

LECTURE BUILDING

BUILDING A LECTURE THROUGH ORDERING YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE

1. Intellectual methods, like social or religious methods, give form to the way life is. Whether lecturing, workshopping, or praying, one is trying to articulate the way life goes on. How does life go on in the spirit deeps? Once one grapples with the way life goes on in the spirit deeps, one can understand the meaning of participation in the discipline of prayer. How does life go on in the learning dimension? How does actual communication from one man to another take place? When one understands the dynamics of communication, one knows how to build a lecture.
2. Lecture giving begins with the process of building a lecture, pulling together what one has to say, and then organizing it into a dramatic happening. Lecture giving entails the method of presenting that material. Finally, it involves the pedagogue's style, which can only be grasped in the context of the whole of intellectual methods.
3. Imaginal Education is always drama; drama doesn't necessarily mean being rowdy. Rather, it has to do with human details, the spiritual depth in the actual experiences of people's lives. In order to build a lecture, one has to begin by getting all of his details out. Gathering details is the task of imaginal education.
4. The process of building a lecture and the process of giving a lecture are very related polarities. You might say they are one thing, because it is the demand to give a lecture that feeds back into the process of building one, and vice versa. But it is a different dynamic to look at the problem of preparing the construct for what needs to be put on in the lecture, from that of playing out the drama.
5. There are three critical stages in building a lecture, whether it is a brand new one or the reconstruction or reintensification of an old one. The first stage is that of recalling your own experiences and other illustrations of the life dynamics being brooded over. Your concern is to get out all you know. It is existential knowing--a memory of the deeps of life, how those deeps of life are experienced, and how they can be communicated by pulling them through your own life.
6. When you are doing that kind of recall in preparing for a lecture, you want to brainstorm as many experiences and examples as possible. You do not really care, at this point, what type they are. They may be episodic snatches out of your life or perhaps the structure of the whole lecture.

12. The third step is to carefully choose key illustrations, and spin them out in order to make them speak. This means taking the incident of the illustration, and writing down everything about it you can remember-- details about the people involved, their reactions, your emotions, the context--everything you can recall. Then you chop away at that information, deciding on the crux for the point needing to be made in the lecture. Neither an unclear illustration nor one burdened with unimportant detail is helpful in empowering your lecture. Therefore, you select the key information that "crux" depends upon, and spin it all out so the illustration will have the greatest impact.

13. With illustrations, the pedagogue needs flexibility. He needs to choose that which enhance his dramatic movement and address his particular group. When you are first lecturing, it does not seem to you a matter of which illustration to use, but how to get enough illustrations to fill up fifty minutes. But when you have given numerous lectures and heard others give them, that is definitely not your problem. Then, it is what to throw out of all the vast notes you have taken over the past year or two. Each person finally comes to the point where he makes the decision, "I have to give this lecture without my favorite illustration." You have to choose what you really need for the occasion, at the same time, honoring the corporate wisdom concerning powerful illustrations.

14. All illustrations must be pulled through one's life. Stealing from your colleagues is more than permissible in relation to lecture illustrations; it is utterly necessary. When someone tells a story, it is yours to use. That is part of being a corporate teaching staff, rather than just one teacher doing his own thing." However, people can spot a phony thief a mile away. A "non-phony" thief is one who has pulled his theft through his own experience so that he has almost forgotten where he first stole it; it has become so much a part of himself. There are certain kinds of illustrations one could not steal, no matter what. If you are four feet tall, an illustration about your great height comes off as phony, unless you make some radical changes in it. Someone illustrating his war experiences when he is a fifteen year old boy will not likely come off. Yet, if you can pull it off, then pull it off! You do not need to have been in the army to tell about war experiences you have actually had in your own life. Stealing is fantastic, but it has to be pulled through your own existence. Those listening could not possibly guess it is a lie because it so obviously applies to the human being they see standing before them. It is that kind of authenticity you are after, not some kind of phony honesty. After all, everything one has learned in his life is, in one form or another, stolen.

15. Illustrations need to be chosen relative to the quality of the happening needing to be performed. It is obvious, but quality is needed rather than quantity. Sometimes one illustration is so good you can pull a whole section of the lecture through it, so that you do not need many other illustrations. In other situations, you may be after a whole battery of illustrations just to barrage them with images. I heard a God lecture once where the pedagogue, in talking about "being overwhelmed," literally overwhelmed us with a battery of things. It was like you were getting a hundred illustrations, but you were really getting just one: that is, that the

to get across while a whole row takes only three minutes. Sometimes Paragraphs I, II, and IV of a lecture need only a sweep of the hand while Part III may take forty-five minutes. It is not helpful, when giving the Church lecture, for example, to spend two-thirds of the time on the "sickness of the Twentieth Century Church". One needs to decide, first, where the downbeat of the lecture is, or which dimension of the Church needs time spent on it. Out of that decision, then, the illustrating and "fleshing out" can be done.

20. The time plan needs to be thought through. Sometimes you have to give a lecture in only thirty minutes because you decided you had to spend the first thirty minutes mopping up other problems or getting ready to give the lecture. Then again, maybe you decide to go ahead and take an hour and fifteen minutes for a particular purpose. Generally speaking, however, there is a limit of fifty minutes or so on the time; and one must always respect that limit with great seriousness. Castro apparently could hold people spellbound for three hours, but I wonder if it was necessary. The happening should not be much more than the "seat" can take.

21. A third thing to be thought through is the dramatic movement. Those who have the most trouble with time are those who think giving a lecture is taking this whole paint tray and plastering it on everybody's life, tube by tube, until they run out of paint. If there is any illustration they know or anything they have noticed left out of previous lectures, they get it in. This may give the group a lot of paint but it does not create a drama, or a painting. The task of building what goes on in the classroom is the task of taking this complex paint tray and painting--for that particular class at that particular moment in history. So the crucial question is, "What do you want to have happen to this group of people today. what do they need? They do not need everything on your paint rack. Your job is to be a happening--a particular happening with a particular group of people on a particular afternoon. Therefore, to decide the intensification and ordering of what has to be done; to decide how to get on and of stage is to deal with the dramatic movement of the lecture as carefully and creatively as the 4x4x4.

22. The fourth thing is the selection of your particular illustrations in relationship to the particular group. One may use an entirely different set of illustrations from some other group. When courses are held in exurban areas, inner city areas, suburban areas, with youth, elders, and adults, one has to know what is going to be particularly helpful in each situation.

23. To summarize all this, thus far, the 4x4 is the place where the Movement maintains its corporateness in terms of the RS-I lectures. As a methodology, a 4x4 is very crucial. However, the actual material used needs to be flexible in relationship to the pedagogue and flexible in relationship to the occasion. The 4x4x4 is a methodology that is always being worked on, and acts as a paint palette out of which any particular lecture is given.

them, then you tell them, then you tell them what you have told them. Then you say the "benediction." In the very beginning you tell them the whole story and then come back at it in several ways.

27. The overall rhythm has to be thought through to put on a lecture. The easiest way to succeed in the overall drama is to begin with the intellectually comprehensive; that is, shock them with the rational thought-through-ness of what you have to say. Then move on to the histrionics, the dramatics. Unless you can sweepingly interest the intellectual, there is no permission to be histrionic. Once people have said, "Yes, I see what you are talking about," then the lecturer can tell them what he is talking about. By histrionic, I mean that a drama is pulled through your own being. The pedagogue is not just out to talk to the top of the head. He is out to talk to people's decision-making faculty, their illusion-spinning faculty. The only reason he is in there is to deal with the depth understanding, and struggling with life. Thus, a certain kind of histrionics are crucial.

28. Another way of talking about this is that the drama has to have its highest level of existential intensification at the end and not the beginning. If given a "knock-out blow" in Act I, they do not even listen to Acts II, III, and IV, whereas they really may have needed Acts II, III, and IV to figure out what knocked them out.

29. The first probe gives the students the idea and relates that idea to their whole life, so they are located as to where they will be working. The pedagogue comes in with a probe from the left. Then he comes in on the same subject with another probe from the right, saving the knock-out blow for the end. That follows the dramatic order of most good lectures - the last section of the 4X4 is the one with the "wallop" in it. At least it is true in the Church lecture. Another way to move is to get out the idea, do a probe and then do the knock-out blow third. The fourth section, then, is clarification of the decision that has to be made when a person is knocked out. Give them the idea, hit them once, and then level them on the floor. Then go over to them while they're on the floor and talk to them about the complexities they are now in. The Freedom lecture is like that. The last row of the Freedom lecture, the decision row, is like talking to somebody on the floor. "By the way, having to make all your own decisions and accept the consequences doesn't mean you are not a disciplined person." The Christ lecture is this way, also. When you get through with row three of the Christ lecture, the job is done, but then it is necessary to go back and clarify what this has to do with reinterpreting the symbols of the whole Christian faith. So the lecturer talks to them on the floor about Jesus and lambs and other mysterious things like that.

30. Any other order besides those two is probably poor. If the

it is necessary to think it through before beginning any lecture, what kind of pictures are going to be up on the board when the lecture is completed. We used to tease one colleague about photographing his board in technicolor when he finished because he always used four different colors of chalk. That is not necessary, but at least he took the issue of board work seriously.

34. The second thing is the use of voice. Lecturing is something more than just talking loudly enough so that everyone can hear without straining his ears--that is, unless the pedagogue wants them to strain to hear. After a quiet portion, you can pound back at them with something you have to say. The pedagogue does not give them a choice about hearing; they only have the choice of leaving the room. You can do a lot more with your voice than you think. You can bounce it off the table, make it sound like it is down underneath the table, ricochet it off the back of the room or bounce it off the ceiling. It can go where you want it to go. If you want to say something to a particular person, your voice will go right back to where you want it to go.

35. Some of us have magnolia blossom voices, but oh, what one of those can do! If you have a raspy old voice, a raspy old voice can do things no magnolia blossom can. There are teachers with terrible voices who do a fantastically effective job by deciding that the voice they have is the one they are going to use; and then they use it. If you have a Polish accent, or something exciting like that, decide you are going to use that accent to get the job done. There are advantages in being a Southerner in the North or a New Englander in the South, or a Canadian (They can get away with anything in the United States, just by talking Canadian.) If you have a voice that really needs to have something done about it, then do it. For example, I know a grown man who has the voice of a sixth grade girl. It was limiting for him and I do not know what he had done about it, but he has lowered his voice. It still sounds a little odd, but it doesn't sound like it used to. And he gets the job done.

36. The pedagogue also needs to use his body. You communicate with your body as well as with your voice. There is a skill to using gestures. I think many gestures should be very subtle. The underplaying of a shrug or a certain look can be very powerful. You may need some very exuberant gestures. They say when Reinhold Niebuhr preached, with his long arms and big hands, he would reach down to the bottom of the floor and then sweep the clouds of heaven. You can picture how that might be done with a gesture. He called transcendence down into the situation some way or another. The use of your body shows the way you deal with life. To affirm your body is to bodily affirm your relationship to your students.

37. One of our pedagogues, a small woman of about 4 feet 10 inches, was standing in front of a group, giving a lecture from her notes. It was suggested to her that in order to get and keep people's attention, she needed to move. She started to move around and talk to people. Her vivacity and enthusiasm and spryness were able to command attention in a way that made her appear three times her size. She looked like someone who ought to have everyone's attention. Then, there are those who look like someone who just came off a football field. One of our colleagues is like that. He is 6-feet-something and weighs well over 200 pounds. If he did what our short friend was asked to do, it would have such an impact that no one

THE REFINEMENT:

42. I want to say a word about "refinement." The question of vulgarity is not among the most important things to say about lecture-building, but it must be on the list. We have had some necessity as a Movement to make a strong attack on "pious-ity," or perverted piety. The occasional effective and symbolic use of some of the great four-letter Anglo-Saxon words to cut through the shallowness has been effective. They also give a secular word to say about life. I do not call them vulgar. Vulgarity is when one is just being cute, or is using a coarse, vulgar word for the sake of calling attention to himself, or any reason other than getting the job done. On the other side of that, there is the power in words like Kazantzakis uses, "the dung hill of our flesh and minds." If it is necessary to further intensify the lecture, you can use some of those choice Anglo-Saxon offerings, but only as they are appropriate to your particular audience.

43. In addition, we all have little ticks, or unconscious habits such as blowing our noses or scratching or playing with our hands. One needs to remember that we are dealing with the world's dignified public. For the ministry we are called to, we must not allow ourselves to be dismissed because of vulgarity. If you cannot defend your action before God himself, then do not use it.

44. There is also a necessary refinement in how you handle the role of teacher. A pedagogue must be very careful not to violate that role. To teach, you put on an artform and it must stand there doing its job, however poorly. It takes a certain discipline to respect the sacredness of what a pedagogue is trying to do. It is the discipline of not reaching out for approval, or not being overwhelmed by criticism. A pedagogue delivers up to God the deed of being a pedagogue. To the degree that he has given himself to that task, and received from the class its participation, he may have some sense after the presence of the Holy Spirit itself. That needs to be respected and honored--not disgraced with the need for approval, or a vulnerability to criticism. When a lecturer leaves the front of the room, the only thing he has left is his name written in the word forgiveness. It is not that he did or did not do a powerful deed. His only status is that before God, he is forgiven.

45. To put it another way, a pedagogue is not concerned with whether or not his class agrees with him. He does not care whether they make the decision to be saved or not. That is not his affair. That problem lies between the participant and God. The pedagogue never takes seriously any criticism or any approval. He does his job. He makes critically evaluate himself, but that is another matter. For the group, he uses whatever he has done to help call them forth as human beings. It may mean he must escape the situation entirely in order to do the best job of honoring them, which reflects the fact that more than anything else, people like to be let off the hook of what has been asked of them. When they come up after a lecture to talk to the pedagogue, they simply want him to tell them, "Well, it was just an act. It wasn't real." Or, "I didn't really mean it," or "Yes, you are right, there is another side to the story." There is never any other side to the story. The problem is, they don't want the story they have on their hands.

46. The third area has to do with honoring people. It is very closely related to the other two. It is a terrible thing to misuse an audience by saying things you are uncertain about, or that you yourself have not thought through. If you

hand, the less you have, the more temptation there is to belittle yourself. Oh, tragedy of tragedies if you show up limited in some area! For it allows you to let that limitation tell you you can belittle yourself further, which, in turn provokes disaster, or a temptation to bitterness.

50. The man who rests in the being that the Lord gave him to be with, cuts through the vain glory, cuts through the self-belittling, cuts through the bitterness and therefore is able to give his neighbor what the Lord gave to him. This is the kind of refinement I am talking about. Every human being has to find his own way to portray it. But whatever else we are out to communicate in being a teacher, it is to communicate the deep and wondrous and overwhelming spirit that revelation in Christ has led us to. In all of a lecturer's looks, manners, and uses of himself, he must communicate obedience to God. Or to put it another way, if he communicates the way it is, he communicates authenticity.

LECTURE BUILDING!

THE PRE-PLANNING/ING		THE LESSON PLAN		THE PRACTICAL TOOLS		THE REFINEMENT	
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Recall Life Exper.
 Create Rational Order
 Spin Key Illus

Drama Mom't

Reddalling Life Experiences

Creating Spin Rational Key Illus

Check your Emph T/L/Dra Partic on Illus

Create the Drama "Own" Stg Your Stories

Chalk board Voice Body

Personal Contact

Vulgarity Take Off Role

Honor People Looks

THE PRE-PLANNING/ING

THE LESSON PLAN

THE PRACTICAL TOOLS

THE REFINEMENT