



2015 Curricular Integration Workshop

Christian History

As a starting point for thinking about where work and the economy might arise in classes, the table facilitator (Charlie Self, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary) provided these “touchpoints”:

NT and early church poverty alleviation and principles of stewardship (AD 30-250)

Sacred-secular divide: mixed blessings of monasticism, Benedictines, mendicants, clergy/lay “calling” (AD 250+)

Christian ethical influence on property, slavery, work and money in late antiquity and early medieval Christianity

Reformation: money, vocation, property, economic policies, foundational principles for virtue-based liberty

Evangelical revivals: Methodism and movements of economic liberty and social change

19th/20th c. Christian views on markets and money; free market vs. mercantile/controlled economy debates

20th/21st c. Christian discernment and economic constructs: how are these informed by Christian history?

The faculty at the table brainstormed these additional “touchpoints”:

Note: The entire table agreed that a small colloquia of 15-20 historians would be valuable for strategizing future papers, books and other materials that integrate the ON vision and our curricular efforts. Our friends at the Land Center said they would be willing to host this and Nathan Hitchcock said he was happy to help put it together.

The rise of trade, towns and the middle class beginning in the 11th-13th centuries. This was concomitant with lay renewal movements, both within the Roman Catholic Church (Brethren of the Common Life) and among the marginal or persecuted (Waldensians).

Italian “urban saints: in the 13th-16th centuries – respect for lay vocations and economic flourishing as well as sacrificial charity.

Great expansion of health care and hospitals from early monastic beginnings (5th century) to the huge transfer of wealth in the 13th-15th centuries to the Evangelical concerns for the needy in the 17th-19th centuries.

Grant Wacker's work is helpful: history as a moral discipline.

Case studies are vital for motivating student about learning and applying history: they illustrate contextualization and innovation on the part of Christian leaders and pioneers.

We have a responsibility to help student hear other voices on economics and work as it related to culture and mission: for example, W.E.B. DuBois on what it meant to be "Negro and American" in the late 19th/early 20th century can inform us.

History integrates several disciplines and provided a solid basis for introducing seminarians to economics, political science and social psychology, as well as intellectual history outside of church dogmas.

The positive impact of Christian Mission: democracy, economic development, and literacy are just three examples of Gospel influence in a culture and nation. (Robert Woodberry, *The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy*)

The impact of Methodism in the 18th and 19th century: we need to hear all voices, especially ones outside the Halevy and E.P. Thompson debates.

More books: *Derek Chang, Citizen of a Christian Nation*; Timothy Miller's biography of Charles Sheldon unveils the real struggles Sheldon faced in calling people to socially-impactful discipleship.

Aquinas, Salamanca, Calvin and others on monetary policy as a moral/spiritual issue: Loans, investment, the difference between acceptable interest and usury (Issler).

What about monks hiring labor?

Some general observations:

- Much excitement about continuing sharing and gathering to see what is emerging in the discipline as well as contributing new insights.
- Case studies seem to offer the best entry points for integration.