

Nov-2016

## Editor's Notebook

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### Recommended Citation

Holman, Andrew C. (2016). Editor's Notebook. *Bridgewater Review*, 35(2), 2.

Available at: [http://vc.bridgew.edu/br\\_rev/vol35/iss2/3](http://vc.bridgew.edu/br_rev/vol35/iss2/3)

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**N**ormal school administrators, presidents and teachers must never lose sight of the fact that normal schools are not organized and maintained to provide a special class of workers with the means of gaining a better livelihood; these special schools are organized and maintained to train teachers for the state's children... upon whose right development... all good causes of the world depend.

– Ethel Masters, “Administration and Organization of State Normal Schools” (MA Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1913).

Written on the eve of an optimism-destroying global war, Ethel Masters' prescriptions about the administration of state normal schools might seem to us, today, both archaic and familiar. They describe an institution we have lost. World war and global depression transformed the character, clientele and *raison d'être* that state normal schools enjoyed at the turn of the twentieth century. As Miss Masters went on to a successful career teaching high school English and History in post-war Los Angeles, the normal schools she had studied morphed into something different: large, bureaucratic, multi-disciplinary and comprehensive state colleges.

In other ways, her words describe something familiar. They resonate still. Regrettably, some (students largely, but others, too) at Bridgewater State University—one of the nation's first normal schools—continue to look to their education too narrowly and instrumentally, as merely a vector to a well-paying job. But the other part of her message—her call for

service—echoes even more strongly on our campus today. “[T]he normal school must inspire the student to ‘minister, not to be minister[ed] unto’,” she wrote more than a century ago (invoking the biblical verse that former president Albert Gardner Boyden used in his commencement address of 1904, and

that later became our school motto). For Masters, faculty, administrators and staff, “must be... agent[s] ... on the part of society to improve and satisfy human wants by the universal establishment of good will.”

Those are lofty goals, but ones we pursue daily, in incremental ways. Ministry means many things. We minister to students and others by creating knowledge through scholarly inquiry,

research and publication; we minister through the subjects we teach and the ways we teach them; we minister through the off-campus experiences to which we expose students; we minister by investing ourselves in community and looking out for each other's well-being, and in many other ways.

The pages of this issue of *Bridgewater Review* detail a small portion of our educational ministry as researchers, as teachers, and as pursuers of “right development” on campus, in America and abroad. The articles take us from Bridgewater to China, Belize and Canada; they detail our own efforts to understand and draw energy from the Black Lives Matter movement; they report on academic successes and failures, community challenges and prospects, intellectual problems and progress across disciplines. They critique the latest scholarship. All of them are “agents for good will”; all of them fine examples of the ways that we, as scholars, teachers and engaged advocates identify and evaluate the world's “good causes.”

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*Andy Holman*