Anglican Evangelical belief and one held tightly in Catherine Hamlin College, as I outlined earlier in this chapter. “There’s a lot of things in the Bible that I don’t agree with that are part of my beliefs right now.” She is a feminist, supportive of LGBTQI rights and critical of what she terms “the Bible’s view of homosexuals and how women are portrayed”. The implication is clear: “So that’s what’s stopping me about really becoming a Christian.” The school appears to have been reasonably effective in communicating its version of the flourishing life, for Ai can clearly see the suggested link between biblical authority and Christian belief. This results in a real blockage to commitment although she acknowledges that she has also been greatly influenced by social media and her peers.

In addition, Ai rejects what she sees as a rather restrictive pedagogical approach to issues of belief. “They say we’re having a discussion but it’s not really a discussion for us.” She also wants to see more depth when considering difficult ethical issues, claiming that the school avoids these. Furthermore, she is a little hurt that the school doesn’t appear to understand or respect an atheist viewpoint in the way it presents alternatives to faith. Despite this, she doesn’t feel any restriction of her agency. She doesn’t feel pressured to believe. “We have our own beliefs... we can stick to them.”

Although Ai wants to be prepared by the school to act positively for others, she does not acknowledge a link between either religion or atheism and her evolving moral framework. Initially she is unwilling to concede that the subject of History may be impacting on this. But then concedes it helped her develop a deeper understanding of human nature, a foundational aspect of any moral framework.

Human nature is like I'm seeing both good and evil parts in it [WWI, WWII] and like we've done this to ourselves... it's very emotional but I don't link it to anything that's in the present. (Ai)

Nevertheless, she sees things very much in the present, indicating a lack of perceived relevance of the subject to her life. Her moral framework revolves around a different understanding of persons: "If you love someone, then just love someone". Both blind faith and blind atheism are anathema to Ai, but not apparently blind love.

Fiona, the Globetrotting Actress

If everything works out the way I hope, then I hope to be either living in Byron Bay or in London and working for National Geographic where I am getting paid to travel around the world, writing about the stories of families and people worldwide. I hope to have starred in a few theatre shows either in Australia or London and hopefully will be living in a cute home by the beach with my husband and two kids where we will attend a church in this area. (Fiona)

How is it that a student with a professed Christian faith fails to see its direct relevance to her life's purpose? This is the dilemma initially presented by Fiona in her vision for the future. There is no sense of service for others such as expressed by many of her classmates, most of whom profess no faith. The picture of celebrity, travel and family ensconced beachside seems somehow disrupted by the tacking on of church attendance. Fiona's story of a flourishing life appears to be one of hedonism not eudaimonia.

However, her story is rather more nuanced and complicated than it first appears. She initially describes herself in Part 1 of the Questionnaire as "Busy, hard-working, short with blonde hair". Being Anglo-Australian accounts for her

“blonde hair”. Being so diligent is explained as: “I need to ’cause I’m Christian”.

She feels the pressure from school to be very active as an expression of her faith and relates how difficult it was for her when she first came to the school.

Everyone seemed to her to be both “busy” and “good”. She is the exemplar of the Chaplain’s view that the students’ general identity revolves around doing many things seriously.

Being good motivates her to be identified by others as “a nice person”. But she also credits her family for this. “We in our family... have to be nice and, you know, be a good person”. The influence of family is evident in her religious identity Status. They are church-goers and while Fiona has a weak Achieved global identity Status, her religious identity is predominantly Foreclosed, tending to Achieved. This indicates that she has not explored particularly widely in coming to her faith commitment. She has perhaps taken her family’s faith for granted or not been willing to explore outside the boundaries set by her family. Perhaps also she has felt the pressure of connection to family being dependant on faith.

Despite her positive account of her activism, Fiona is hesitant about its place in her religious identity.

I’m not sure of who I am and my identity... and that’s why I think I’ve been looking at ‘am I based on what I do or what I believe?’

This is a genuine dilemma for her, at least partly due to the school’s expectations in each area. It may be that the school’s emphasis on academic achievement and social activism or service is impacting on students’ understanding of the core theological belief of its framework, that students are “imago Dei”, created in the

image of God. Affirmation of Fiona's value in terms of a universal core identity seems to be eroded by the expectation of achievement across a broad number of areas. She feels compelled to be busy.

However, she claims that her faith has shaped her view of people and her moral framework and explains it in terms of belief in equal opportunity for all and treating others with care. She mentions how her thinking was recently advanced by the subject of English on the issue of maintaining respect for someone who was judged as doing something "morally wrong". The conclusion she took away was that forgiveness depends on connection, and that indifferent justice, seeing it "just as it is" prevails otherwise. She could be echoing that different, female voice of Care Ethics (Gilligan, 1982). For Fiona, connection is a strong aspect of her story of the flourishing life. "Looking after others", "welcoming environment", "community", "you feel at home here" are words that pepper her description of Catherine Hamlin College. Again, she nuances her purpose by balancing an achieving career with seeking to have a positive impact on others.

Stories told in History have impacted on her thinking around this. Although she prefers Drama, she acknowledges the emotional impact of stories in History and clearly sees its potential to develop student worldview.

That really shapes who you are, how you see the world and I think you can see the world in what you interpret in it as something that's really big about who you are as well. (Fiona)

Fiona appears to be situating her story within the bigger story of History. This is reflected in class where she is very active, involving herself in many discussions, eager to answer

questions. The human story appears to attract her, perhaps for its dramatic qualities, given her love of Drama.

She is also affirmed by the Christian Studies teacher for being someone who actively reflects about the meaning of life. This is obvious in the larger picture that she paints of her school experience. It is a rather poignant account of a Hamlin student. In crediting her church, family and peers as the biggest influencers in her life, she says,

If it wasn't for the people that were there who were lifting you up and helping you to continue and find that identity, then I would kinda be lost. (Fiona)

Then later, in reference to the school's role,

Especially in Hamlin... we're really, like, we can be really strong we can be awesome characters that can do lots of amazing things and I think that kind of helped me be, like, I can do, I can achieve what I want to achieve... and that has helped me move past the fact that I might be... short. (Fiona)

Fiona's height appears to be a major issue for her, one that has been eased by the single-sex nature of the school. "Go women in power" is her mantra. Yet it is an understanding of female power that finds its meaning in unity of purpose. The stories that really tell Fiona what life is about are those that are about goal-oriented connection. "Hamlin definitely influences... they want people in power to come together and work together... to achieve something."

Conclusion

Catherine Hamlin College, like many girls' schools, began with few students. Even at its inception, it flagged a future of academic achievement for women. This is now proudly part of its heritage, along with its faith basis. Yet, for the current students, the past is another country. They are little aware of that female teacher who stands in the historic photo on

their website. She wears an academic gown and hood, rare for her era, the woman who paved the way for their achievement. That students now enjoy this joint heritage of faith and academic achievement is due to the vision of the current Headmistress, incorporated into an all-encompassing framework. That students can respond to both aspects of the school as relatively free agents is their privilege in a proudly Protestant Girls' School.

Chapter 9. Family, Freedom and Fidelity in two Protestant, Privileged and Powerful Schools

Introduction

In the previous two chapters I recounted a story of the flourishing life in two schools from three perspectives: that of the school, the curriculum in three forms and the students. In Chapter 4 I summarised religious identity and curriculum as chiefly interacting in the areas of school context, subject content, pedagogy, and teacher modelling. Although there can be no distinct boundaries, in this chapter I compare William Cowper College and Catherine Hamlin College in terms of school context and discuss some key insights from the perspective of students and the culture developed by the school ethos.

School Context: Protestant, Privileged and Powerful

The first research sub-question aimed to describe each school's version of Anglicanism by asking, 'How does the school's story of the flourishing life reflect that of its founding tradition?' This was important because a denominational school's identity has been found to be determined by "their interpretation of the religious truth claim, their conception of the nature of education, and their view of cultural differences as content of education" (Wardekker & Miedema, 2001, p. 36). Further, in the English context, student religiosity was found to be influenced by the school's religious climate, its ethos/values, and its loyalty to the founding denomination (Hemming and Madge, 2011). This study found that the two schools told a story of the flourishing life as Protestant, Privileged and Powerful in their expression of the "religious truth claim" of Anglicanism.

Protestant.

For both Catherine Hamlin College and William Cowper College, the dominant theological narrative was a Protestant one, which broadly aligns them with Sydney Anglicanism. They had been transformed during the headship of their principals from identifying as church schools to promoting themselves as Christian, although to different degrees and in different ways. Despite these differences, both schools actively promoted the Evangelical Protestant version of their religious tradition in their formal religious education initiatives. A school is not a church and therefore it should not be expected to reflect every aspect of Diocesan identity. Nor is there a lengthy checklist of orthodoxy in connecting a religious tradition to the school context; although there must be some parameters around recounting the religious truth claims accurately. The following table lists the major ideas referred to in Chapter 5 about the Sydney Anglican religious tradition although I note that characteristics of Sydney Anglicanism are usually taken together as descriptors of its unique identity (Cameron, 2016) so each school's version cannot just be reduced to its components. Capturing their holistic version of the religious tradition remained a challenge.

Table 9.1: *Major understandings of Sydney Anglicanism*

RELIGION	EVANGELICALISM	SYDNEY ANGLICANISM
Defined as belief in a transcendent realm involving: i. devotion and commitment to a source of order and meaning in the universe, ii. consecrated rituals and symbols embodying worldview and ethos, iii. (often) sacred writings containing statements of dogma and principles of conduct and iv. a (more or less) coherent, imaginative narrative of the good life, expressing its unique worldview and ethos.	Characterised by: Biblicism: a reliance on the bible as the ultimate authority in faith and practice Conversionism: the necessity for spiritual rebirth through personal faith Activism: commitment to personal involvement in society and the church Crucicentrism: the centrality of the ‘redeeming work’ of Jesus Christ in His life, death and resurrection.	Described as: Gospel-centred and conversionist Biblicist, emphasising theology Reformed Protestant, holding to the Substitutionary Atonement of Jesus Christ Low church in ceremony Highly educated Loosely structured, suspicious of authority Socially conservative yet concerned for social justice. Militant

In the Anglican tradition of Sydney Diocese, a flourishing life is lived not for its own sake, but in loving relationship with and service of God and others with Jesus Christ at the centre of this telos. It is what Dunlop & Walker (2013) refer to as a formal Big Story, well-developed and informational, a comprehensive interpretive framework that invites students to align their Big Story with it and thereby develop personal meaning. The Big Story of each school was, in the first instance, a story of rejection of liberal and fundamentalist understandings of the “religious truth claim” and secondly a story expressed in ‘models of Christian education’.

Although both schools had been transformed “church” to “Christian” schools, they appeared to be at different stages on the journey. Cowper appeared to be still deep in the transformation process, as noted by the Chaplain, Peter.

The school is in a purple patch, going from being a church school to being more of a Christian school...where the gospel of grace and wanting to serve both God and humanity, trying to help students come to an authentic faith...I think it's become much more central to the school's purpose and it's driven by your Head and your Council. (Peter)

It was still in the process of becoming "Christian" rather than "church", the latter label perhaps implying nominal adherence to the truth claims of the school's religious tradition and an overemphasis on ritual. Hamlin appeared to have journeyed further along the road of transformation in that the school's version of the Anglican Big Story had become the dominant narrative of the school. Year 10 student, Jenny, noted, "it's an Anglican school and it's not really expected for you to not believe in Christianity".

This form of religious identity is theological in nature rather than institutional, a theology that rejects the priority of group membership in a centralised hierarchical denomination and privileges a rather individualistic faith. It is a typically Protestant emphasis that was evident in statements on school websites, lessons observed in Christian Studies and interview responses of staff. But there is no automatic progression from religious dogma to educational practice and this was evident in the differences between the schools as they responded to their history, clientele and social context. I discuss these differences in terms of four dominant responses to each school's particular context:

- Balancing a 'duality'
- Aspiring to academic rigour
- Promoting a conversionist gospel
- Distancing from the source.

Balancing a ‘duality’. Both schools had previously expressed their institutional identity by employing ordained clergy to conduct formal Anglican liturgy and otherwise bestow blessing on school activities. There is a potential dualism, a separation of sacred and secular, in the religious climate and educational practice of such ‘church’ schools. A transition towards a more integrated approach was exemplified by the Heads’ promotion of their role in terms of spiritual as well as educational leadership. Neither would countenance the ceding of their theological authority to the Chaplain or indeed to Sydney Diocese, although Hamlin’s Headmistress, Gloria, thought her school was well aligned with Diocesan theology.

The study found that these spiritual and educational roles resulted in twin priorities for the Heads. One priority was driven by their understanding of the theological essentials of Anglicanism and the other their educational priorities in response to their school context. While both schools were Protestant to a certain extent, the Heads’ disparate visions for their educational offering appeared to affect the distance travelled along the road from nominal church school. As Cowper’s Christian Studies teacher, Christine, explained,

The Headmaster sets the tone of faith in the school and he is Anglican and also an independent thinker, so there is a kind of duality there. (Christine)

This “duality” is not equivalent to “dualism” whereby the sacred is expunged from the classroom; but “duality” here does imply the potential for separation, or even non-alignment, dependent on the Head’s thinking. I therefore understand each school’s transformation as a journey towards a fuller expression of a Protestant understanding of telos, both empowered and constrained by the Heads’ theology and educational priorities. It should be noted that this is not a recent challenge. Moody (2010) identified lack of a clear vision of the nature of the Anglican school as a problem a decade before. The difficulty of

implementing the duality of theology and educational practice is compounded by this lack of clear vision. Nevertheless, the duality played a critical role in the identity of each school.

Aspiring to academic rigour. Both schools saw academic rigour as an Anglican identity marker. This aligns with Anglicanism's historic emphasis on education and is perhaps a remnant of the Diocese's post-WWII swing to a rational apologetic. But this was not understood as including any reference to the rich intellectual Anglican heritage in these Anglican schools. Instead, the schools' understanding of academic rigour appeared to chiefly involve hard work by both students and staff to maximise achievement in the final high school credential. This self-imposed limit to academic rigour did not preclude Hamlin from urging its girls to achieve at a high level across multiple areas. But there was little evidence that either school addressed issues in Anglicanism that may have enhanced academic rigour in this area. Exploring the belief-based assumptions of the syllabi from multiple belief perspectives, for example, is a high-level intellectual pursuit in which students could participate. I discuss further recommendations in Chapter 10, Conclusion.

Promoting a conversionist gospel. Each school constructed its faith tradition as more than ritual allegiance. In both schools there was an emphasis on the Sydney Anglican version of the Christian gospel, although to different degrees. There was an attempt to align students' understanding of the flourishing life with an expression of the Anglican faith that was vital and dynamic, focussed on changing lives.

In Cowper there was a clear attempt to establish a climate of acceptance, a safe space for the expression of Christian belief with Christian values undergirding the culture. For example, "Christian" was a term used frequently in documentation and general discourse. The Head frequently referred to his own faith in assemblies, claimed to embody Christian manhood and was known to prioritise employment of Christian staff, all things being equal.

Staff and students acknowledged the extent of the Christianising of the school culture. Christianity had become, according to self-identified non-Christian teacher, Gavin, the “official ethos”. Few identified the Christian aspect as distinctively “Anglican” although Christine claimed, “Anglican values inform the values of the school”. However, while the Chaplain, Christian Studies teacher and Head all expressed the evangelical imperative of gospel and conversion as a priority, they also related that very few boys actually came to faith at the school. Peter stated, “There aren’t lots that are converted in the context of our school”. This is reflected in the Year 10 responses to the Questionnaire where the Hamlin girls consistently measured a higher level of interest and commitment in the domain. This does raise the question of why Cowper was so different to the experience of Hamlin.

The answer may rest in Hamlin’s construction of the school’s religious climate less in terms of character education and more in direct Protestant “gospel” terms, implying the priority of internal reorientation of the whole person. As expressed by the Hamlin Chaplain, Jess, “Kids can thrive, and the gospel can be spoken of clearly without any hindrance”. The History teacher, Mary, even saw the Teaching and Learning Framework as a form of expression of the gospel stating, “It fulfils the gospels that are integral to Anglican identity”. More than a simple presentation of alternative perspectives, there was a definite goal of “metaphysical change” (Bruner, 2004, p. 709) built into the schema of the school’s metanarrative that had potential to impact on student religious identity. This conversionist emphasis appeared to be quite dominant, earning frequent mentions in each interview and celebrated as a success story by staff. Gloria’s enthusiasm was typical.

Girls are coming to Christ. Parents are coming to Christ. Staff are coming to Christ. Well it’s an absolute blessing. I think we’re seeing God’s good grace in

action really and as a result of fervent praying by the school community.

(Gloria)

She credited this sort of success to “the relationships between the girls and the chaplaincy team”; however the gospel-based story also appeared to dominate the school’s story, enlarging the context for such relationships. Hamlin also tended to practise a more emphatically ‘low church’ version of Anglicanism that may relate more to 21st century millennials who might reject more formal and ritualistic versions.

Distancing from the source. The schools’ unofficial stories revealed more nuance in the area of loyalty to the founding denomination, a factor which has been found to influence student religiosity (Hemming & Madge, 2011). Ironically, the emphasis on a vital conversionist form of Christianity seemed to go hand-in-hand with an almost-deliberate sense of distancing from the Evangelical Protestant version of Anglicanism that spawned it. At Hamlin, staff appeared to set up a binary of Anglican practice and biblical knowledge; while accepting an Anglican theology of biblicism and conversion. It was as if any identification of Anglican distinctives could compromise the conversionist story. The gospel instead was said to be “permeating” the school and therefore precluding any necessity to identify Anglican distinctives.

Given the Headmistress’s opinion that Hamlin was well aligned with Sydney Anglicanism, there may have been a slight disjunction between what other staff recognised as Anglican and Gloria’s understanding. This suggests a possible gap between official and actual school ethos, similar to that detected in research in Northern Ireland faith-based schools (Donnelly, 2000). Donnelly observed in her case study of two religious schools that there was a lack of alignment between the formal ethos as expressed in aims, objectives etc and informal ethos, observed experientially in mood and atmosphere. This gap was due to

staff understanding of the founding religious identity directing their contribution to the school ethos. At Hamlin it may be that staff understanding of Sydney Anglicanism was similarly lacking. Indeed, Gloria stated that in her opinion staff did not care. In any case, the emphasis on low church practices, although in accord with Sydney Anglicanism, might have had an unsought impact on the informal school ethos.

Cowper's expression of this aspect of Sydney Anglicanism was less emphatically low church, reflecting the loose coupling of the Diocese and its schools. This allowed the confident expression of what the Head, Paul, described as the school's particular "strand" of Anglicanism. Again, the overwhelming emphasis was on a general, Bible-based understanding of the faith basis of the school, rather than crediting Anglican scholars or identifying a particular Anglican ethos or set of practices. However, the Diocese's Protestant beliefs were not interpreted as opposing all formal liturgy, traditional music or the church calendar. School corporate worship centred on a traditional chapel that retained a more formal approach than Hamlin. This may be what triggered the response of the Chaplain, Peter, who suggested a certain distancing from the Diocese. His response indicated a sensitivity at least on his part about the area.

Now I need to be careful here. Um. I think there would be aspects of our school that would be a little um, ah, I guess not concerned but with that there are elements of the Sydney... Yeah, yeah, I wouldn't have said that I guess I've articulated before that we would see ourselves more as a a a Christian school first and foremost more than we are a Sydney Anglican School. (Peter)

Although neither Cowper nor Hamlin prioritised Christian over Anglican as official policy, their journey from nominal adherence to Anglicanism to promoting a theological metanarrative appeared to involve a partial distancing from its source.

Promoting Anglicanism as a denomination was not found to be a priority of either of these schools, although they generally reflected the major characteristics of their Diocese. Cowper's Head did intimate that he could be directing the school towards a slightly different strand to that of Sydney Diocese. Nevertheless, biblicism, gospelling and conversionism were all significant aspects of their story of the flourishing life, and this reflects the major priorities of Sydney Diocese.

Possible impact on student religious identity. The schools are not unique in distancing themselves somewhat from their religious tradition. It may be that widespread post-denominationalism has also had a significant impact. No students for example self-identified as Anglican in the Questionnaire even if they identified as Christian. However, religious identity is understood partly in terms of affiliation and belonging as well as behaviours, practices, religious/spiritual experiences and a framework of beliefs and values (Bell, 2009; Hemming and Madge, 2011; Hitlin, 2003). Perhaps, then, there is a significant gap in each school's support for student religious identity in their failure to reference the Anglican church in a way that promoted affiliation and belonging. Instead, affiliation and belonging appeared to be the preserve of the individual school, or school identity. In both schools, student religious identity and curriculum were contextualised not in Sydney Anglicanism *per se* but in each school's interpretation of it, resulting in sometimes quite different versions. In which case, the question arises as to the endurance of students' religious identity after they leave school. Are they more likely to link up with a generic Evangelical community than Anglican or are they perhaps inclined to shrug off their religious identity when they shrug off their blazer for the last time, treating it as an "optional garment" (Kunzman, 2015), an outgrown aspect of the Hamlin or Cowper tribe?

Privileged

There is an inherent elitism in the simple ability to pay annual school fees that equate to a significant portion of the average Australian wage. This may translate to a certain level of conservatism about social structures and issues and this indeed appeared to be the case, especially in Cowper. Nevertheless, there was an awareness amongst the staff interviewed of the seductive nature of privilege, with its potential to compromise a vision of the common good and democratic education in a pluralist society. Each school addressed this privilege by strategies in two areas:

- Responding to social and cultural change.
- Challenging student values

Responding to social and cultural change. Cowper teachers were very aware of the privileged position of their students. They spoke of student insularity due to their social status and offered examples of lack of understanding of the plight of marginalised groups of people, including the poor. It was evident in classes that students held conservative political views and were not hesitant in voicing them. The College generally was responsive to this and sought to address it in multiple ways. The Strategic Plan for example suggested a counter-cultural vision of the flourishing life that downplayed the material and the self-centred. Its emphasis was on both understanding and living out a version of the Christian faith in society that involved utilising privilege for the common good. Student take-up of this vision may have been hampered by siting within that influential 30 kilometre zone, plentiful resourcing and its wealthy clientele, all suggesting direct access to power, place and position. Nevertheless, Cowper remained aware of the challenges privilege presented to its Christian moral purpose.

The majority of Hamlin students, although labelled grateful and hard-working, also belonged in a financially elite social group. What Hamlin provided was a safe place where a diversity of students found a place in a supportive community, sheltered from a sometimes-threatening outside community. It was evident in the data that students felt safe enough to express their cultural and ethnic background with 12 out of 18 students listing *Ethnicity* in the top three salient aspects of their identity. Further, students of Asian, Greek and Anglo background were all confident and articulate in interviews, even when critiquing Hamlin's approach. For example, in their critique of the school's biblicism, the interviewed students expressed views on ethical and environmental issues that were far from the conservativeness of Cowper.

In their meta-analysis of the role of schools in general identity development, Verhoeven, Poorthuis, & Volman (2019) found that students must feel safe enough to take risks while feeling supported by the school and their peers in order to further develop their global identity. In this respect, the general school climate of both Hamlin and Cowper, so necessary for successful identity development, appeared to offer high levels of school safety and support, generating a powerful sense of community. This safe school climate is an important form of support for the development of religious identity, because in faith-based schools it has been found to correlate with some form of religious commitment (Wighting & Liu, 2009). Each school was faced then with the challenge of supporting a safe school climate while challenging the very privilege that had contributed to that sense of security. They did it by firstly recognising the existence of privilege and then referencing their Christian foundations for appropriate strategies addressed to student values.

Challenging student values. Both schools expressed their commitment to some form of social justice in their endeavour to counter privilege. Character education programs, teacher

pedagogical choices, Heads' addresses and multiple service opportunities were intentionally planned to challenge student acquiescence in their comfortable lifestyle. These strategies were undertaken within the parameters of an ethos that sought to actively counter secularist assumptions about humanity and ethics. Freedom-from external restraint and the priority of individual freedom were held to be the antithesis of the order and structure derived from rightful authority, which is regarded as a major conservative value (Haidt, 2008) and expressed by both Heads as an important component of Anglicanism. Cowper, in line with its conceptualising education in Classical/Christian terms, emphasised, "a focus on other people...and manly character" (Headmaster, Paul) while Hamlin emphasised the Protestant "think beyond yourself, into the world" (Chaplain, Jess). Both motivations were put forward to disturb elitist tendencies and embody their Anglican tradition. In Gloria's words, "It's all about the girls leaving...well prepared to serve". Privilege was linked with responsibility; hard work was linked with service. The schools' emphasis on social justice appeared to be aligned with that of Sydney Diocese while promoting conservative Protestant ethics. This dual emphasis of social justice and biblical ethics proved to be an area of conflict for students whose perspective on sexual ethics in particular differed from that of the school. This was due to the tendency to construct sexual ethics in terms of human rights and I explore this further below.

Powerful

To describe the schools of this study as 'powerful' is to acknowledge the privileged role assumed by the inner-circle schools in the social landscape of Sydney, Australia. Power of various sorts naturally attaches to such privilege. In attempting to assert their somewhat counter-cultural moral purpose, it was significant that both schools adopted a complex

approach to their understanding and practice in the area of power. This approach is discussed in terms of three aspects:

- A managerial and theological hierarchy.
- Strategising power.
- Modelling authority.

A managerial and theological hierarchy. Given each school's perception that authority and structure were promoted by Anglicanism, it is puzzling as to why both schools tended to distance themselves from their founding tradition, although to different degrees. Their distancing suggested that the central authority of the school rested in the managerial as well as theological hierarchy, with the Head at the apex. The hierarchy may be the bureaucratic reflection of the duality of the Head's role discussed above. This is supported by evidence that the story of each school was differentiated by the Head's vision and philosophy of education in response to their respective school's unique context. They led their schools in prioritising educational strategies, modelling the Christian if not Anglican faith and painting the picture of a telos for the school community. All students interviewed recognised the theological and managerial authority of their respective Head's leadership and were responsive in some way to their vision, although not always positively.

Strategising power. The single-sex girls' school has traditionally offered opportunities for women to excel in exercising leadership in the Diocese. Sydney Anglicanism promotes male leadership while restricting the space for female leadership. Until recently only one woman had ever been appointed as the principal of an Anglican co-educational school. The authority of Hamlin's Headmistress was just as real as that of Cowper's Head. However, it appeared to be exercised through three main strategies rather than remaining solely invested in one person.

The most dominant strategy lay in written texts in the form of the Teaching and Learning Framework and the Strategic Plan with their highly structured approach and aspirational vision of female empowerment. The second means was modelling by Gloria of a woman in authority, professionally competent, having a personal faith, assertive yet relational. The third strategy was Gloria's vision pronouncements in Assembly that the Chaplain credits with being "the big cultural influence" along with an acknowledgement of the role of others in the school community. Cowper's Head, Paul, referred to a focus of power emanating from himself in a top-down model in relation to the Christian focus of the school although he regretted its necessity. Perhaps Hamlin's model was just as hierarchical yet exercised with rather more shared theological and managerial authority. Gloria certainly referred to her Christian workers many times in her interview.

Paul's version of leadership I have described in Chapter 7 as an Anglican clerical model that focussed more on the role of the pastor/teacher/administrator. This may account for the failure of many students to explore alternative perspectives and religious identities offered in the official ethos. Paul, with his dominant personality, impressive physical presence and corporate dress seemed to project social power. The official ethos espoused the upside-down values of humility and service, still possible for the socially powerful, but perhaps less probable. Not being ordained, or a member of a religious order, as might occur in the Catholic Church, also reinforced the business-aligned model of Headmaster. This may have been a response to the clientele, forming a bridge with socially-powerful parents, but in relation to modelling for the students, it may have reinforced their sense of being a powerful elite and may account for the dominant place accorded "personality" in Part 1 of the questionnaire on implicit identity.

Modelling authority. The Heads of both schools appeared to be actively modelling a use of power that they grounded in a theological understanding of Anglicanism as well as their personal educational philosophy. This was most obvious in Paul's claim to be a model, albeit imperfect, of the Christian man. Anglicanism in Sydney Diocese appears to circumscribe central authority, with the local church gathering prioritised over a centralised hierarchy or magisterium. Lay power, however, is tempered by an authoritative role accorded the Anglican clergyman, focussed on the Bible preached as the Word of God. At Hamlin and Cowper the combination of theological and managerial authority enabled this to function in the school context. The study thus confirmed Hemming and Madge's (2011) understanding that in a faith community (which each school certainly was), the leader has an important role in the development of religious identity through their discourse around the school's educational philosophy.

Protestantism, privilege and power.

My initial research question in relation to each school was, "How does the school's story of the flourishing life reflect its founding religious tradition?" Both William Cowper College and Catherine Hamlin College incorporated distinctive elements of the Sydney Anglican version of the flourishing life. This appeared to be based on each school's distinctive interpretation of the religious truth claims of Sydney Anglicanism. Aligning their story with Sydney Anglicanism resulted in Hamlin narrating a story dominated in its theological aspect by a conversionist and service orientation. Cowper claimed broader denominational roots for its story. Paul affirmed that they chose from several "strands" of Anglicanism. Cowper therefore expressed a story of Anglicanism dominated by the classical aspects of its religious roots, particularly in its emphasis on character education. This may be partly due to Cowper's founding tradition as it was established by an archbishop who was both a broad

churchman and an elitist, promoting a grammar school model specifically for boys who were not of working-class background (Cameron, 2016). In both cases, primary affiliation and belonging, important characteristics of religious identity (Hemming & Madge, 2011), appeared to be to the school not the founding religious tradition. Students were primarily identified as Cowper Boy or Hamlin Girl. This is a story that allocates an optional yet significant role for faith, but not necessarily for the Sydney Anglican religious tradition.

In promoting this vision, the role of the Heads was found to be absolutely crucial. In both schools they derived significant extra authority from structuring their role as partly theological as well as educational. The Heads embodied a “duality” that gave them an extraordinary influence on the culture of their schools. There were certain factors that may have limited the impact of their faith-based vision, such as the low number of staff (less than 30% in Cowper) who had a faith aligned with Anglicanism. On the other hand, Hamlin claimed to have a “critical mass” (Gloria) of both staff and students to influence the culture and religious climate towards acceptance of the Head’s theological approach. The big story of each school was, to a certain extent, a story of rejection of alternative understandings of the “religious truth claim” that did not cater to their unique context. Cowper rejected prioritising conversionism over character education and Hamlin rejected traditional ritual practices. These rejections impacted strongly on how students identified in each school.

Family, Freedom, Fidelity

In a school context that was in each case Protestant, privileged and powerful, students told a story that at times appeared to be a reaction against the school’s story of the flourishing life. The schools’ stories never comprised a simple set of theological statements. The story may have often been driven by a theological anthropology, but it was an enacted story with many

interwoven aspects. School environment, traditions, newsletters, staff dress, student uniforms, Heads' discourse, Chapel services, co-curricular activities and all the forms of curriculum contributed to the told story of each school. At times students appeared to react against this story and at other times to attempt to fit their own evolving story within that of the school's. Three key areas were revealed in the responses of students: family, freedom and fidelity.

Family

Connection to family was very pronounced in the responses of students from both schools. Yet the longing for connection was expressed as broader than the nuclear family. Students described themselves as: relational, embodied, having a heritage and both constrained and enabled by family. Their expression in this area was almost visceral. And it was the bonds of connection to particular groups (including family) that dominated their responses. Students prioritised belonging over believing..

I am relational. Identity is developed in relationship (Haidt, 2007). This was evident in students' high ranking of 'Family/friends' in the Questionnaire in relation to identity salience and domain centrality. Although there was no distinction between family and friends in the area of domain centrality, family appeared to be a key relationship for many students in the study as indicated by self-identifiers in Part 1, many of which referenced family-derived characteristics. Students in interviews and surveys about their envisaged future also focussed on family closeness and family ethical views. Strongly religious parents usually have strongly religious children (Hemming & Madge, 2011) and this was confirmed by the *Youth on Religion (YOR)* study out of England (Madge, Hemming & Stenson, 2019) that found family heavily influenced religious identity. Both Cowper and Hamlin students were thus bringing their family to curriculum interactions and this was at times obvious in

classroom observations. However, how students expressed and contextualised this relationship appeared to take a slightly different form in each school.

I am embodied. Perhaps as a response to their parents' aspirations and sacrifice, Hamlin students emphasised diligence and academic achievement. Academic achievement was also a feature at Cowper, but this may have been construed as the natural outcome of being a member of a socially powerful family. Many of the responses of Cowper students in Part 1 of the Questionnaire included 'Hobby/sports/leisure', 'Physical appearance', 'Ethnicity' and 'Gender/sexuality'. As embodied domains they appear to provide the context for the equally dominant personality attributes. The co-curriculum and sports offering would seem to be an important area of curriculum interaction for Year 10 Cowper students. Some Hamlin students were also very aware of their embodiment, but this related mostly to 'Physical appearance' and 'Ethnicity', the latter I indicated in Chapter 8 was an important consideration in the History classroom.

I have a heritage. 'Ethnicity' was a powerful aspect of the Operating Identity Story (recorded in Part 1 of the Questionnaire) for students at Hamlin with 12 out of 18 students including some descriptor of their ethnic heritage, chiefly as "Asian". Dealing with potential conflict of religious beliefs may be particularly challenging for students of Asian background (Davis & Kiang, 2016; Skerrett, 2017) and they may bring to their studies a religious identity that is closely aligned with their family/cultural background (Lopez, Huynh & Fuligni, 2011). In a study of Chinese Americans it was found that religious identity remained stable; but participation in religious practice declined across Years 10-12 perhaps because of development of autonomy and subsequent distancing from family (Lopez et al., 2011). Ai exemplified the challenges. "I used to think there was a God. Then in Year 7 I was like well there's no God. And then now like in Year 9 and 10 I was like well

maybe there's a God." Her current situation was due partly to ethical difference with Hamlin's biblical sexual ethics which she understood to be in opposition to her feminist perspective. That the school's stance was supported by her parents had complicated her conflict with the Christian Studies curriculum and the hidden curriculum of much of the school. There were attempts in subjects such as History in Hamlin to acknowledge the role of family heritage, as previously discussed; however none were observed in Christian Studies in either school and 'Ethnicity' was implied, not directly addressed. In Cowper the lack of cultural and ethnic diversity may have influenced this; although this study was unable to explore the perspective of the few students from diverse backgrounds.

I am constrained and enabled by my family. Students from both schools referenced their family's beliefs. Charles and Fiona spoke appreciatively of their family's Christian faith. Jason referenced his family's Indigenous heritage. Ai disagreed with her parents on some ethical issues while Jenny rejected her Greek Orthodox heritage in favour of a scientific worldview. This sense of ambiguity about the family's role was also obvious in the larger groups. In Part 3 of the Questionnaire, which related to identity Status, Statements 4 and 12 referencing the influence of the family, drew responses that were skewed towards a distancing from family religion and lifestyle. This was despite implicit identity and identity salience indicated by Parts 1 and 2 revealing students' deep bonding to family.

Whether constraining or enabling, parents were students' most trusted and original source of personal worldview, consistent with Minnaar-Kuiper & Bertram-Troost (2020, p. 11). Parents functioned as a key reference point, possibly fulfilling roles such as "active and reflective agents" (de Bruin-Wassinkmaat et al., 2019, p. 70) or shapers through conversation of expectations, narrative skills and "a meaningful life story" (McAdams & McLean, 2013, p. 237). The nature of this relationship was not able to be explored further in

this study. However, in classroom observations it was evident that Year 10 students were aware of family worldview in their meaning-making at times clashing with their own need for autonomy. Jason spoke for the majority of both Cowper and Hamlin students when he said, “I love being in my family”.

I belong not believe. Hamlin and Cowper students longed to be connected beyond family. Self-descriptors such as “kind”, “empathetic”, and “compassionate” were common to both groups. Peers have been consistently found to impact on student religious identity (Madge, Hemming & Stenson, 2019; Mason, Singleton & Webber, 2007; Singleton, Rasmussen, Halafoff & Bouma, 2019; Smith & Denton, 2005). Hemming and Madge (2011) claim that feelings of group belonging and conformity to norms are characteristics of membership in this domain (2011, p. 42).

The trend toward “belonging not believing” (Day, 2009, p. 263) was evident in Cowper with its strong emphasis on being a Cowper Boy. In denying a dominant role for propositional belief in adolescent religious identity, Day argues, “Young people have shifted the meaning of belief to describe affective relationships in which they feel they belong” (2009, p. 263). Here she claims is where they are nourished in their sense of the transcendent, obviating the necessity for a religious meta-narrative. This may be because of a deficit of resources with which to form identity, causing an “other-directed” attempt to impress peers (Yoder, 2000, p. 99) or it may be a desire to connect without what are perceived to be ethics that are too socially conservative. Han articulated the dominant but not exclusive student position when she said, “I really value what my friends think more than I guess a religion.” Whatever has caused this turn to peers, it has significant implications for all modes of curriculum, for paradigmatic approaches to teaching and learning dominated practice in Christian Studies classes in both schools. If students are more

conscious of belonging than believing, then that presents serious challenges to what has been a very ‘cerebral’ version of Anglicanism in Sydney Diocese.

The number of students attending Christian groups each week was mentioned by the Head of Hamlin as evidence of God’s grace to the school; but it may also be viewed as an indicator of students’ looking for opportunities to belong with peers, in the (mostly homogeneous) Christian school community. Faircloth (2012) suggests belonging is important to student learning and achieved through connecting “school experiences and their developing sense of their own identities” (2012, p. 192) so there may be general learning benefits in belonging to one of Hamlin’s Christian groups. Cowper students were not as active in their Christian group membership. Perhaps the presence of openly atheist and agnostic staff allowed Cowper students to feel a sense of belonging in a community that was not homogeneous in faith.

Freedom

A key characteristic of the students at Hamlin and Cowper was their awareness of the importance of freedom to their general identity. Students often saw the values-based core of their religious identity in terms of ‘freedom from’ and ‘freedom to’. For Hamlin girls, this was especially so in relation to sexual ethics. For boys, there was a more general aspiration for autonomy and fun. Single sex schooling appeared to play a key role in this as it enabled the expression of their gendered differences in specific ways that ran counter to the perceived narrative of the broader culture and preserved a sort of celebration of maleness and femaleness.

I determine my own ethos. The Anglican version of the truly flourishing life is seen as a secondary result of glorifying and enjoying God as Charles had understood. Alternatively, “Do what I want to do” and “Enjoy it” were Jason’s aspirations. The right to one’s own

ethos was expressed strongly in both schools without an acknowledgement that their determinations might be linked with foundational beliefs. Han would not acknowledge any link. “To me religion is like you can believe in anyone you want to...religion doesn’t inherently make you a better person.” Headmaster, Paul’s opinion is relevant here: “They want the kingdom without the king”. The link between Anglican faith and each school’s *Bildung* emphasis was to a certain extent broken. Students acknowledged a link if they professed Christian faith as with Charles and Fiona; but from Jenny and Han’s perspective it was a simple case of their being socialised into their parents’ ethics. Yet, Hamlin students must have recognised the possibility of a link because it was on that basis that two of the students interviewed rejected Hamlin’s version of Anglicanism.

For these students, freedom was more than a freedom from outmoded ethical stances. It was freedom to support fun and connection. Ai and Han both claimed that the Biblical stance on LGBTQI issues and “feminism” as they understood it was blocking further exploration or commitment. They assumed a personal freedom directed to maintaining relationships illustrated by the “love is love” mantra. This issue had caused some distancing of Anglican schools from Sydney Diocese, as implied tentatively by the Cowper Chaplain. However, perhaps surprisingly the issue was not raised by Cowper students despite their parents’ strong representations to the school about the issue.

I experience freedom in my girls’ or boys’ school. Single-sex schooling is controversial in an era that questions binary genders as well as traditional sexual ethics. Each school planned for formation of gender identity based on an understanding of a theological anthropology. In Cowper it was expressed in their character education program and it may partly have been a defensive response to a discourse that was perceived to be in opposition to an Anglican theological anthropology, namely accusations of “toxic

masculinity” as expressed by the Cowper Head. Student mentions of several heroic and Christian virtues in Parts 1 and 2 of the Questionnaire and the strong, modelling personality of their Head would be expected to reinforce a type of independent masculinity. This is consistent with Fivush et al., (2011) who found that 16 year-old boys related life stories that reflected autonomy and achievement whereas the girls’ life stories involved the social and emotional. There was also a greater degree of “intergenerational connection” for the girls who also showed greater identity development. This suggested that boys may need to achieve a certain level of autonomy from their family in order to develop their identity further. Nevertheless, Cowper boys also demonstrated a strong relational aspect to their identity as I have described previously. It may be that they were given access to sufficiently diverse canonical scripts with which to narrate their story so that they could demonstrate their focus on connection and belonging. Certainly, given the importance of the narrative process to identity development, it would seem advisable for boys to maintain a high level of familiarity with literature, oral story-telling and their own creative writing and recounting processes.

Hamlin students often saw being a woman in co-operative terms, with multiple leadership opportunities to counter any underlying patriarchal social structure and assume significant power. This was aided by their being in a single-sex school where there were positive and “subtle situational cues about the link between gender and future success” (Elmore & Oyserman, 2012, p. 183) and these were probably picked up as students perceived all sorts of clues about how to be a woman in the process of enacting curriculum. It was also perhaps aided by maturing in identity somewhat earlier than the boys.

A deeper exploration of the impact of single-sex schooling per se on student identity is for another study. But student experience of freedom as freedom from the religious ethical

framework of the founding religious of the school has been explored in North America and the United Kingdom. I discuss these findings in the next section as they relate to the struggle for students to achieve fidelity in their religious identity.

Fidelity

Erikson's goal for adolescents of 'Fidelity', understood as commitment to beliefs, worldview and values, morals, sense of purpose, and ethical behaviour (King et al., 2014, p.187) lies at the heart of the Occupation/Religion/Ideology domain. Whether understanding religious identity as a discrete construct or as general identity manifested in the religious domain, commitment signals a sense of maturity, of identity conflicts resolved. As might be expected in Year 10, students in both schools were often ambivalent about their commitments in this domain. They were aware of as well as cautious about the role of the transcendent in their lives. On the other hand, girls in particular were keen to express that they wanted to explore more deeply in relation to spiritual things. The Fidelity aspect of their story can be understood in terms of two key characteristics: their awareness of the transcendent and their desire to explore at greater depth.

I am aware of the transcendent. Many Cowper students had achieved 'Fidelity' if that equates to Achieved Status in religious identity, for 13 of 27 boys were ranked Achieved. Cowper students' Operating Identity Story, as expressed in Part 1 of the Questionnaire, indicated that this was not Christian for the vast majority. They seemed to have considered the domain already explored, perhaps found the school's version of the flourishing life irrelevant or unattractive and committed to their own beliefs in the domain.

This is in contrast to the findings of Crocetti et al. (2013) who reported that in general, males began the exploration of identity alternatives in later adolescence. Girls tended to begin in mid-adolescence and scored Statuses associated with commitment at an earlier age than

boys. Males are more likely to be allocated Diffuse Status and females Moratorium and this result was duplicated in the religious domain (Solomontos-Kountouri & Hurry, 2008). Many Cowper boys, however, given their Achieved Status, appeared to have undertaken the job of exploring alternatives and rejected the school's Big Story.

Responses to the questions in Part 3 of the Questionnaire supported these fascinating differences around attention to the transcendent. For example, 14 girls out of 18 expressed the need to explore religion whereas only 11 of 27 boys felt such motivation. This indicates that many boys had not received sufficient challenges to their religious identity to trigger the exploration process. Further, 14 out of 18 girls agreed that religion was important to "who I am"; whereas only 8 boys out of the 27 agreed.

Yet, this does not necessarily mean that the majority of Cowper boys were unresponsive to that domain. Singleton et al. (2019) cautioned against classifying what Hemming & Madge (2017, p. 197) call the "religious nones" (52% of the Australia's teens) as having no faith or spirituality. They found that this age group was still alert to the role of the transcendent in their lives although not identifying with any particular religious tradition, with 67% of teens believing in either God or some Higher Being. These teens were also committed believers in aspects of alternative faith traditions such as karma (50%), reincarnation (29%) and ghosts (31%) (Singleton et al., 2019, p. 7). Jason's Aboriginal spirituality understood as "connection" or Ai and Han's conflicted thinking about atheism are good examples of students considering the transcendent and these became obvious when the content of Narrative religious identity was addressed, not just the processes. This was a "self-constituted" not externally imposed spirituality, consistent with earlier findings about how Australian youth address awareness of transcendence (Mason et al., 2007).

I may want to go deeper. Students appeared to feel safe in what was definitely a school context that considered them holistically, a necessity for the further development of identity. However, they were also conflicted at times about each school's promotion of its founding faith. For their part, many Hamlin students appeared to want to go deeper in the context of their Christian Studies classes. "I haven't analysed the Bible enough because the school doesn't really go deep into ethical matters and controversial topics" said Ai. "It's not really accommodating for people who are wanting to explore more about their faith." Many students appeared to agree with this lack of depth and relevance as no students in either school registered a strongly Foreclosed Status for religious identity, although one student at Hamlin was weakly Foreclosed. This indicates that the students were still willing to explore alternatives but were not yet able to achieve commitment, perhaps because of what they perceived as superficial treatment of the content of Christian Studies. A similar desire for more depth was obvious in History classes where it was often not possible to pursue student identity issues in any depth and maintain progress through the planned curriculum.

Most students seemed to fall within the two central categories of Singleton et al.'s (2019) typology of religious identity: "spiritual but not religious" and "seekers". Jason's attempt to articulate his ethical framework and feelings of connection through his Aboriginal identity was to him more spiritual than religious. Han and Ai were "seekers". All students appeared to be conscious of still writing their Big Story of life and open to a certain extent to options. However, the options were often tightly circumscribed, as I have described above. Biblical ethics ran counter to their current story of the flourishing life.

This presents Anglican schools with numerous dilemmas in relation to their Protestant and biblicist tradition. Although students at Hamlin stated they wanted to explore issues of belief and what the Bible stated, it is not at all certain that they were prepared to

countenance biblical beliefs around ethics. Studies in the U.K. have found a similar disjunction between faith-based schools and student values (Casson, 2011, 2013; Francis, Lankshear, Village & ap Sion, 2014). Francis et al. (2013) in comparing over 1,000 students in 4 Anglican schools with 20,000 students in 93 community (public) schools found no significant school effects in relation to six constructs. These were rejection of drug use, endorsement of illegal behaviours, racism, attitude re school, holding conservative Christian belief and sexual morality (abortion, contraception, divorce, homosexuality, and sex outside marriage). The place of Anglican schools in the U.K. may be quite different to those of this study; however the finding around school effect on conservative Christian belief and sexual morality appears to align with the student version of the flourishing life, told by students at Cowper and Hamlin. Casson's (2011) study of 3 Catholic schools in the U.K. suggests a possible process from the student perspective. She found that students "bricolage" their religious identity. That is they assume agency to actively construct it themselves, sifting and evaluating the resources of the school to do so (2011, p. 215). The resultant identity is not that promoted by the church but that judged by the self. Nevertheless, the process is dependent on interaction with the school's resources.

As illustrated above, in studying Research Question 3 on the religious identity Status of students, suggested areas became evident in relation to the "other factors" referred to in Question 5. Student religious identity was impacted by factors such as their peers; by a school culture of service and group membership and by gender-specific school culture. Yet these factors were not perceived to be as powerful as those that students brought with them

to school, including their own embodied place in a family with a heritage and already semi-developed religious identity.

Conclusion

“Does Jesus have an office?” is a key question for all Christian schools, originally coined by the Head of PLC, Croydon, Dr. Paul Burgis. It interrogates whether the religious tradition is marginalised in a functional isolation of Christian beliefs, values and worldview from the mainstream educational activities of the school. Whether by intention or neglect, the sacred is relegated to a specific role, that of the Chaplain, and a space, his office. This study understood that such a secularising approach could be potentially damaging to students by not acknowledging the role of their telos-directed and motivated religious identity. Student perspective is however ambiguous around religious identity. Students relate vastly differing stories of the flourishing life with rich accounts of the interaction of their religious identity with the school’s approach to promoting its understanding of Anglicanism. In the next chapter I take up this interaction as it occurs in all modes of curriculum and I conclude with insights and recommendations drawn from the study.

Chapter 10. Conclusion. Does Jesus have an Office?

Introduction

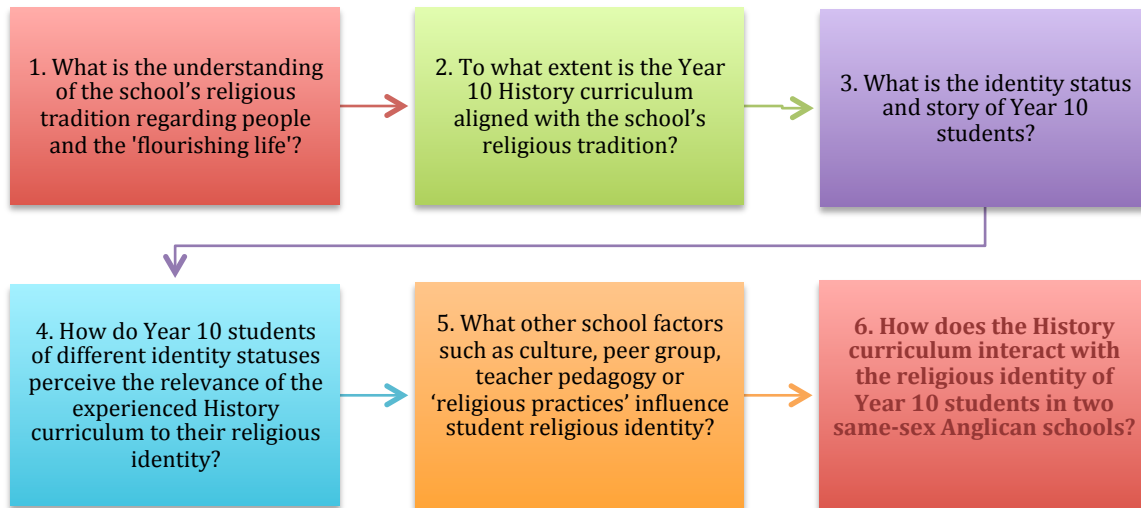


Figure 10.1: *Interaction in the Anglican school*

In the previous three chapters I explored each school's version of Anglicanism and the way it impacted the schools' lived version of the flourishing life. In relation to Research Question 1, the study showed that they were both in a process of change from nominal 'church' school to Evangelical Anglican with the concomitant understanding of the flourishing life as relationship with God directed to and guided by a transcendent telos. Both schools narrated an Evangelical conversionist story that required heart or metaphysical change in the context of two different understandings of church ritual and tradition. Both emphasised the academic tradition of Anglicanism, reflecting its accommodation of classical thought, but neither school promoted its founding religious tradition significantly beyond generic Protestant Christianity. Student reflections on their religious identity revealed an ambiguous relationship to

the two schools where they acknowledged the power of the community but sought to maintain personal agency and autonomy. In this chapter I compare the two cases in relation to curriculum and propose a model for teachers with some further suggestions. I then outline some limitations of the study before concluding the thesis.

Coherence and Charisma in the Curriculum

In seeking a place for religious belief, worldview and ethos in their story of the flourishing life, Anglican schools must deal with possible denial of what Trevor Cooling has termed “the credibility of rationality”. The subject of Christian Studies is especially at risk of marginalisation if its influence on “mainstream subjects” is denied (Cooling, 2012, p. 91). Given their secularised social context, the Anglican faith is in the first instance likely to be thought implausible by students, impacting their exploration of religious issues. Promoting this exploration may depend on plausible answers being offered for the key identity questions: ‘Who am I?’ and ‘What is my purpose?’ as the curriculum’s story of the flourishing life is narrated.

Alignment of the school’s various stories of the flourishing life has more than an apologetic purpose. The telos which motivates and directs personal feeling, thinking and acting assumes a different role at school level. A transcendent telos that acknowledges humanity made in God’s image for an eternal future is a powerful driver of practices in a bi-directional relationship that lends coherence to models of meaning-making. In this respect, two key issues became apparent in each school’s account of the flourishing life in relation to the curriculum and its interaction with student religious identity. They were associated with the epistemology of the curriculum and the impact of staff in the enacted curriculum.

Planned curriculum: seeking coherence

In Chapter 9 I referred to a “duality” in Headmaster, Paul’s vision for his school, reflecting Anglicanism’s incorporation of a classical emphasis on intellect as well as a rich theology. This was widely acknowledged in both schools in terms of prioritising “academic” criteria for subject content and the selection of staff and in terms of student intellectual achievement. In setting each school’s vision and direction, the Heads assumed the responsibility of deciding on the degree of emphasis on each aspect of this duality while pragmatically acknowledging that ongoing enrolments involved prioritising academic achievement. This was especially so in relation to curriculum where the tendency to a dualistic separation of sacred and secular was present in both schools, but to varying degrees. With History as the main exemplar of each school’s approach, the second research question of this study was “How is the Year 10 History curriculum aligned with the school’s religious tradition?” This study found a small degree of alignment in Hamlin in terms of topic selection but more in both schools in terms of pedagogical decision-making and the privileging of certain values. In comparing the two cases, it became obvious that differences in this area lay in each school’s understanding of epistemology, particularly as expressed by the Head of Cowper and the Hamlin Teaching and Learning Framework. This was a key finding of this study.

Religion as epistemology. Attempts had been made in both schools to bring a sense of coherence to student learning, thus supporting this important aspect of identity development (Crocetti et al., 2013) and meaning making. Students were encouraged in assemblies, chapels and service opportunities to make meaning of their life in reference to the transcendent Christian version of the flourishing life. As

meaning-making is said to be a major component of both process and product in understandings of identity generally (Kunnen & Bosma, 2000; McLean et al., 2014), it was important to observe if and how each school referenced the religious tradition as an epistemological framework. In this I am assuming that a coherent framework for making meaning is offered by Anglicanism consistent with Hunsberger & Jackson, “Religions as epistemologies provide a frame of reference for understanding and interpreting the world.” (2005, p. 815).

This framework is a network of concepts and beliefs; but takes the form of a metanarrative whose authority is understood in different ways. In Sydney Diocese, it focuses on the Bible’s picture of the flourishing life in relationship with God through Jesus Christ, with biblicism as a key marker of the Diocese’s identity. Both schools regarded the Bible as a sacred text requiring a public outworking. To use the Bible in this way begins with understanding it theologically rather than just culturally. It is to hold that it is the Word of God and makes public demands on adherents. “People strive to follow its teaching and in some way take on its vision of the world” (Lake, 2018, p. 15). Especially relevant to curriculum in Anglican schools is the way that the “theological Bible” was used by early colonisers in Australia as “the unrivalled starting point for knowledge” and “the framework for understanding the world and its workings” (Lake, 2018, p. 25). This study understands the Biblical metanarrative as a possible orienting story or lens for student religious identity. This implies a special relationship with the curriculum and raises the question of how the metanarrative was used in the curriculum.

Duality or dualism? Perhaps reflecting Sydney Anglicanism’s tendency to rationalist apologetics, modernist separation of the sacred and secular in curriculum

was found to be present to differing degrees in both schools. It expressed a more comprehensive separation of theology and practice than a simple duality of educational aims. Faint echoes of dualism remained in the curriculum of Hamlin and more emphatic declarations of dualism were apparent in Cowper. Mary, the Head of History at Hamlin, recognised the relevance of their theology-grounded Teaching and Learning Framework and intentionally oriented the History program towards it. She stated, “It just sort of permeates everything we do”. Her teaching program referred to the first dimension, *Christian Foundations: Building Strong Faith*. This in turn referenced an understanding of the flourishing life in terms of Jesus Christ being the means of understanding what it means to be human and to live as a wise person in a world created for humanity. Exploring a Christian perspective was advocated in Hamlin, on the basis of the Bible and scholarly writings as they might apply to key questions and concepts. Topics were chosen in each year to align with this understanding in some way, such as the Biblical and archaeological exploration of Jericho in Year 10. However, in the History documents observed there was no intentional planning of content incorporating biblical insights or issues of belief arising out of the topics in recognition of the subject’s role in the school’s story of the flourishing life. This less vivid picture of the flourishing life was compounded by the omission of the influence of religious identity on people and events in history. The result may just be a secularised cacophony of perspectives. This threw the focus squarely on the classroom and the enacted curriculum.

In a similar way, Cowper staff were free to forge their own links between the school’s story of the flourishing life and their subjects, but there was no evidence that they had in History apart from attempts in previous years by the Christian

Studies/History teacher, Christine. Cowper had not based their version of a teaching and learning framework on a clearly-articulated theological anthropology. Staff appeared comfortable with a more defined separation of secularised subjects from the metanarrative of the school, complemented by the sacred Christian Studies and character education initiatives. This did raise the question of what telos their curriculum framework was oriented towards and what support students were offered in recounting their story of the flourishing life.

A modernist assumption of the possibility of value-free universal knowledge may be the default position in response to a secularising and pluralist culture. But it is an impossibility. Teachers and students will always bring their worldview and ethos to class, as have those who have contributed to the body of concepts, theories and methodology of each subject area. It also leaves students without scaffolding or guidance for exploring alternative perspectives, important for the development of religious identity. Such dualism usually assumes that the Judeo-Christian values canopy is still the dominant interpretive framework of society, able to be accessed by students outside the confines of the classroom. The major site for meaning-making by students though, may not lie outside the classroom, but in the social space of the classroom itself, sited in a cultural context. In any case, certain implications of sacred/secular dualism became apparent in process and product in relation to each school's curriculum framework, the emphasis on a particular way of knowing and in handling student doubts.

‘Jesus has an office’. Firstly, religious identity appeared to be quarantined somewhat in its role in the curriculum framework as a subjective option, unique to staff who teach Christian Studies which in effect was marginalised as irrelevant to the

“real work” of the school. Hence the saying “Jesus has an office”. Staff who were personally committed to Anglican faith were free in both schools to teach in a way that linked their subject with Christian Studies, as Christine had in Cowper. However, for the most part, religious identity remained to function in unacknowledged ways in the enacted curriculum on the basis of the functional separation of Christian Studies from other subjects. Teachers made decisions based on their personal understanding of what it is to be human and their associated version of what Ewing (2016) has referred to as the Storylines of the curriculum (Ewing, 2016) and this did not necessarily align with the school’s Storyline in subtle ways. I discuss the role of teachers in more depth in a later section of this chapter.

Green (2012) in her study of an English academy school very similar to Cowper found that a dualistic curriculum framework had a negative impact on student engagement with Bible teaching, referring to...

the structural separation of Christian Bible teaching from the secular subject curriculum, with the exception of RE. The study concluded that this structural separation compounded the view widely held in liberal secular society that religion is only relevant to the private sphere. (Green, 2012, p. 397)

Although this was more pronounced in Cowper than Hamlin, this structural separation of the all-important Bible-based subject was noted as significant by Christian Studies and Chaplaincy staff interviewed in both schools. All aspired to see Christian Studies as the core of the curriculum framework, presumably with linkages to the other subjects, as a boost to the subject’s credibility and effectiveness. A more comprehensive examination of how this subject could function as a core to the curriculum framework is the topic for another study.

Secondly, a modernist separation of sacred and secular fails to support students to develop the integrative meaning so indicative of their well-being in understandings of Narrative Identity. Personal meaning finds rich expression in a story of the flourishing life that is integrated and coherent as I indicated on page 78 (Adler et al., 2016; Polkinghorne, 1996). If student stories, as a theological anthropology suggests, must find a place within a referential metanarrative that is somehow transcendent, it would seem best for them to access this in the context of their “mainstream” classroom. They are then more able to assess its plausibility and relevance to their construction of personal meaning (Green, 2012).

Thirdly, the failure to recognise the role of “the sacred” may have restricted ways of knowing as understood through the lens of Theological Critical Realism. The ThCR claim is of a certain level of objectivity or truth-seeking interacting dynamically with interpretation/perspective (Carson, 2008). As an expression of this, I claim that both hermeneutical knowing, that involves personal meaning (Smith & Lovat, 2003), and abstract theoretical knowledge (Wheelahan, 2010) are two essential aspects of the development of the mental map of the subject (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing & Le Cornu, 2015) drawn by students in the classroom. An attempted separation of the sacred and secular may have hindered student learning by de-emphasising the hermeneutic in favour of paradigmatic knowing. It was apparent in the study that teachers generally acknowledged a limited role for personal perspective, shaping a story of the flourishing life that was very focussed on the Anglican emphasis on a modernist version of academic achievement.

Fourthly, an over-emphasis on paradigmatic knowledge may have established a pedagogy of right and wrong answers about universal knowledge in the planned

curriculum. This leaves little wriggle-room for students with doubts in the “sacred” area and doubts are thought to be a necessary catalyst for exploration and achievement of religious identity (Baltazar & Coffen, 2011). Although classes were observed where teachers attempted to respond to student questions, generally students in Hamlin felt that contrary opinions were not really welcomed, especially in Christian Education. Their doubts were left unexplored in any depth. As Ai said, “It’s not really accommodating for people who are wanting to explore more about their faith”. In Cowper, lessons were observed in Christian Studies with a logical flow directed towards belief in the existence of God. Written personal responses, although elicited, were little discussed. Staff in both schools generally chose an apologetics-based model of subject delivery across the Christian Studies curriculum, but they at times appeared to be ill-prepared on the key ethical and personal issues that students wanted to explore. This may have stemmed from the schools’ biblicism, given that it is not easy to teach Christian Studies with a Bible focus without claiming a strong, sacred authority for it.

It might then be asked: What set of assumptions about students and knowing grounded this at least partly modernist approach in each school? What metanarrative did this approach draw from and feed into? The approach had enabled good results in the HSC. If the National Curriculum reflects a neo-liberal Storyline then perhaps that is what students were being inducted into as Low (2013) found in parent-controlled schools. This was partly evident in History classes where boys were engaged only by assessments that involved “marks” and by some girls who “just want me to tell them what they need to get good marks” (Mary). Yet, amid all these commonalities, certain

key differences emerged that appeared to impact on the schools' interacting stories of curriculum, religious identity and religious tradition.

Mind the gap. Each Head resolved the relationship between the dual aspects of their vision in markedly different ways. Amongst the many uses of the term “framework” in Cowper, was the one set in place by Paul for teaching and learning. It was an informal but very powerful understanding of knowledge and knowing that established the parameters for curriculum in all its forms. Paul stated,

I'm a great believer in general providence and general revelation...without necessarily denying the necessity of special revelation and salvation. (Paul)

His “I'm a great believer” is an emphatic prioritising of universal knowledge through “general providence”. “Special revelation and salvation” are secondary. While this is to be expected in a school seeking to educate with integrity, this may also be interpreted as functional dualism with its attendant weaknesses for the Anglican school. Coming from the Head, it was a powerful epistemology that allowed teachers to pursue their subjects as products of “common grace”, available to all regardless of religious identity and taking little account of differing perspectives. Staff were able to teach without thinking foundationally about how a Biblical understanding of the nature of persons and knowing might be expressed in their subject. Nor did they explore the belief issues at the heart of their subjects or articulate how their subject might contribute to the school's story of the flourishing life.

Yet, there was still said to be an unspecified role for a “Christian worldview”. The epistemology appeared to privilege the logical/scientific over the hermeneutic in knowing because it failed to articulate clearly the role of perspective and interpretation of what is presumed to be universal and value-free. While this may have been

effective in 20th century church schools because of the lingering impact of the Judeo-Christian values canopy, it is no longer tenable (Hill, 2007).

The effect was to ignore content that relied on an understanding of humanity as beings with a spiritual aspect, an area obvious in many Year 10 topics and rich with possibilities for religious identity development. According to History teacher, Gavin, there was no programming of issues or topics from the perspective of Anglicanism, or any articulated spirituality. The vacuum was filled by the professional judgement of the teacher in bringing his personal values to bear on the teaching and learning in the classroom. Year 10 History classes were taught with a focus on a limited form of personal meaning-making driven by the passionate commitment of the teacher to his values rather than referencing a story of the flourishing life from outside the subject.

In Hamlin, the formal T&L framework reflected the Head's epistemology in a rather different way. It acknowledged the powerful role of values in human life, including curriculum choices, by affirming the centrality of a theological anthropology. This involved a clear statement of Who am I? and What is my purpose? incorporating the Sydney Anglican story of humanity. The goal of education was understood in terms of preparing students to steward the world, to promote God's shalom. There was an emphasis in the T&L Framework on personal gifting, on reason and understanding, and responsibility for service. This was reflected in the comments by the History teacher, Mary, on History's contribution to the school ethos. For her it involved helping students to be "informed", "lifelong learners", "valuing multiple perspectives", "being judicious in judgement", allowing a "plurality of voices". While Mary was careful to affirm differing perspectives in discussions, she was also firm in directing students towards a logical construction of informational knowledge. So while

the T&L Framework supported cognitive processes by advocating thinking skills etc. there was little guidance as to how each subject might bridge the gap between theological anthropology and educational practice. In this way, both Cowper and Hamlin shared a similar lack in their planned and enacted curriculum, one that lessened the ability of students to construct a coherent story of the flourishing life while enhancing the professional judgement of teachers.

In my experience, given this gap, the default position of teachers is to highlight ethical issues in their subject. The emphasis on service in each school could thus be construed as compensatory as students find an avenue for applying their ethics. This may have the unfortunate by-product of students developing a story of personal faith that is actually not Anglican or even Christian. It may instead be characterised by what has been described as “moralistic, therapeutic deism” (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 157), a faith that relies on being ‘good’, avoiding accountability to a transcendent God and only inviting His ‘intrusion’ into life when help is needed.

This study suggests that the planned curriculum has the potential to have a significant impact on the educational provision of the Anglican school. A well thought out epistemology forms a bridge between theological anthropology and educational offering and this epistemology may incorporate the metanarrative of the religious tradition. To be effective in supporting the mission of Anglican schools, the bridge would acknowledge notions of objectivity partnered with a hermeneutic perspective, oriented towards a vision of the flourishing life that dynamically focusses on a transcendent telos. As Smith and Lovat affirm, “Any curriculum is centrally concerned with the nature of knowledge, how we know and how we can prove that we know.” (2003, p. 12), so this should be of concern to Anglican schools across the world.

A transcendent telos

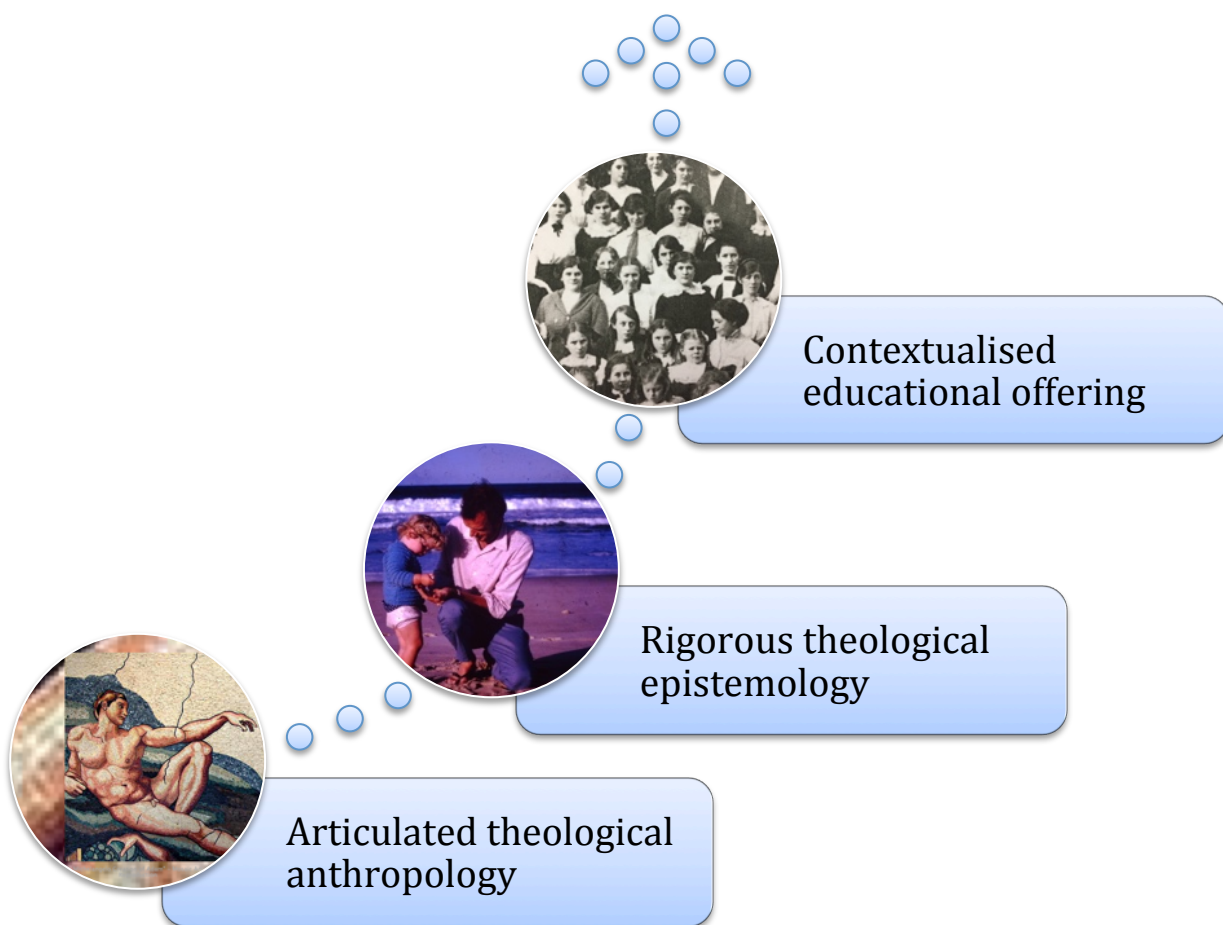


Figure 10.2: *The Flourishing Life and Curriculum*

The enacted curriculum: the power of staff charisma.

Attention to the planned curriculum is, however, only one strategy for promoting a story of the flourishing life that supports the religious tradition of a school. Sinai, Kaplan & Flum (2012) found that while curriculum initiatives in Literature made the self salient to one third of the students, this failed to lead to the basic identity process of questioning. These interventions seemed to make the topic more relevant and interesting for students rather than stimulating broad long-term identity exploration. They concluded that the identity exploration process was unpredictable due to the unique and dynamic nature of personal and contextual variables.

This shifts the focus to the role of the curriculum as enacted in a community setting (Bamberg, 2011) where students observe and interact with teachers modelling agency around exploration and commitment (McLean et al., 2014). The metanarrative of the Sydney Anglican Church is a lived tradition. It comprises rituals and symbols, worldview and ethos, modelled and lived by individuals in community. Providing a vital Christian (but not necessarily Anglican) story with multiple embodied models of the faith was found to be a priority common to both schools. However, the impact of teachers was of prime importance in the telling of this story.

Teachers transformed the metanarrative of the school. Students are constantly making personal meaning in the classroom and helping to form the enacted curriculum. Teachers also transform the planned curriculum as enacted in the classroom. History classes in both schools generated personal responses from students to the topics discussed such as The Holocaust and the Vietnam War. But the spiritual aspect of the topics, often around the nature of people, were little explored, despite students becoming aware of this. This was a missed opportunity to explore students'

Small Stories in the context of the microscopic interactions that generate identity (Lichtwarck-Aschoff, van Geert, Bosma & Kunnen, 2008).

Dualism may account for this in Cowper or perhaps lack of understanding of the religious tradition (Donnelly, 2000) and hence its theological/philosophical relevance. Or perhaps the school's Big Story of the curriculum was not apparent to teachers. Shkedi (2009) for example found in the context of teaching Biblical Studies to Israeli students that teachers were unable to detect the metanarrative of the intended subject as indicated by curriculum developers, and often taught in conflict with it. If the curriculum appeared to them to lack a sense of order, teachers brought their own metanarrative into play without being particularly conscious of it (Shkedi, 2009). Furthermore, if the Australian experience is similar to the secularised Swedish, then increasingly the Big Story of any religious tradition is being understood by teachers in terms of "sense-making", "ethical guidance" or "sociocultural systems for thinking" (Liljestrand & Olson, 2016, p.156). Although I have referenced each of these functions as relevant to students, to understand the Anglican faith in only these terms is to ignore the public "thick" nature of religion with its confessional grounding and motivation to action (Liljestrand & Olson, 2016, p.162).

This highlights the possibility for fairly radical change in the Anglican metanarrative if and when it is enacted in the classroom. Teachers, many of whom do not know the meaning of 'religion' (Liljestrand & Olson, 2016) bring their hidden curriculum to an actual curriculum that becomes radically different to the intended (Smith and Lovat, 2003). There appeared to be some alignment between the worldview and ethos of the teachers and both schools; except where a few (for example, Charles' atheist teachers) distanced themselves from Anglican faith.

However, there were subtle departures in, for example, the failure to consider the spiritual nature of persons functioning powerfully in world events. Ironically, this gap between curriculum intention and actuality was more obvious in Hamlin because its planned curriculum was based on a framework that specifically acknowledged this aspect.

Teachers lived the curriculum. Teaching as a “moral enterprise” (Gleeson & O’Flaherty, 2016, p. 46) is nowhere more apparent than in teachers’ relationships with students. Teachers at both schools demonstrated exceptional care for their students in the classroom. The History teachers did this through what I term a certain “charisma”, projecting a personality that connected with and engaged students. In Hamlin a rather motherly yet achievement-focussed approach to classroom relationships was observed. At Cowper it involved appealing to boys’ love of fun through the teacher’s extraverted personality. Studies have shown that there are three characteristics of school climate that influence identity: teacher caring, positive role models and a school that promotes a ‘whole school’ approach. Of these, teacher caring appeared to dominate (Rich and Schachter, 2012) in Jewish schools in Israel, focussed on collectivist Jewish identity. Previous research had found that the teacher as a positive role model, rather than just a caring person, was a powerful predictor of student identity development (Rich & Schachter, 2012) and this effect may be greatest in the middle years especially in relation to beyond-self life purpose (Yeager & Bundick, 2009). Indeed, in one study teachers ranked second only to parents in influence on identity (Fisherman, 2011).

In both cases, teachers deliberately embodied the *Bildung* aspect of curriculum focussed on formation or edification described by Miedema as:

the development of the student in relationship, encounter and dialogue with the other persons and the surrounding world and thus also being confronted with oneself (Miedema, 2017, p. 122).

Erikson described the process as “interplay with available models” (1968, p. 159) with teachers as representatives of roles. As described previously, teachers modelled paradigmatic knowing in their pedagogy. They complemented this with a story of mutual caring, warm relationships pushing the classes towards high achievement. History at Hamlin was the exception in the extent to which the teacher focussed on perspective, although even there this was mostly taught as a thinking skill. As Mary stated, History’s contribution to the school ethos “all comes down to being really informed and able to decipher, see holes in arguments”. Nevertheless, they modelled respectful and engaging relationships within authority boundaries, modelling an informational approach matched with careful reasoning. This may have been an advantage for some students in developing their global identity as an informational style has been found to be most likely to lead to strong commitments. It has also been positively related to Achieved and Moratorium Statuses (Berzonsky, 2011).

A safe classroom is the enabling context (Sinai, Kaplan & Flum, 2012) for the modelling situation, because students feel they can trust the potential sources of their values. But in Christian Studies students were surrounded by the hidden curriculum of posters of heroes of the faith or of a conversion process. These appeared to reflect the chief Christian Education focus of each school: character education or conversion. Interestingly, both schools also displayed biblical texts in multiple locations, including classrooms. So as the interactive student-teacher relationships stimulated exploration of models of religious identity (Layton, Hardy & Dollahite, 2012), the ‘approved’

models were well displayed. Teachers at both schools also appeared to model their understanding of “Hamlin Girl” or “Cowper Boy”, although Headmaster, Paul, was most intentional about this. In presenting themselves as models, teachers were conscious of their values on one level; but also communicated expectations implicitly and this presented teachers with unique challenges in schools that were highly focussed on *Bildung*.

Teachers sometimes found themselves in a conflicted position. Values are said to lie at the core of identity (Hitlin, 2003) and that includes the religious identity of teachers. They bring their values to bear on choice of topics and pedagogy, relationships and ex-tempore pedagogical choices in the classroom. Teachers’ selection of teaching strategies has been found to shape adolescents’ self-understanding around feeling they were capable participants with an “envisioned future in a particular field” (Verhoeven et al., 2019, p. 43). In the Anglican school, it could be expected that the strategies might be directed towards a transcendent telos with this-world implications and herein lies the potential for conflict.

Personal lifestyle, the evangelistic goal of each school, subject alignment with the ethos and the function of personal ethos in the classroom were all recognised as sites for possible conflict of values. A suspicion of the role of the Bible in subject and unease with biblicism was evident in Cowper. Gavin was fully aware of the responsibility to align his professional practice with the ethos of the school while maintaining his personal values. He walked a fine line in a school culture that valued professional freedom and judgement. That other staff referred openly in their classes to their disagreement with the school’s ethos; but Gavin’s perspective betrayed an element of ambiguity. He was committed to his own beliefs and values in a way that

came alive in the enacted curriculum in his classroom. Although he was not able to fully embody the school's Christian beliefs and values, he attempted to find common ground for the most part.

In both schools, professional judgement regarding pedagogical choices was predicated on the assumptions and values of teachers around their role, their students and the nature of persons as linked to teacher understanding of the founding tradition. This has been described as the transformation of the formal ethos of the school into the informal and actual (Donnelly, 2000). Where those values aligned well with that of the school, little conflict occurred for staff. Where teachers, such as Christine at Cowper, disagreed with educational directions that emanated from the managerial/theological hierarchy, they were uncomfortable with overt disagreement and reluctant to elaborate in the study. This may be due to the leadership being perceived as having a heavy moral authority by those who shared the school's faith tradition. In any case, potential misalignment needs to be managed (Crossman, 2016). There was little evidence of management in Cowper of the possible conflicts presented by the 70% of teachers who did not share the faith tradition, either by agreed frameworks of teaching and learning or by management structures. It seemed to confirm the existence of a functional dualism of sacred and secular that rates issues of non-alignment to be marginally relevant to student learning and formation.

This does not mean that these issues do not exist, however, and that teachers do not seek solutions for them. Bertram-Troost, Versteegt, van der Kooij, van Nes & Miedema (2018) found in their survey of eight Dutch Protestant secondary schools that teachers experienced considerable internal conflict. Participation in worship, morning devotions and Christian celebrations; the role of the Bible either in student

formation or as a cultural product and catering to diverse religions were all labelled “challenges” by teachers. They often stemmed from the lack of alignment of teacher and school worldviews and so contrasting solutions included both more religious inclusivity and more alignment of practice with formal ethos. The researchers concluded that Christian secondary schools needed clearly developed aims around general education but also around worldview and religion. They summarised the key question:

Is the aim the transmission of the presented and represented subject matter, or the transformation of the subject matter by the pupils in the processes of their meaning-making and meaning-taking and the development of their personal identity or personhood? (Bertram-Troost et al., 2018, p. 18).

Agreement on the answer to this question they claimed will drive pedagogical quality as well as educational quality.

Question 2 of this study asked ‘How is the Year 10 History curriculum aligned with the school’s religious tradition?’ Only Hamlin was found to have structured its planned curriculum to reflect a clearly articulated theological anthropology but shared with Cowper the need to bridge the gap into curriculum with a rigorous epistemology. In both schools, this originated in the powerful Heads’ dual stances on theology and educational philosophy and was mediated by the values-based pedagogical choices of the teachers in enacting curriculum.

A Curriculum for an Envisaged Future

I would like to have a successful career and be financially stable. I would like to have my own houses and cars. I would like to move to London in 10 years’ time. In 20 years I would want to be happily married and possibly have a family. I would like to be able

to have enough money to travel around the world. I would also hope to have a good relationship with my parents and be able to support them. I would also like to be involved in charities and possibly even set up programs myself to fight for causes that I believe in. (Cathy)

Cathy's picture of the flourishing life was typical of the majority of students in the Hamlin Christian Studies class. Family, financial security, travel, marriage and service were key components of many of their responses. These are drawn from the deep well of the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain of identity expressing wide-ranging answers to identity's question of purpose. However, the telos of the good as incarnated in Jesus Christ is the telos of Sydney Anglicanism and there is no awareness of a transcendent aspect to Cathy's future. Her answer to 'What is my purpose?' was firmly grounded in the material world. Charles' vision of the future as "serve and honour God and live in a way that points to Him" was more in tune with Anglican sensitivities. Admirably, 9 out of 18 students at Hamlin noted some form of service as an aspiration for their lives in 10-20 years, affirming the efforts of the school in this area.

However, most students do not appear to have linked service with the moral framework of the school that encouraged it. This is a challenge to the Anglican school to explore how they might support students to move towards a transcendent telos that J.K.A. Smith suggests as a rich, imaginative social vision, a picture rather than a set of dogmas (2009, pp. 52-3). I claim Anglican schools may fire the imagination of students with a vision of the flourishing life if they suggest multiple links between its religious tradition and students' lives and aspirations. A combination of experiential

and hermeneutical approaches, possibly in the context of service, could also stimulate an emotional trigger for exploration and retelling of students' Big Stories.

I have suggested that epistemology that references the Anglican meta-narrative may form a bridge between theological anthropology and educational offering. Further that this bridge could also impact pedagogy by incorporating a balance of paradigmatic and hermeneutic perspectives focussed on a transcendent and transforming telos for the flourishing life. Understanding curriculum as an imaginative meta-narrative of the good life starts for the Anglican school with a consideration of persons as created for relationship with the transcendent God, with a spiritual nature. More than a list of dogmatic assertions it is a vehicle for the integration of the affective and cognitive, intuitive and rational processes, all necessary for the development of worldview and ethics (Berzonsky, 2004; Haidt, 2007), the outcome of the emphasis on formation in preparation for an uncertain future.

Powerful subject stories.

The importance of integrating the affective and cognitive was particularly evident in conversations when researching Question 4 as to the relevance of the subject of History to their religious identity. In answer to the question "Do you see your identity story fitting somehow with the story you're getting in History?" Fiona replied,

Yeah it is. Kind of implied probably...everyone in a certain space bases their identity on past people and then kind of that shapes them...I really like hearing about the stories and the people who have this emotional connection to it. That kind of really shapes who you are, how you see the world...[and] what you interpret in it is something that's really big about who you are as well. (Fiona)

Fiona's emphasis on "emotional connection" is consistent with Haidt's claim that emotionally-compelling resources are needed to enable intuition to be shaped by reason in relation to the development of a moral framework, a component of identity (2007, p. 47). While Fiona recognised the modelling power of History other more emotion-stirring classes such as English and Drama impacted her more. For Jenny, Dance was where she had strong models she wanted to emulate. For Jason, Art was a means for developing his worldview. These subjects where an understanding of the nature of persons is most at play were those where modelling and active processing of alternatives seemed to be most present. Maths and Science did not rate a mention except as areas of study not favoured by students.

Fiona's comments were echoed by Charles, Jason and Han who referred to developing an understanding of the complexity of a humanity that was capable of great good and great evil. How she might have responded in similar circumstances challenged Fiona as a Christian as much as Jason as a connector with Indigenous spirituality who said in relation to WWII atrocities,

[It] makes you think like would I do that if I was in that situation?

But I like feel empathy for the people because you realise how hard it would have been to try and make the right choice. (Jason)

Han experienced a dual affirmation in History and English. Firstly, of her Chinese heritage in her studies of ancient China; secondly of her Australian identity when confronted by the banning by Chinese authorities of a book that she was studying in English.

It makes me feel like living in Australia, having these chances...I could be more like...my situation is pretty good, why not make the most of it? (Han)

Many students in both schools appeared to be impacted by the stories of History and an assortment of other subjects, whether by the content and its presentation or teacher modelling. In both cases, students and teachers brought their personal values and religious identity to the classroom and transformed the curriculum.

The story of the flourishing life as told in Christian Studies was also quite significant. The subject has been found to move students to explore and commit (Bertram-Troost, de Roos & Miedema, 2009) but with certain conditions. This includes the degree to which worldview issues are also considered in the other school subjects. However, it was noticeable that Christian Studies in both schools was often perceived to have weaknesses in pedagogy or lack of depth in coverage of issues of interest to students. “Chapel and stuff” have given Jason “information” and “a different perspective” and Charles also found Chapel helpful. It was clear that the largely apologetics approach observed in Christian Studies classes was not always effective in challenging students to explore their religious identity in more depth. I have explored above how this may be related to students’ location of the transcendent not in propositions but in belonging to relational groups. The co-curricular offering of Christian lunchtime groups appeared to successfully offer a place where belonging can happen. This recourse to the co-curricular I have found is a usual accompaniment to what I term the Complementary approach to the interaction of religious identity with the curriculum.

The complementary approach.

This approach assumes the division of knowledge into disciplines and understands a religious tradition chiefly in terms of its theology. It seeks to address what it understands as a faith/scholarship dichotomy by identifying areas of commonality

between particular disciplines and theology (Burwell, 1987). It is a search for compatibility leading to a cognitivist apologetics approach and evidenced in the dualism of Cowper. Despite this, students were challenged to explore basic assumptions they may have had about people and the presence of evil in the world by their History studies, perhaps illustrating how inevitably all subjects are shot through with hidden values and their consideration.

The negative impact on religious identity of the complementary approach was highlighted by Elizabeth Green in her research on schools in England with a Christian ethos. She found,

The view of religious knowledge presented to pupils...belongs within a modernist apologetics framework...this may clash with the views of knowledge embedded more widely in the cultural paradigm of the pupils, who are more likely to accept things as 'true' when they closely connect to personal history and experience...(so) there was little evidence that that the Bible-based ethos was a strong enough vehicle to radically reshape their worldview. (Green & Cooling, 2009, pp. 50-51)

Green's findings highlight the danger for school ethos of separating theology from other 'disciplines' and de-emphasising hermeneutical ways of knowing.

Understanding the world in purely material terms, independent of the transcendent is antithetical to Anglicanism. Because there is no articulated link between a religious tradition and the subjects apart from perhaps issues of ethics, many schools implement a character education program to address their moral purpose.

The character education approach.

I have already stated that many Hamlin students envisaged service of some form in their future lives, partly as a result of the school's emphasis. So too Cowper valued its

co-curricular program, incorporating challenging service opportunities as “integral to our flourishing life” although I was not able to study this in more detail. More extensive data was available about the Character Education program.

In the 21st century the concept of the flourishing life marked by habits of virtue, has morphed from metaphysical classical roots to achieving one’s potential as both a unique individual and the possessor of a generic human nature (Waterman & Schwartz, 2013). Self-fulfilment is far from a biblical understanding of living life in a love relationship with God. Further, the classical virtues appear as anachronistic. Jesus spoke to the “virtue outcasts” making the paradigm of the martyr more appropriate than the soldier, the humble man rather than the magnanimous man (Eberly & Mesimer, 2018, p. 3). This is unfathomable without a focus on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Faith, hope and love are virtues of the suffering servant, Jesus Christ as the embodiment of the good life. Courage, justice, prudence and temperance are the cardinal virtues of the warrior/king (Eberly & Mesimer, 2018). The program did appear to have an impact on students so it is possible that emphasising character education without inner metaphysical change has instead of addressing privilege, cemented their social position in students’ identities.

It is difficult to see exactly how the Character Education Program was situated in relation to the religious foundation of the school, because there was no clear articulation of a theological anthropology, no indication of its foundation in Christian rather than classical roots. Although character education does have the advantage of its virtues component being “filled out” by a religion (Noddings, 2002, p. 3), Cowper staff noted the failure to effect change in students’ religious identity. The Character Education Program may have played a distracting role in that. Kunzman (2006, p. 31)

for example warns of the tendency towards social convention and obedience in

Character Education and this appeared to be happening according to Gavin.

It may also be that character education blurs the picture of the telos, leading students to focus on the foothills rather than the mountain top because the flourishing life is seen in terms of character not relationship with the transcendent God. Individual ethical stances and behaviour are emphasised at the expense of inner change and commitment to a relationship. The flourishing life was predominantly seen in terms of character in Cowper, so it is difficult to see how such a dominant emphasis could avoid compounding the philosophical dualism that marginalised the sacred and transcendent from the rest of the (secularised) curriculum. That lack of coherence in the curriculum possibly also means that it is less able to support the adolescent drive to coherence in identity.

A further result was a lack of clarity for students in determining the link between the ethical framework of the school and the school climate. Cowper's Head conceded the link between the school's faith tradition and its ethical framework was unfinished work. This lack of connection between ethical framework and religious tradition was noted by Green (2012) in her research in British academy schools. Character education and the school's religious story were promoted together without grounding them both in similar assumptions. Ironically, the school did so in order that the religious tradition would not be challenged, but Green suggests a different sort of challenge as the outcome.

It follows, then, that a dislocation in student culture between the cultural capital of 'values' and 'good character' from the necessity of biblical authority will render Bible teaching and those who teach the Bible ineffective. (Green, 2012, p. 404)

It may also lead to confusion over what is a specifically Christian moral framework as distinct from classical. As both have combined to form what is termed ‘Western civilization’, the Christian identity of the school may be put at risk by integrating these two aspects too closely. If one fails, and certainly Western civilization stands accused of many excesses and failings, then both may fail in the minds of students. This confusion challenges claims to relevance and plausibility of the faith foundation of the school, especially given the increasingly diverse nature of Australian society and hence Anglican Christianity in Sydney. The result may be a rejection of the Christian faith because of its contribution to a partially discredited paradigm of civilization, being perceived as more suited to Australians of European ancestry. This may also apply to the Head’s advocacy of a particular type of masculinity that incorporates the noble virtues of a bygone elite.

Human nature as understood by former Moore Theological College Ethics Lecturer is said to have two aspects.

The inner nature is where the direction and character of the self is determined while the outer nature of the body is the instrument that expresses the action and intention of the self. Habitual forms of behaviour expose the settled beliefs of the mind and the will both the ethics of duty and the ethics of virtue. (Hill, 2002, p.127)

In this understanding the external virtues expose the inner nature. Habits do not necessarily lead to change in the inner nature, contra J.K.A. Smith’s ‘bodily practices that grab our hearts’ (2009, pp. 62-63). This is due to the ongoing presence of what has been understood in Anglicanism as ‘original sin’ impacting on every aspect of a person, including the affective and cognitive. Students in this understanding are in need of a bridge to the transcendent God and the subjects they study are in need of

critique as well as celebration. That this aspect of persons has not been well understood by teachers in Anglican schools may be due to Moore College's failure to teach systematic theology with a focus on the nature of humanity, preferring instead what is termed 'biblical theology'. Clergy then may not communicate a relevant account of humanity from their pulpits.

Instead of continuing to cede a dominant role to character education in a complementary juxtaposition of subjects, a recognition of the religious tradition functioning across all the curriculum is suggested. In line with most recommendations for school improvement, this could usefully start with teachers addressing the link between their (theological) anthropology and the epistemology they take into their classroom.

An Alternative Approach: *AR-I-V-E*.

Nicholas Wolterstorff, an American Reformed philosopher, cautions against simplistic answers to the role of religious identity in learning. It should not be:

- Additive such as a theology of music in the music curriculum;
- Integration such as having faith issues interact with the already-formed discipline;
- Searching for similarities between the discipline and religious doctrines; or
- Just seeking differences and highlighting uniqueness. (Wolterstorff, 2014, p. 10)

On this basis I suggest an approach that I have developed to the interaction of religious tradition with the curriculum: *AR-I-V-E*. It involves the following functions

by believing, valuing human beings who are focussed on a particular transcendent telos of the flourishing life:

- **Apprehend Reality**
- **Interpret**
- **Valorise**
- **Education strategise**

In terms of a ThCR epistemology, suggestions to encourage the positive interaction of a religious tradition and curriculum must accommodate both a correspondence theory of truth and the social construction of knowledge. Assumptions in this area undergird practice in every school and they may or may not be aligned with those of the religious tradition. To the extent that the disciplines reflected in school subjects are socially-constructed, they will inevitably involve the “fiduciary framework” of the knower (Polanyi, 1962, p. 266) in interpreting. So ongoing revision of both theories and methods and the interpretive framework is necessary. This revision will inevitably be grounded in assumptions about people and knowledge and Sydney Anglicanism has some distinctive assumptions based on their Evangelical biblicism. The subjects of the curriculum are developed by attention to apprehended reality and this attention may be focussed through the lens of such assumptions. It follows that teachers in Anglican schools need to be aware of and able to articulate their assumptions, interrogating them for how they influence alignment with the ethos of the school. I would suggest that agreement on a theological anthropology is a key issue for the professional development of staff.

Attention to reality will vary according to the discipline on which they are based. Mathematics, for example, may be more reality-dependent for its methodology and

body of knowledge than Visual Arts, although they both use apprehended reality in some form. Oxford theological critical realist, Alister McGrath, summarises the balance between the two central ideas of social construction and realism,

Reality is apprehended by the human mind which attempts to express and accommodate that reality as best it can with the tools at its disposal—such as mathematical formulae or mental models. (McGrath, 2002)

Metaphors offer imaginative ways of thinking about particular aspects of reality without pretending to be exact mirror images as in curriculum as a metanarrative of the flourishing life.

On the other hand, the ThCR approach to the linking of religious tradition with the curriculum understands both instrumentalist and constructivist theories of curriculum as tending to restrict the real to what a person can experience (Wheelahan, 2010). A certain epistemic humility is restored by an emphasis on both the possibility of knowing reality held in tandem with the finitude of human knowing. Staff in Anglican schools then are constantly fulfilling the functions: Apprehend Reality (*AR*) and Interpret (*I*).

Additionally, they ascribe value or Valorise (*V*). Wolterstorff claims this applies to thoughts about the discipline; habits of attention, perception and evaluation; and capacity for “appreciation and delight” (2014, p.11). This valorisation occurs in deep concert with one’s religious identity (Smith, 2018) and the *AR-I-V* functions should therefore not be thought of in a simple sequence, but an iterative process involving endless interactions as understanding of self, others as the Subject develops.

Practice in Hamlin and Cowper did involve systematic education strategising (*E*) with a commitment to truth in knowledge as basic to curriculum. Yet the apprehension

of truth by valuing, fallible human beings was explored fairly rarely as to the impact on their subject choices. Indeed, Nicholas Wolterstorff claims that the Christian scholar should “let the belief-content of his authentic commitment function as control over his theory-weighting” (1976, p. 94). This understanding of ‘control beliefs’ I suggest undergirds the *AR-I-V-E* approach by grounding it in a theological anthropology and epistemology. Anglican schools have an obvious source of these in that their founding religious tradition may function as critique. To summarise, a ThCR-based ontology and epistemology involves a conception of a Creator-God; of truth; of some universals not relativist ethics; of reality not perspectival meaning and interpretation alone; of reason not hard constructivism; of communal scholarship, not individualism. The *AR-I-V-E* approach aligns well with ThCR ontology and epistemology through its foundation in a (biblical) theological anthropology.

Implications

For the purposes of this research religious identity was understood in terms of global identity expressed in the *Occupation/Religion/Ideology* domain. I integrated Narrative and Status approaches to understand identity as an internal synthesised structure (Kroger & Marcia, 2011) expressed in a Big Story of the self, described by Baddeley & Singer as,

An inner story of the self that integrates the reconstructed past, perceived present and anticipated future to provide a life with unity, purpose and meaning. (2007, p. 177)

Using a psycho-social lens, identity was explored on the understanding of an interrelationship of internal psychological processes and social perspectives (Bertram-Troost, 2006) with values as the unifying core. Student data was collected on their

story of the flourishing life and on the exploration and commitment processes involved in identity formation.

I have further described religious identity as having components, direction and content. Its components are affiliation and belonging; behaviour and practices/rituals; beliefs/worldview and values/ethos; and transcendent religious and spiritual experiences (Hemming and Madge, 2011). Direction refers to the transcendent telos, an ultimate goal motivated driven by love of a alluring vision of the flourishing life. The content of religious identity in the two case studies was the Sydney Anglican tradition which provides worldview, ethos and hence a theological anthropology which I have claimed is best served by a ThCR ontology and epistemology.

A comparison of the two case studies demonstrated that student religious identity was alternately challenged and supported in interaction with the curriculum in its various forms. The Evangelical identity of Sydney Diocese was interpreted differently in each school, reflecting context, gender and school tradition; although both were ‘gospel centred’ and both downplayed Anglicanism in favour of generic Evangelical Christian. This meant they limited opportunities to demonstrate the denomination’s potential to contribute to culture forming.

In relation to curriculum, I suggested areas of content in the planned curriculum of History such as existential questions, topics related to Anglican heritage and history-based beliefs. Opportunities to explore the role of the Evangelical Anglican church in its positive and negative contributions to settlerism, aboriginal languages and general social welfare (Piggin & Linder, 2019) were not taken up in either school. Exploration of beliefs that had historical significance such as those related to the life of Jesus Christ were encouraged as options in Hamlin. Both areas have potential for advancing

the plausibility of the Anglican faith tradition and hence affiliation and belonging.

Indeed to skip from the Jesus of the 1st century A.D. to the 21st century without an acknowledgement in mainstream subjects of the ongoing, ambiguous and contestable role of the church presents students with an incomplete narrative, devoid of a significant perspective around people and ideas.

Both schools did actively address their moral purpose, but chiefly by complementing ‘mainstream’ subjects with Christian Studies, Chapel, and character or service opportunities. They both acknowledged the holistic nature of their students and provided opportunities for religious practice and the practical outworking of religious identity. However, this was not always thought to be of sufficient depth by students who sought a sense of belonging to community in groups reflecting school ethos or in a sense of being a Cowper Boy or Hamlin Girl.

So what does a school community look like that is successfully passing on its religious identity? Regnerus, Smith & Sikkink (1998) suggest eight characteristics:

- Moral framework based on its religion;
- Spiritual values;
- Defence of the faith by preparing students for future college education;
- Sense of religious commitment binding the community;
- Socialisation leading to values-based well-being;
- Individual theological understanding of what it is to be human;
- Civic engagement and volunteering; and
- Generosity and support of charities.

William Cowper College and Catherine Hamlin College manifested many of these characteristics while seeking constant improvement. On the basis of this study, the following suggestions for Anglican schools may prove helpful in this regard.

Conditions for Effective Curriculum/Religious Identity Interaction

1. Heads articulate the link between their theology and their philosophy of education.
2. Blockages to exploring religious identity are recognised and explored with a transparent in-depth approach that satisfies student interest and relevance, especially around 21st century ethical issues. The goal is to engage with ethical difference, to respect, understand but not necessarily endorse (Kunzman, 2015, p. 80).
3. Belonging to the Anglican tribe is promoted inclusively, based on plausible scholarship and life-enriching experiences, perhaps incorporating “fun” in a pedagogy of connection.
4. Careful attention is paid to the religious background of student families, especially for students of EAL/D heritage.
5. A coherent teaching and learning framework that clearly articulates an epistemology based on a theological anthropology.
6. The Anglican meta-narrative and each subject’s role within it are understood by teachers.
7. The rich heritage of Anglican scholarship is alluded to in relevant subjects in more than ethics-related form.

8. Teachers and students are challenged to recognise and articulate the role of values at the core of their identity (Bamberg, 2011), influencing the complex mental processes of exploration and commitment, modelling and autobiographical reasoning.
9. Pedagogical practice goes beyond the paradigmatic and technical and emphasises hermeneutical processes. Especially in History and Christian Studies it is focussed on both intuition and logic, the pre-cognitive and the informational to facilitate meaning-making.
10. The school's socio-cultural context is interrogated and clear links between Judeo-Christian heritage and versions of the flourishing life are delineated.

Limitations and Future Research

Limitations to the research presented themselves in at least two ways: the methodology adopted and the reality of research in large, busy independent schools as suggested in Chapter 6. Although the comparison of the two cases led to helpful insights about Anglican education; many apply to a very limited range of schools, the elite, high-fee schools of Sydney, Australia. Further, the schools are situated in a unique Diocese. Its Evangelical theology prompted responses in different ways in each school and this variation is likely to be repeated across the Diocese and indeed the globe. The versions of Anglicanism that I have described may be unique to Cowper and Hamlin because of the decisive role of the Heads of these schools in interpreting their religious tradition.

Accessing the religious identity of students shared the weaknesses of all self-report measures. Further, only a vague picture emerged by exploring the psychological processing involved in this psycho-social construct through the Bell Measure of

Religious Identity. It was not at all obvious how students had explored or committed or what resources they used to do this. Nor was the problem obviated by the double-barrelled nature of the questions, some more obviously so than others. However, the Measure included three parts, Implicit Identity, Identity Domain Salience and Status, and these were able to be usefully compared. Interviews complemented the data in relation to students' OIS and how they saw their interaction with the curriculum. However, Hamlin students were more forthcoming and needed fewer prompts than Cowper students in describing their perspective. Fivush et al. (2012) found that 13-16 year old girls tell more elaborated, coherent, reflective and agentic narratives than adolescent males with gender as a "critical filter" on the interpretation of memories (2012, p. 295) so this was not unexpected.

I also realised early in the research that the focus on History as the exemplar of the curriculum in interaction with religious identity was too narrow. Student perceptions of how their religious identity was functioning in the school indicated that I needed to enlarge the definition of curriculum to incorporate Enacted/Experienced and Hidden as well as Planned. I was also alerted to the need to complement History observations with Christian Studies because so much of student thinking around their religious identity took place in the context of formal Christian education.

Each of the Case Studies involved an exercise in avoiding blockages, although the lack of involvement of the Cowper History department generally was a serious impediment. I judged that it was probably an expression of their marginalisation of the sacred, implying the irrelevance of my research to their subject. Access to both schools was negotiated carefully and respectfully, but the incredible busy-ness of these schools was evident in the way staff became stressed at times with my presence. This

led to the most serious limitation of the study in that only two Cowper students were available for interview. In Hamlin the burden for organisation fell on the shoulders of the Head of Department who was supportive at every stage. Participation of the students still depended on parental approval, but numbers were sufficient to allow selection from each of the Statuses.

More general limitations relate to participant perceptions and the impact of the researcher on the stories told. Expectation bias was anticipated given the issue of positional authority and co-construction of stories experienced. Where I was conscious of these operating in the interviews with staff or students, I sought to overcome them by prompting with further questions to get at the heart of participants' stories. Nevertheless, my prompts directed the conversations in certain directions that would perhaps not be taken if students simply wrote their story of the flourishing life as experienced at school. There also seemed to be an element of 'staging' of model lessons as staff knew well in advance when I would be observing.

Finally it should be noted that many of the findings actually relate to general Christian religious identity and not specifically Anglican as the schools both displayed a reluctance to refer to Anglican in their general discourse. This may have been to distance their schools from a controversial Diocese or it may have originated in a theology that denies the relevance of denominationalism, which is ironically similar to Sydney Diocese.

With the context of single-sex Anglican schools examined here, the suggestions for future research focus on three questions. How might the Diocese communicate the Big Story of Anglicanism more effectively to the teachers in its schools, especially in relation to the biblical understanding of the nature of persons, the Anglican answers to

‘Who am I?’ and “What is my purpose?”? How might Small Stories be undertaken with integrity to contribute to students’ Big Stories, consistent with Dunlop & Walker’s recommendation (2013, pp. 243-244)? Finally, in relation to the perennial dilemma of spiritual formation, ‘What strategies best honour student agency and reject manipulation while triggering exploration of alternatives for religious identity?’

Conclusion

This research confirms the finding by Cohen-Malayev et al., (2014) that teachers and schools do significantly contribute to student religious identity even after accounting for parental religiosity. Belonging, in both cases, to the Cowper or Hamlin tribe trumped being Anglican. Teacher modelling, a culture of service, influential peers and the History and Christian Studies curriculum were all found to interact powerfully with student religious identity. However, I remained cautious about some aspects of the study, possibly because of my interpretation of the Evangelical Anglican tradition as an insider.

For example, religious identity might be a construct that cannot be fully applied to conversionist schools given that the common understanding of the flourishing life is focussed more on one’s ethical framework than faith in relation to telos. Alignment of values between Anglicanism and individual students does not necessarily imply conversion to the Christian faith; nor does a student’s religious identity equate to the Biblical “soul”. The issue of formation is closely related and arises from differing approaches to character education in each school. If formation is understood as ‘putting on Christ’, then Vanhoozer (2015) claims:

Doctrine, in deepening our understanding of the story – the identity of its protagonists, the meaning of its most important events – helps disciples better

understand what God is doing in Christ so that they can act out their new humanity as it were by second nature. (2015, p.165)

This is rather different from an Aristotelian focus on the practice of virtues devoid of the Anglican belief in the role of the Holy Spirit in applying the Bible to student hearts and lives. It does indicate the contestability of approaches to formation, especially in the school context where the agency of students must be respected and promoted. Nevertheless, both schools had recognised the necessity for implementing strategies that threw into focus the transcendent and challenged secularist orthodoxy.

Authentic faith, seen as a way of life “with a clear cognitive and moral content” (Volf, 2011, p. 40) was advocated by both schools. Yet caution as to how other school practices could impact its effective communication is necessary. Volf suggests that a lack of authenticity sets up persons who claim faith to actually practise a vague religiosity that serves primarily to energize, heal and give meaning to the business of life whose course is shaped by factors other than faith. (Volf, 2011, p. 40)

Students’ suggestions about their future are suggestive of this possibility.

Volf further claims that the “experientially satisfying life” as a pre-occupation, is a destroyer of hope, love, satisfaction and ultimately, meaning for our students. Sawatsky (2004) reinforces this with his suggestion of characteristics that should be indicative of students who are directed by a transcendent telos. They relate to hope and love:

[Hope is] the deep-seated confidence that this is God’s world and that the future, including the future of scholarship, need not be feared, for God’s kingdom will come. (2004, p. 5)

[The student of faith has] a profound love for God’s creation, a deep desire to serve all that God pronounced good. (2004, p. 4)

These spiritual qualities enable students to develop and use knowledge ethically and with epistemic humility worthy of a ThCR researcher. Faith, hope and love then are generated in the context of a religion that practises an “ongoing tradition with strong ties to its origins and history, and with a clear cognitive and moral content” (Volf, 2011, p. 40). The essential challenge for the Anglican school wishing to shape “the business of life” in terms of its faith is how will it present it in the context of the whole curriculum as relational, real, robust and relevant to students, challenging them to formulate and live out biblical answers to Who am I? and What is my purpose?

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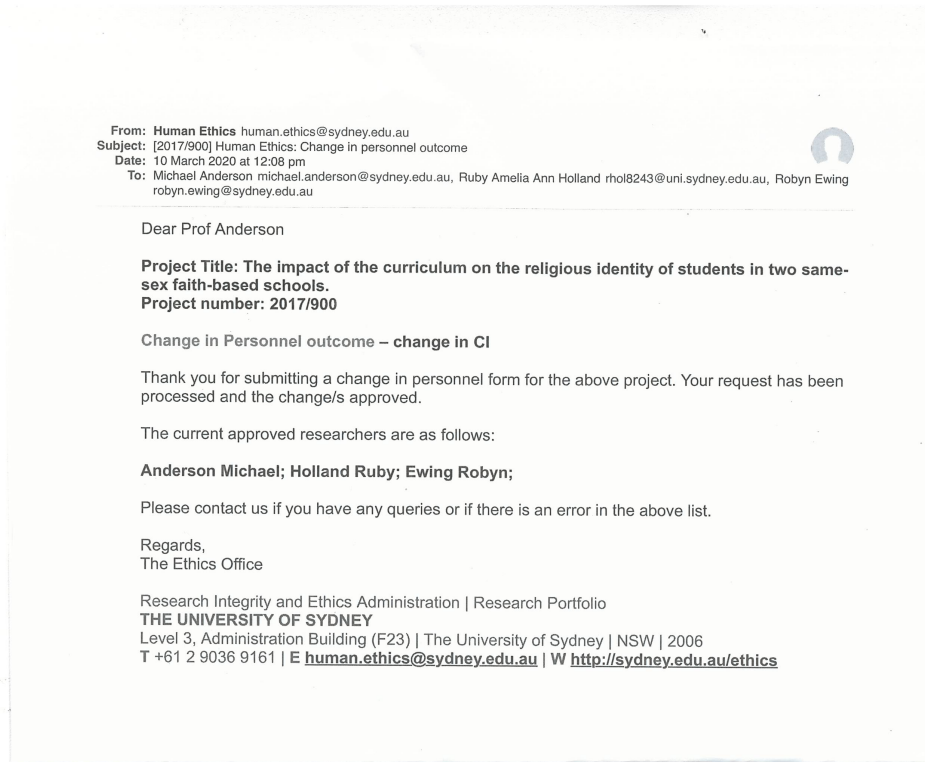
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Appendix 1

Evidence of Human Ethics approval from University of Sydney



Appendix 2

Participant Information Statement for Parents



**Discipline of Education
School of Education and
Social Work
Faculty of Arts and Social
Sciences**

ABN 15 211 513 464

Dr Robyn Ewing
Professor of Teacher Education and the Arts

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PhD candidate

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**The Impact of the Curriculum on Religious Identity in Stage 5.
PARENTAL INFORMATION STATEMENT**

(1) What is this study about?

Your child is invited to take part in a research study about student identity in Stage 5. The study aims to explore the experiences of both teachers and students in relation to the role that curriculum plays in the development of the religious aspect of identity. Given the importance of student identity to motivation and achievement, the study aims to generate important knowledge that can be used subsequently to inform effective teaching and learning in faith-based schools. Participation in this research study is entirely voluntary.

Your child has been invited to participate in this study because, Year 10 students are at a key age for adolescent identity development. This *Participant Information Statement* tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to let your child take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree for your child to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your child's personal information as described.

This copy of the Parental Information Statement is yours to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

- Dr Robyn Ewing, Professor of Teacher Education and the Arts, School of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney: Chief Investigator
- Ms Ruby Holland, Doctoral candidate, School of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney: Researcher

Ms Ruby Holland is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at The University of Sydney. This will take place under the supervision of Professor Robyn Ewing.

(3) What will the study involve?

All students in Year 10 will be invited to complete a questionnaire that explores their experience of *the* major task of adolescence: identity development. Your child will be asked to rate such statements as: 'The way I look at life gives me certainty for the future', 'I have never really thought about "who I am"' and 'I am still exploring my faith and I'm not sure where I will end up.' This will be administered in Year 10 Christian Studies classes to those students who consent to participate, while those who do not consent will continue to work on the current topic in that subject.

Four students will be selected on the basis of their questionnaire answers to participate in a semi-structured interview with the Researcher. As there are four categories of

identity achievement, one student will be asked to participate in the interview from each category. The Head of Christian Studies will inform students of the invitation, which may be declined by your child without giving any reason. The purpose of this interview is to give a clear voice to students about their experience of school in relation to their identity. They will be asked to further explain their questionnaire answers by telling their identity story and how certain aspects of school may have contributed to it. If in the process of the interview they should feel any discomfort, they will be free to refuse to answer any particular question and to stop the interview at any time. In this case, the Head of Christian Studies is available for support, as is the School Counsellor. The interview will be recorded on iPhone for later transcription; but this data is treated entirely anonymously in the research and confidentiality is protected. No student will be identified. These interviews will take place at a time that is deemed appropriate by the school, possibly a Christian Studies period.

Classroom observations will take place in the normal History class time on at least three occasions throughout the term, but will not involve any time commitment for students as the observation will not interfere with the functioning of the class in any foreseeable way. Relevant words and actions of both teachers and students will be observed and noted by the researcher for their potential impact on student identity.

(4) How much time will the study take?

It is envisaged that the Questionnaire will take 15 minutes to complete; while the Interview will take about 45 minutes. Classroom observations will encompass the full period of History class several times during the study; but will not intervene in any way with the functioning of that class.

(5) Who can take part in the study?

All students who are in Year 10 are invited to participate in the study by completing the questionnaire in Christian Studies class. Four students will be invited to participate in an interview after analysis of the answers for two aspects of identity formation: exploration and commitment. Students with varying combinations of each will be selected to participate in the semi-structured interview. All students in Year 10 and their History teachers are also invited to participate in the study as observed members of the History classes.

(6) Does my child have to be in the study? Can they withdraw from the study once they've started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and your child does not have to take part. Your decision whether to let them participate will not affect your/their relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney or the school, now or in the future.

If you decide to let your child take part in the study and then change your mind later (or they no longer wish to take part), they are free to withdraw from the study at any time by informing the Researcher or Christian Studies class teacher in writing. This can be by email.

Your child is free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to keep them, any recordings will be erased and the information your child has provided

will not be included in the study results. Your child may also refuse to answer any questions that they do not wish to answer during the interview.

Your child's questionnaire responses can be withdrawn after submission and will not be included in publications, up to the point that we have analysed and published the results.

If your child does not consent to taking part in the study, they will remain in the class to be observed but no information about their participation will be recorded.

If your child withdraws from the study, we will not collect any more information from them by including them in the classroom observations. Students are identifiable to the researcher by their initials, so any interactions already observed will have the withdrawing student's responses deleted.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

There will be no cost to any student or parent associated with this study. However, as the research will involve the exploration of personal values and beliefs as components of identity, there is a minor risk of some feelings of discomfort, especially in the interview situation. The researcher will inform the student at the beginning of the interview that they may halt the interview at any time without any personal consequences. The researcher, who has over 40 years' experience in schools, will also be alert for any signs of reluctance to answer questions and will again remind the student that they may halt the interview at any time and speak to the Head of Christian Studies about their concerns. A School Counsellor is also available for a time of debriefing if your child feels it is necessary.

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

We cannot guarantee that your child will receive any direct benefits from being in the study, but it is hoped that the findings will benefit the school community as a whole as well as the broader community of faith-based schools.

(9) What will happen to information that is collected during the study?

All information gathered in the course of this study will be stored securely and participants' identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published, but neither the school nor individual participants will be identifiable in these publications. During the course of the study, hard copies of the questionnaire, consent forms and observation notes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in Room 445 of the Education Building, A35, at the University of Sydney to restrict any unpermitted access. Electronic data, such as the audio interviews, will be stored on a password-protected iPhone initially, then transferred to a password-protected computer. All data will subsequently be digitised and stored securely on the University of Sydney's Research Data System. Access to original information will be available only to the Researcher and the Chief Investigator. The results collected will be analysed and published in a student thesis, journal articles and conference presentations. The school will also be offered a final research report in summary form to enable reflection on current practices. Individual participants will not be identified in the report or any publication or conference presentation.

Data collected in this study will not be used for any other purpose outside of this research project. Once the resources from the study are no longer required, they will be stored electronically for 20 years on the University's data management system, as per

the University's policy. Once the storage period has ended all data will be destroyed securely.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about your child for the purposes of this research study. Their personal information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise.

(10) Can I or my child tell other people about the study?

Please don't talk to other people about the study, in order to better preserve the anonymity of the school.

(11) What if we would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Ruby Holland will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. Feel free to ring her on 90367214 during office hours. If you or your child would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Ruby Holland at rho18243@uni.sydney.edu.au. Alternatively, Professor Ewing is available on 93513846.

(12) Will we be told the results of the study?

You and your child have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by ticking the relevant box on the consent form. This feedback will be in the form of a one page summary report. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

(13) What if we have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney [2017/900]. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you (or your child) are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

This information sheet is for you to keep

Appendix 3

Teacher Interview Question Topics

Discussion will revolve around:

1. I wonder if you could explain to me what was happening in your classroom when...
2. Hamlin an Anglican school. What do you understand by that?
3. How do you see Year 10 History/Christian Education as helping to fulfil the mission and ethos of the school? How do you feel about that?
(This will consider both the body of knowledge and the methodology of the discipline as well as the topics covered and pedagogy of History.)
4. The other day you commented on how informational the lesson was and how students simply want you to give them the information to pass the exams. Do you ever encounter the personal story of students in the classroom context? Do you see any links between the content of the subject and the way students see themselves, ie. Their identity? Can you give an example of how this has happened in your classroom?
5. What story of what comprises the good life do you think is told by the History curriculum in Year 10?
6. How is this story developed within the context of your classroom?

Semi-structured interview: students

Exploring the CONTENT of religious identity:

1. The first section of the questionnaire asked you to write down quickly the ‘top ten words’ to describe you. Please tell me why you chose those things.
2. If you had to do a similar thing for human beings generally, how would you describe them in five words? Begin with ‘People are...’.
3. Why did you give that ranking to ‘religion’?
4. Imagine yourself in ten years time. Describe for me your ideal life.

5. How do you decide what's right and wrong? Do your beliefs have a role?
6. What do you think the purpose of life is? Do you think the school has influenced this?
7. I'm going to list some things that are part of any school's culture and I want you to think about the story being told there about what makes a happy, fulfilling life: assemblies, chapel, pastoral care groups, co-curricular activities, relationships with staff, playground and classroom layout etc.
Taken together, what picture of the fulfilling life is painted there?
8. What story do your subjects tell you about the ideal life, especially about who you are and your purpose? Think about all the activities in class as well as the teacher and the topics you cover.
9. What topic from your History class has made you think about who you are and your purpose in life? Why did this influence you?

10. What has been the biggest influence so far on your life story? Some options may be for example, peers, technology, family, social media, your church/temple/mosque, an advocacy group etc.



Appendix 5

Sydney School of Education and Social Work
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

The Exploring Identity Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire. By answering the questions honestly you will help us understand how schools can best help students of your age to develop holistically. Your answers will be kept confidential by the researcher.

We are asking you to include your name, as this questionnaire will be used to identify four students who may like to participate further in the research by agreeing to an optional interview.

The questionnaire is in three different sections and we ask that you complete each section. The study should take about 30 minutes, but you may take till the end of the period if you wish.

NAME: _____

AGE: _____ CLASS: _____

PART 1: Who Are You?

For this first section, imagine that you need to describe or identify yourself to someone that you have *never* met, who *cannot* see you, and does not know you from any other person in the world. This person can only know who you are through the following words or short phrases that you use. Now, as quickly as the answers come to your mind, write out the top ten words or short phrases that best identify who you are. **I AM...**

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

PART 2: How important are these areas to who you are?

Please consider each of the following areas of identity that are listed in alphabetical order. How important is each area in your thinking about who you are? Please rank them with the numbers 1 through 10, with number 1 being the **most** important to who you are and 10 being the **least** important. Remember: Allocate number 1 to only one box: the one that is most important to how you identify yourself. Then allocate numbers 2 to 10 in descending order of importance for **how you see yourself**.

Rank each area on how important it is to WHO YOU ARE.

AREA	SOME EXAMPLES	RANK
• AGE	Past, future or present age	
• EDUCATION	Level you aspire to	
• ETHNICITY/CULTURAL GROUP	Anglo, Chinese/private school student	
• FAMILY/FRIENDS	Parents, siblings/peers	
• GENDER/SEXUALITY	Male/female or sexual orientation	
• HOBBY/SPORTS/LEISURE	Soccer, music, partying	
• PERSONALITY/PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS	Extraverted, pessimistic, kind, aggressive, shy etc.	
• POLITICAL/ETHICAL	Community/personal values	
• RELIGION	Personal faith or church, mosque, temple membership	
• VOCATION	Career or calling	

PART 3: To what extent have you decided who you are?

This third section consists of 28 statements that require a response. If the statement has two parts (connected with "and"), take it as a whole and ask yourself if you agree with both parts of the statement (not just one part). Please tick only one box to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. When it comes to religion, nothing appeals to me and I don't really feel the need to look.						
2. I've thought about my faith frequently and know what I can believe.						
3. I have never really thought about "who I am."						
4. I've never really questioned my religion because it's just part of my family.						
5. I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.						
6. After considerable thought I've developed my own view of what is an ideal "life style" and I'm not likely to change my view.						
7. I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my mind but I'm not done yet.						
8. I feel like I am still trying to find out "who I am."						
	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9. Religion is confusing to me and I keep changing my views on which one, if any, is best.						

10. In finding an acceptable worldview, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration.						
11. After going through a period of serious questions about faith, I can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.						
12. Because I share my family's views on life, I don't need any others.						
13. I am still exploring my faith and I'm not sure where I will end up.						
14. I am committed to my religious beliefs without ever questioning my faith.						
15. I have a few religious or spiritual beliefs, but I am not committed to any religious tradition and am not concerned about finding one.						
16. My faith is very important to me, and I have never really doubted it.						
17. I have a lot of questions about different faiths, like "Which one is true or best?"						
18. There's no single "life style" which appeals to me more than another.						
	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19. It took some time and effort, but after wrestling with my faith, I now know what I believe.						
20. I know what I believe, and even though I don't believe everything in my religious tradition, it's still a part of who I am.						

21. I like my church/mosque/temple/religious community, and I have never considered changing to another.						
22. I don't see religion as important to who I am, and I'm not concerned with religion.						
23. My religious beliefs are different from others, and I am still forming them.						
24. I know "who I am" and I never had to worry about it much.						
25. I've questioned a lot of things about religion, and I now feel at peace with my faith.						
26. I've never thought about whether religion is important to me or not.						
27. I did a lot of searching and exploring and I now have a good sense of "who I am."						
28. I attend the same church/faith community that my family has always attended, and I've never really questioned why.						

Adapted from the *Bell Measure for Religious Identity—Religious Identity Salience and Status* (Bell, 2009)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

I trust you enjoyed it and found it helped you develop a better sense of your identity.

Ruby Holland

Appendix 6

Responses to Questionnaire Part 3

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Agree	Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. When it comes to religion, nothing appeals to me and I don't really feel the need to look.	4,9,10,15 17,24 H	1 8,13,14,21 Je	2, 6,12,18 19,25 J	4,5,12 1,7,11,16 23	6,10,11, 13,14 3,5,22	1,7,8,9,3 2,20 C,F,A
2. I've thought about my faith frequently and know what I can believe.	3,7,10 2,4,7,9, 10,20,24 F	4,6,8,11,14 5,6,13 H,A	1,2,5,9, 12 1,11,12 16,23, 25 J	3,14,18,19 C	13 8, 17, 21, 22 Je	15
3. I have never really thought about "who I am."		2,13 15, 21	5,8,11 1,2,5,14 24 F,Je,A	3,4,6,7,9 6,11,12, 13,19,20 22,23,25	1,12 4,7, 16,18 H	10,14 3,8,9,10, 17 C, J
4. I've never really questioned my religion because it's just part of my family. <i>#9 Family's religion is non-religious</i>		6,8 9,11,14,15, 17, 21 F	2 13,24	1,3,5,12, 14 1,4,8,12, 18,19,20 23 C	7,9,11 3,5,6,7,16 22	4,10,13 2,10,25 J
5. I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.	4,15,17, 21	13 6,8,9,13,18, 19,24 Je	2,12 10,12, 14,25 J	5,11 1,3,7,11, 16,23 H	1,4,10 22	3,6,7,8,9, 14 2,5,20 C, F, A
6. After considerable thought I've developed my own view of what is an ideal "life style" and I'm not likely to change my view.	1,15 C	5,6,12 5,7,9,22,24 H	3,4,7,8, 10,13, 14 10, 16, 17,18, 19, 21 Je	1,2,9,11 3,4,6,8, 12,13,25 J, A	2,10,11,14 23 F	20
7. I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my mind but I'm not done yet.	6,10 8 A	1,2,4,12 3,11,14, 16 17,18, 22	11,13 12,13, 15,23 J	5 1,6,7,19, 21,25 Je	7,9 5,9,10,20 C, F, H	3,8,14 2,4,24
8. I feel like I am still trying to find out "who I am."	2,4,6,10, 13,14 3,4,8 J	3,12 2,7,9,10,17 22,23 C, Je	1,5,7,8, 9,11 1,11,12 14,16, 18 H,A	6,15,24, 25 F	5,13,19,20 21	
9. Religion is confusing to me and I keep changing my views on which one, if any, is best.	A	1,13 11,13 Je	2,12 14,18 J	5 3,8,12,15 16,19,25	4,9,11 7,10,22,23	3,6,7,8, 10,14 1,2,4,5,6,9 17,20,21, 24

						C, F, H
10. In finding an acceptable worldview, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration.	10 5, 17	3,5,7,9 7,8,9,11,15, 16, 22,24,25 J	1,2,6,8, 12,13, 14 2,3,4,10 18, 21 C, Je, A	4,11 12,14,19 F	1,6,20,23 H	13
11. After going through a period of serious questions about faith, I can now say I understand what I believe in as an individual.	3,8 2,4,9, 17 24 H	1,4,7,9 1,5,7,10,19, 20,21,23 F	5,6,10, 11,14 11 C	2,12 8,12,15, 16,25 Je,A	3,6,14,18, 22	13 13 J
12. Because I share my family's views on life, I don't need any others.	17	7	8 4,24	1,5,7,14 12,13,14 19,20, 21 22 C,H	3,4,6,11, 12,13 1,3,9,10, 16,18 J	2,9,10 2,5,6,15, 23,25 F,Je,A
13. I am still exploring my faith and I'm not sure where I will end up.	2,10,13 16,17 A	11,12 5,11,18	1,4,5,6 3,12,13 14,20, 22,23, 25 J	9 2,6,8,10 F,Je	3 1,7,9,15, 19, 21 C	7,8,14 4,11,24 H
14. I am committed to my religious beliefs without ever questioning my faith.	8 4, 17	7,15, 21	3 24 F	2,5,6,9 1,2, 16, 19	11,12,14 3,5,6,10, 14,13,18, 20,23 C	1,4,7,10, 13 8,9,11,12, 22,25 J,H,Je,A
15. I have a few religious or spiritual beliefs, but I am not committed to any religious tradition and am not concerned about finding one.	1,15,16, 17,19	2,13 5,6,7,12,13	5,6,12 3,4,9,14 18,25 J, Je	1 8, 21, 22 A, H	10 10,23 C	3,4,7,8,9, 11,14 F 2,11,20,24
16. My faith is very important to me, and I have never really doubted it.	8 17,24	3 1,2,13,20 F	9,14 4,7 C	1,2,5,7, 10 5,12,14, 15,16,18 19,22,25	4,6,11,12, 13 3,10,11, 21,23 J,A	6,8,9 H,Je
17. I have a lot of questions about different faiths, like "Which one is true or best?"	2,8 13,17,22 A	6,13 5,11,19,23 Je	1,4,7, 12 1,2,4,14 16,18, 20,25 J,H	5 8,9,12,15	9 3,6,7,10, 21,24 C	3,10,11,14 F
18. There's no single "life style" which appeals to me more than another.	6,7,8,11, 17	1,2 2,14,16,21, 23,24,25	6,13 1,3,12, 18	3,8,9,10, 14 4,10,13, 19,22 J,F,A	5,7,11,12 9,15,20 H,Je	4 5 C
19. It took some time and effort, but after wrestling with my faith, I now know what I believe.	3,7,8 2,17,24 H	10 7,10,21,23	4,5,6, 9,11 1,5,9, 19,20 F,Je	1,2 3,8,13, 14,15,16 18,22,25 C, J	12,13 4,11,12 A	14 6

20. I know what I believe, and even though I don't believe everything in my religious tradition, it's still a part of who I am. #9 no answer	10,14 5,24	8,11,13 2,4,6,7,11, 17,23 A	3,4,5, 6,7 1,8,10, 13,16, 19 H	1,2,9,12 3,14,15, 18,20, 21 22,25 C,J,Je	12 F	
21. I like my church/mosque/temple/ religious community, and I have never considered changing to another.	4,11,14 2, 17 F	7 1,7,9,11,19	2,5,9 5 J	1,6,8,12 3,4,18,20 21,22 C	3,10,13 12,14,15, 16,23,25	6,8,10,13, 24 H,Je,A
22. I don't see religion as important to who I am, and I'm not concerned with religion.	6,9,10,15 24 Je	1,10 7,13,14, 21, 22,23 H	1,4,16, 17,18, 19,25 J	2,5,12,13 3,11,23 A	4,6 5,8,12	3,7,8,9, 11,14 2,20 C, F
23. My religious beliefs are different from others, and I am still forming them. #5 no answer	8,10 3, 17 A	4 10,19, 21, 22,23	1,2,11, 12,13, 14 8,11,12 16,20, 24,25 J,Je	5,7 1,14,15, 18, C,F	6,9 2,4,7,9,13 H	3 6
24. I know "who I am" and I never had to worry about it much.	15,24	2 1,7,13,20, 21, 22 H	6,8,9 2,4,6,11 18,25 F	1,3,7 9,10,14, 16,17,23 J,Je	5,10,11,12, 14 5,12,19 A	4,13 3,8 C
25. I've questioned a lot of things about religion, and I now feel at peace with my faith.	7 17,24 H	6,8 1,2,4,7,13, 19,20,21,23	3,4,9, 14 9,10,15 16,25 C,F	2,5,11,12 3,5,8,11, 14,18 J,Je,A	1,13 12, 22	10 6
26. I've never thought about whether religion is important to me or not.	17	14, 15, 21, 22 Je	8 18,19, 24	1,2,5,6,7, 13 1,3,6,8,9 23,25 J,H	4,12 7,10,11, 12,13,16, 20 C	3,9,10, 11,14 2,4,5 F,A
27. I did a lot of searching and exploring and I now have a good sense of "who I am."	24 H	1,6 7, 15,19,20 21,23 F	3,5,7, 12 6,9,10, 17,18	2,8,9,14 1,3,4,16, 25 J,C,Je,A	10,11,13 2,11,12, 13,14,22	4 5,8
28. I attend the same church/faith community that my family has always attended, and I've never really questioned why. #5 Why are these linked #9 We don't attend any	6,8,14 11,17	1,7,15,22 Je	2,3 4 F	1,5,12 5,9,16, 19,20	7,10 3,12,14,18 21,23 J, C	4,9,11,13 2,6,8,10, 13,24,25 H,A

KEY TO TABLE

Red: Hamlin students who were not interviewed

Blue: Cowper students who were not interviewed

Black: J=Jason; C=Charles; H=Han; F=Fiona; Je=Jenny; A=Ai

Appendix 7

Coding: *First phase*

Initial Coding		
1	Explicit statements around "who am I?"	
2	Explicit statements around "what is my purpose?"	
3	Content/topic areas of curriculum	
4	Methodology/skills areas of curriculum	
5	Head's role	H
6	Student identity as Cowper Boy, Hamlin Girl.	
7	Enacted curriculum: teacher impact on class environment through personality/pedagogy	
8	Explicit statements around human flourishing/good life/character education	
9	Reference to worldviews	
10	Initiatives re moral purpose eg. Chapel	
11	School culture/goals etc. including staffing	
12	Teacher identity/values	
13	Student-teacher relationships	
14	Family heritage/values	F
15	Anglican identity	A
16	Curriculum framework	FW
17	Ethical implications of curriculum	E
18	Physical site, including classrooms	S
19	Student values	✓
20	Possible comparison points between Cowper and Hamlin	C

Appendix 8

Coding: *Second Phase, Example from Hamlin*

CATEGORY	POSSIBLE ASSERTION/PROPOSITION	CONFIRMING DATA
The story told by the curriculum 16,17 1,2 A. Holistic Provision 1. Cohering Framework 2. Co-curricular provision	1. There is a cohering teaching and learning framework that undergirds all activities of the school. It is not a framework that centres Christian Education as the Chaplain and CE teachers would like. It coheres around opening up possibilities rather than suggesting definite approaches. How it bridges the gap between aspiration and practice, theology and epistemology is the challenge. It 'seeps through': 'it permeates' However, it does have a clear sense of purpose and explores the nature of persons from a faith basis. 2. More cohering appears to be the understanding of people, as evidenced in CE and Chapel and in the foundation of the FW.	HC3 re T&L foundation in understanding humanity. HS2 re impact 'it seeps through' HS2-1 re 'gospel framed' T&L framework HS3 re link to Anglican identity/gospels; 'foundation of the school', embedded in all programs, sequencing, posters in rooms, behaviour, teacher practices;; responses from students 'implicit' HS1 re basis of school culture: 'it permeates everything we do' HS4 re CE outside the formal curriculum because not assessed. HC3 re key questions allowing a Christian perspective. HC3 re Bible justifies framework across all aspects HS2-9 re Big Picture/Small picture
10	1. Camps, bible studies and Chapel are very significant in exploring student identity as leaders. 2. The emphasis on service is carried forward into identity salience in the area of 'purpose'.	HS2 re central role in relation to understanding people and purpose. HS1 re 'educational package' allows for co-curricular strategies to become forefront.
8 3. Character education/ links with flourishing life Service	Character education refers constantly to the biblical source. However, it is a minor aspect of the Hamlin offering with the Head exploring a keyword every year. Chaplain didn't even know what it meant. They produce a woman with certain character traits. There appear to be many different answers to what comprises a flourishing life. The dominant discourse is around service and having a global impact for good and chaplain fits subjects in there. Is there a general emphasis on action not	HS1 re doing minor virtue work: one word per year HC3 re 'young people need to witness unambiguous commitment to and confidence in Christian values and lifestyle' HC3 re 'associated characteristics' Student interviews. HS2-4 'certain character traits' 'understand self, world etc' HS2-5 re 'know the one whose image' HS3-1 re learning discernment

	reflection on the nature and methodology of subjects (role of Christian perspectives) What is role of motivation? And relation between thought and action in identity development? However the vision is clear that there is one that is endorsed by the school: the Protestant conversionist version.	HS3-2 re make a difference in relation to person and events. HS2-6 'it's all about service' 'think beyond yourself into the world' HS2-8 Role of subjects to 'serve and love people in deeper ways...'
3 B. History, Christian Studies 1. Curriculum Topic areas relevant to identity development Wisdom	1. In History there is some deliberate programming that explore who am I? and what is my purpose? The teacher deliberately addresses some key areas because of the identity of her students. The whole History syllabus for this year really addresses aspects of Australian identity in a general way. 2. There is evidence it is having an impact on student identity because of the personally challenging topics in Year 9 &10 History such as the Vietnam War. Students are questioning who they are and their family's involvement in the events. But is the teacher directing response according to his/her values? 3. Key questions and concepts are recommended by the Hamlin framework as allowing a space for Christian perspectives. 4. Living wisely emphasised by Chaplain. Christian Education Unit explored philosophical and theological basis of ethical systems. The use of a textbook ensured that there is one approved answer. This is confirmed by teacher's disclosure to me that she wants them to take up a biblical view of ethics (based on Sydney evangelical ethicist, Michael Hill's ideas) Teacher wants a belief-based response to the lesson but implements largely modernist strategies. Nature of people is emphasised with a role for ethics. Year 7 gives a theological foundation, Year 8 uses 2 ways 2 Live with a journal response, whole story of Bible is taught, forgiven by God, loved by God, live life for others. Empathise, don't attack eg. Abortion issue in Year 10: journaling/small groups.	H01 H04 2. HS3-1 re White Aust. Policy, movem't of peoples, federation chosen by teacher. Other topics in 8,10,11,12. 'students do take it personally' HS3 re approval of President Diem by a student → plurality of voices. HC3 p. 25 'The presence of overarching questions...Christian perspectives as appropriate.' 4. HS2 re subjects role in living wisely ' HS4-2 story told by the curriculum: 'God has created you in His image, with the purpose to love him, then rule the earth in a loving way'. CE 'tells it in pockets...ethics is part of loving others' H02,3 re approach to content HS2-6 re identity=serious H02-1 "How to convince students of worth of Christian view of ethics is my challenge."
4 2. Skills areas relevant to identity	Thinking skills as necessary for autobiographical memory and interpretation of experience are being actively taught in class. But they are not applied directly to identity.	HC3-23 re curiosity, thirst for knowledge, desire for understanding HS3-1 re multiple perspectives, judicial judgement, informed, versus

development Wisdom	Questioning is encouraged, but appears not to critique the syllabus. This is still done however with reasoned argument. Teacher is deliberately choosing strategies that promote skills related to moral purpose. Teacher sees herself as the model of a flourishing life for her students including 'hope'.	anachronistic moral judgements. HS3-2 'I like to think I model the flourishing life' 'strong believer, optimistic that everyone can, life is good...hope'. HO1, HO4
9 3. Exploration of alternative worldviews and ethical frameworks Wisdom	Students must explore plausible alternatives in order to commit to one. This is allowed in Christian Studies, but only one view is really accepted: because of the goal of the subject Christian worldview and ethics (Hill's view in text). In History, multiple worldviews are explored and a great deal of freedom offered.	HO2,3 Student interviews HS4-1 the aim of CE is "to give all the girls a good and faithful understanding of the Bible and the gospel in particular then how it applies to people's lives".
The story told by staff and students 7,12,19 The person of the Teacher 1. personal identity/personality	Young female teachers with faith have had a huge impact on students exploring the faith and experiencing 'conversion'. Gender and age support relating. (Link with teacher/student relationship). The History teacher is obviously committed to her students achieving well and she also values them as people with God's image. Does she see the role of history in the school's ethos as developing reason which in turn will enhance students' capacity to develop a faith response?	HS1 re her staffing deliberately HO2,4 re informational approach to study. She is their supporter in achievement HS3-1 re reason leading perhaps in her view to wisdom? This may stem from a background akin to Catholic role of reason.
12,19 2. values/personal faith	1. Conflicted Non-Christian staff: must take a very sophisticated approach to their role in relation to the school ethos. Lifestyle, evangelistic goal of school, subject support for ethos and personal ethos are all possible sites for internal and communal conflict. No teachers mentioned as struggling to affirm school ethos, indicating the power of the cultural story. 2. The way topics are taught depends on the alignment of the school's and the teachers' values and their understanding of the framework. Some general application is made. Working in the space that the framework allows emphasises professional choice and teacher empowerment; but perhaps at the cost of genuine exploration of the subjects.	HC3 re 'associated characteristics' HO2, 3 HS1 re take-up by staff General observations of culture, including HT chapel observation 2.HS3-1 re contribution of History to school's ethos focussed on reasoning
12, 19 3. Staffing	The staffing of the school with teachers who do not share the same faith does not impact	HS1-9,10 re critical mass, ideal, no eye-rolling re faith issues; critical mass of

	negatively on those with an already-developed religious identity as Christian or Anglican, because the culture is so blatantly Protestant. It is a powerful, unapologetic stance that all teachers have to fall in line with, even joining bible studies to be converted. Critical mass of students as well as staff changes the culture. Chaplaincy team is embodiment of gospel and the tool for “permeating”.	students accompany that to change the culture of the school HS1-4 ‘vibrant, young, enthusiastic...fun, in touch people...energetic...It just sort of permeates everything we do’. HS1-4 re Success due to “I think it’s the relationships that happen between the girls and the chaplaincy team.”
7,13 Enacted curriculum at the intersection of teacher/student and pedagogy/content	History: General student participation in class is engaged but very focussed on information. This supports students’ personal meaning and identity-making as diligent and involved. Links to Hamlin Girl and general school culture?? Christian Education Unit explores philosophical and theological basis of ethical systems. The use of a textbook ensures that there is one approved answer. This is confirmed by teacher’s disclosure to me that she wants them to take up a biblical view of ethics (based on Sydney evangelical ethicist, Michael Hill’s ideas) Teacher wants a belief-based response to the lesson but implements largely modernist strategies. General Big picture in Christian faith, small picture in classroom	History HS3-2 ‘for some students...skin’ History ‘nourishes, affirms identity’ ‘growth only comes through challenge and history does all of that.’ Christian education HS4-1 Responses: ‘In lessons over time and relationships with students and figuring out how to love them and show them grace’ Result? ‘It depends on everything else happening in the school’ General HS2-9 re big picture (Christian beliefs/framework), small picture
1 Student and staff responses to specific statements re ‘Who am I?’	Re questionnaires: This is the stage that interviewed students are at compared to other girls at this point of time. 1. Jesus 2. Serious attention to lots of things. 3. Family formed me: my ethnic heritage, my moral framework ...then friends and school with its ‘education and values’.	1. HC3 re Flourishing life focussed on Jesus Christ. HS2-6 re ‘I think the girls get their identity from it’s a school that takes a lot very seriously’ HS4-1 “World religions in Year 9 engages them because they come from different religious backgrounds.”
2 Student and staff responses to specific statements re ‘What is my purpose?’	1.Service is the heart of life purpose. Using subjects to train for service globally. 2.Empathy Living with a focus on others, Indigenous education at the school. 3. Diversity cultural, Chinese students competitive, little bit religious diversity, geographic...all over Sydney, socio-economically, talent-wise. 4.Power for women.	1.HS1-11 re purpose ‘opportunities to serve are key, so embedding the notion of service all through the school is very important so we have lots of service opportunities here’. 2. HS1-11 re ‘Indigenous education...girls get first hand exposure to how other people might have to live...developing their empathy and understanding’. HS4-2 ‘Foundation of all

		things...empathise' HS4-1 "God has created you in His image, with the purpose to love Him, then rule the earth in a loving way."
The story told by the school 18 A. The Hamlin Girl 1. Classroom features, incl. class size, site, layout, resources	Students are fairly cramped in a tightly-bound site. Classrooms fairly average, some very old and worn. Class sizes of about 25-28 in middle school. Girls sitting around talking mostly.	General observations of the site.
6,8,11,16 2. School culture	1. Rules and guidelines are quite specific. Obeying them equates to a good Hamlin Girl. Litter is condemned by the girls. Girls are conservatively dressed. 2. Girls appreciate the culture for its emphasis on niceness, fun, service, classiness, women in leadership. 3. Goals or aims of a Hamlin education as contained in the framework exert a strong influence on the culture. 4. Other influences on culture are the Head and the emphasis on working hard. 5. Head describes Hamlin girl in tender terms as the articulated vision.	HF1 HS3 HC3-20 re foundational beliefs and values→ethos, relationships and attitude to learning and knowledge→tone and culture. HS2-6 HSC results 'doing well can become a bit of an idol' 'their perceived future can give false security and it can be crushing. HS1-7 re sweet, gentle, kind, funny, maybe too innocent, loyal, loves school, totally unassuming, amazing, lovely, grateful, value education, not privileged HC3-5 re exit outcomes such as articulate and confident
8 3. Explicit statements of the flourishing or good life answering Who am I? What is my purpose?	Hamlin framework refers to an understanding of people and purpose. And a theological understanding of flourishing. But no evidence of mention in the mainstream curriculum apart from the emphasis on service/ethical considerations of the curriculum (eg Maths example from Chaplain). Indeed, Head when she talks about Christian Ministry specifically mentions chaplaincy team, bible studies, mandatory chapel etc, but not how the teachers implement curriculum or apply the framework's foundation to their classroom.	HC3-4,5 HO1 HO4 HS2 HS1 re chaplaincy team etc and not curriculum

	Chaplain talks of who we are and how we can function wisely. In this he may be reflecting OT story of FL in Proverbs 11, for example.	
6,8 5. The Christian/classical dialogue	There is some attempt at 'character education' according to the Head, although the Chaplain doesn't even know the meaning of the term. Does it actually work to change people long term or just when they are in school? Does its interaction with what students are learning restrict the impact the learning can have? A kindly, relational and service-oriented view of femininity is partnered with the idea of powerful women is promoted. Conversionism may dominate other approaches.	HS1 HS2 HO2,3 Questionnaires Student handbook Student interviews HQ1,2 re self-descriptions AV3
15 B. Understandings of Anglican identity	This is seen as: 1. Protestant 2. Conversion focussed 3. Valuing rigorous learning 4. Enacting the gospels in the framework 5. Biblicist 6. We call it bible based evangelical 7. A few 'tiny little' traditions 8. Conservative in titles and dress 9. Tradition of excellence in all areas 10. Personal characteristics such as respect for authority and diligence	HS1 HS2 HS3 HS4 Student interviews Q: Is Hamlin identity truly Anglican or does it reflect the Head's understanding of one branch of Anglicanism, its Baptist cousin's Sydney Anglican protestantism?
The story told by the staff and students: imaginative holograms 5,19 Head's role	1. The Head is the embodiment of the powerful woman. 2. The Head's assembly and chapel addresses lay out the school's identity as she is the director of the culture. Students affirm this is bible based. 3. Staff are given direction in relation to applying the school's ethos by the Chaplain to whom the Head defers for spiritual leadership. 4. Apparent WV and ethos agreement at each level of responsibility creates a coherent picture of a flourishing life. This is reinforced at every level of the school, but within a broad understanding of what it means to be a Christian professional. A full-bodied hologram would be a good metaphor for the vision of the flourishing life: imaginative, attractive, somewhat embodied, yet elusive. This	HC3 re spiritual leadership in tandem with the Chaplain. HS1 re only having to please one person HS2 Head is the chief driver of the culture with her talks at assembly which she gives a lot of time to. HF Questionnaires The gap between top down and ground up is where the ethos is being developed (Donnelly)

	hologram works in the staff member's mind to influence decisions about both planned and enacted curriculum. It appears to be a personal version Hamlin Girl. 5. A form of 'theological hierarchy' (Green, Donnelly) exists in the school, given that the most senior staff are Christian and the Head would appreciate more staff with beliefs.	
16,17,19 Chaplain's role	Chaplaincy is constructed in a way that is not particularly 'traditional'. He appears to have had significant input into the Hamlin Framework and so the role may be seen as relevant to the 'mainstream' planned/enacted curriculum. He appears to be the only one with a well thought out educational philosophy apart from the Head. It still focuses however on the 'religious' activities of the school that it prefers not to label 'Anglican'.	HS1 HS2
19 Head of History's role	The curriculum is given form at every level of the school, but the faculty head is the chief gatekeeper determining how the curriculum will be implemented in their subject. She drives it according to her understanding of Anglicanism, Christianity etc.	HS3 HC3-21 re all members of staff supporting ethos.

Appendix 9a

Coding: Final phase: Sample of Hamlin memoos

History: Deliberate Choices to further Moral Purpose

1. Topic choices related to student identity as recent immigrants. *typical ideology lesson*

2. "Plurality of voices" in history *allowing* *interp* *meaning-making*

3. White Aust. Policy put into Yr 9: Movement of Peoples & Federal *personal identity in* *pluralist Aust.*

4. breadth of Hist - social issues *anachronistic*

5. skills - see opp

6. nourishes, affirms 'id. than T. rel.

Anglican Identity

15. - bound up in (CHCF) which fulfils the gospel

- she then elaborates on it

- programs • posters - behav
- sequencing - thing prac
- in hist. Yr. - T/S rel.

- X in groups → exper. + hearing Ang id.

Pl. ← able to reason - of looking to Ang id.

Personal Impact

'Students do take it personally' *topic*

Pers. nature of Hist. than *choice of investigation*

3X stated *issues raised in class* *eg Hist. research*

Process - sources examined, then family exper.

allowing 'plurality of voices' in Hist can lead to inadvertent relativism or forget to explore W.V.

History Teacher Interview

P1 *H3*

1. "That student's voice is heard."

1. "Students do take it personally."

2. "Plurality of voices."

15. 16. "The foundation of the school is (CHCF)." *Anglican faith*

- embedded in all programs
- posters in classroom give support for the

girls response "implicit"

Chaplain's role = "model" *Anglican id.*

15. CHCF "it fulfils the gospel that are integral to"

16. "entry point for girls" they are not all X's

17. History's contrib. to sch. ethos promote

- "lifelong learners"
- "valuing multiple persp."

Reason

- "being informed, adopting persp, being judicious in judgement."
- "it all comes down to being really informed & able to decipher, see holes in arguments."

18. - "breadth of Hist exposed re social issues"

- *other times* "moral values" not applicable to
- W.V. "Ethical!"

to know as I put it in"

(which

Appendix 9b

Coding: Final phase: Sample of Hamlin memoos

Protestant School

Anglican Identity

1. minor traits like seasonal colours (she downplays this 'Baptist background')
2. excellence in those things the school prioritises
3. conservative - titles/dress - symbolic of power rel?
4. academic rigour
5. evangelical Kn
6. hierarchy & structure (it's almost ideal)
7. But - staff don't care or get it & she indicates
8. Bible-based belief - of students.

Relationship in Diocese

1. Again, she distances herself - "I'm so pleased not to have been homegrown!" for me there is no conflict.
2. emphasises independence: she's calling it evang. even if it's not
3. interprets Anglicanism in terms of the school's message.
4. indicates #3 agrees in diocese
5. 3 level or system hierarchy: corporat, diocesan & independent.
6. compare to WCC - maybe ironic that WCC has closer ties ???

X'n Ministry in terms of -
is how Head sees the Kn, Bible-based, evang, working out.

Staffing

HS1 - Head

Staff Interviews

1. Anglican mess of the school impacts in a few ways:
 - traditions we honour ... not a lot of those...
 - certain colours on display at certain seasons ... tiny little things like that.
 - "We value learning & I think the Anglican trad. values that rigour."
2. "We being an indep. Anglican school are allowed to call it as we see it in many ways so we call it a Bible-based evangelical Kn message."
3. "I think we as a school fit very happily as an Anglican school in the Sydney Diocese."
4. "There's no denying that's evang. Bible-based belief at the school & approach to the school."
5. "We have a big emphasis on the Kn ministry of the school." - huge chaplaincy team - diff. roles off Kn staff w/ active Kn faith (hard to get competent Kn staff)
 - mandatory Chapel & CE lessons
 - B.S. for staff, parent, Chinese parents
 - Kn seminars + optional Bible study
 - 200 students going weekly
 - praying City, incl. Central & old.
6. "We have a huge no of Kn staff w/ active Kn faith & many of them are choosing to come to work at CHC. That's great. It's becoming harder & harder to think to get competent Kn staff."