

1 Latin America and the Caribbean
2 Luce Workshop UCSB
3 January 16th, 2010

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6 **PANEL 1: Is the role of religion in Latin American and Caribbean public life changing?**

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8 **Fernando Lopez-Alves:** It's my honor and pleasure to introduce our first panel of this wonderful
9 workshop organized by the Orfalea Center here in Santa Barbara. We are privileged to be able to
10 organize things and to be able to actually invite people and to be able to sit around today because
11 there is no money anywhere in the university system. [laughter] There is no money, but
12 somehow we are blessed by this foundation. We are blessed by other governments. We want to
13 start [with] our rival from Riverside. We don't like these people, but still we keep inviting them
14 for some reason or another. [laughter]...It's my pleasure to introduce Jennifer Hughes. Her work
15 sounds important, and Jennifer has done very important work. *Biography of a Mexican Crucifix*,
16 published no less than by Oxford University Press, is her first book.

17

18 **Jennifer Hughes:** Thank you very much. I'm very happy to be here. I love having the junior
19 faculty person first up. Take the most junior person and make them start.

20

21 So the question we have before us this morning for this session is "Is the role of religion in Latin
22 American and Caribbean public life changing?" I suppose this morning that my comments are
23 going to emphasize continuity over change. And so I want to talk about the persistence of
24 traditional or popular religio-cultural institutions in a Roman Catholic context. But at the same
25 time that I am wanting to make this point about continuity, I want to say that these institutions
26 that express local religious practice are also malleable institutions and have been so historically.
27 And so they can be imbued with different content in response to the necessities of a given
28 historical moment. So continuity and malleability are two things, but I also want to isolate or
29 identify four points.

30

31 The first of these points is that, in spite of the growth of Pentecostal and Evangelical expressions
32 of Christianity in the last decades, it is still true that the majority of Latin Americans remain
33 Roman Catholic. I want to highlight the persistence of Roman Catholicism and the fact that on
34 some level there is no such thing as Catholicism, and there is no such thing as Christianity. If you
35 look at local expressions, if you have a local view, or a local approach to looking at global
36 Christianities, then the fact is that on the ground there is no one idea, belief, practice, or text that
37 could possibly even apply to most Christians in the world. And so I really want to emphasize that
38 prismatic local diversity of Christian expression so that even when we are talking about Christian
39 mega-churches in Sao Paulo or South Korea, on the surface they may look similar, but for people
40 in their personal, spiritual, aesthetic experience in the pews they have little in common with the
41 resonances and cultural references those places hold for the people.

42

43 The second point has to do with persistence. That is, Latin American religious practice in Roman
44 Catholic context both persists and continues to be profoundly local - oriented around locally
45 specific fiestas, saints, religious images, all of those things that are categorized as “folk religion.”
46 And these preserve, shape, and narrate very specific community identities - identities that are
47 ethnic, historic, cultural, and spiritual.

48

49 The third point is, when we try to draw close to communities and believers on the ground in
50 Latin America, activists or organizations have to find some way to recognize the fact that in
51 those belief systems divine agency has equal weight with human agency. So much of Western
52 institutions are focused on the role of human agency and development and social justice. But to
53 really understand, to feel close to, or near to people in their faith is to figure out the place of
54 divine agency in those projects for the people themselves whom, presumably, they are trying to
55 serve.

56

57 The fourth point is a very specific discussion that I want to open about the religio-cultural local
58 institutions that persist in most of Latin America, such as *mayordomias*, *cofradías*, religious
59 brotherhoods that are structures of lay religious authority orchestrating the collective practice of
60 local religion. At the same time, these institutions persist historically, and [yet] in the present
61 they are malleable, flexible institutions that are about lay authority and lay power. In some ways

62 I would argue that the Christian-based communities in liberation theology could be
63 comprehended as another expression of these institutions even though they came up against
64 *mayordomias* in some places. The (sebays) and the [indistinct] are just another version of those.
65 Furthermore, these local institutions are neither inherently conservative nor inherently liberating,
66 but they have facilitated both oppressive and liberating projects. Some have worked with
67 environmentalist NGOs, and in Mexico some have collaborated with government agencies
68 around art historical preservation in the protection of architectural and art historical treasures.
69 Also, these religious brotherhoods, *cofradias*, *mayordomias*, have leveraged transnational
70 financial support. For example, in parts of Mexico, these *mayordomo* networks raised huge sums
71 of money to support the Sandanistas by collecting loose change. And these networks were
72 behind the famous golf course rebellion, keeping out a large golf course that was funded with
73 capital from the United States. They kept it out of their community by taking over the town. And
74 that would have been a tremendous draw on limited water resources in that community. Plus,
75 they wanted to keep their town just the way it was.

76

77 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** Mark gave a stern admonition not to read, but I'm going to read just
78 a tiny section from my blurb, and then I want that to be the lead-in. I talk in the paragraphs I
79 gave you about a changed religious landscape in Latin America, which people tend to know, but
80 not everybody does know that Protestantism has become very much a part of the Latin American
81 religious landscape over the past 20 or 30 years, particularly Pentecostalism. Jennifer is right to
82 note that, even when you look at places like Guatemala or El Salvador or Honduras or Brazil or
83 Chile, they are all countries that have very high percentages of Protestants - maybe a third of the
84 population. Still, this means that 70% of the population is Catholic, and we should not lose sight
85 of that. However, the Catholic Church has indeed lost members to Protestant groups in the last
86 few decades. But by the same token, this has also forced Catholics to think about being
87 Catholics. Movements within the Catholic Church have revitalized it, particularly charismatic
88 Catholicism.

89

90 This changed religious landscape has, potentially, significant implications for civil society,
91 although it is hard to tell in which direction these implications point. As people redefine their
92 identities through religion in a way they did not necessarily do in the past, scholars and policy

93 analysts have predicted, for perhaps the past 20 years or so, that Protestants would become a
94 significant force in the political arena through the formation of evangelical political parties and
95 the fielding of “Christian” political candidates. Generally speaking, this has not yet happened—
96 the few examples of “Protestant” leaders such as Guatemala’s genocidal General Efraín Ríos
97 Montt in the early 1980s have proved to be very poor templates—and, historically speaking,
98 Latin American Protestants have eschewed political mobilization for its “worldliness.” This
99 antipathy for political participation, however, seems to be changing as a new generation of
100 second-generation *Evangélicos* begin to redefine their place in the world, and see politics as a
101 place where they can bring about “redemption” and reform. This, certainly, is a trend to be
102 watched.

103
104 I want to point out something that I don’t mention in my paragraphs, and that is the formation of
105 what they call “cell groups” in Latin America. It is not unique to Latin America, but it is
106 certainly widespread in Latin American Protestant groups and charismatic groups. These small
107 groups meet regularly, sometimes four times a week. They are not Christian-based communities,
108 but they do Bible study. They apply the Bible to their lives. They also talk about very practical
109 things. They ask, “If I’m a changed person, how does that play out in society? What should I do
110 to manifest this in the world I live in?” They also talk about very practical things - “How do you
111 establish a bank account? How do you make an investment? How do you cope in a world where
112 you don’t drink alcohol anymore? How do you entertain yourself? What should your kids watch
113 on TV and not watch on TV?” Very practical things. But as the cellular groups become much
114 more widespread, they are gaining a focus that they didn’t have previously. And that is, “How
115 should this new life interact with the neighborhood I live in? With my family? With my
116 community? With my city? Is there a particular role for people who have had these changed
117 lives in society?” They take a very religious point of view into society, and this has dramatic
118 implications for civil society. They talk about it in Central America as simply *capitacion*. They
119 talk about building up leaders. They talk about it at a very local level, and yet the implications
120 are very large. Caballerros in Guatemala ran briefly and unsuccessfully in the last elections, but
121 he is going to run again. He comes from a very large church called “El Shadia.” He has actively
122 pushed for the increase of the cellular groups and wants to expand this idea of redemption to the
123 whole country. That is dangerous in a place like Guatemala because of [indistinct] who also had

124 a very specific vision of what redemption for that country meant, and it resulted in the deaths of
125 probably 100,000 people. So it reads rather differently there than it might in other places. And
126 yet it is a trend; widespread in Latin America, that is very much under the radar and very much
127 worth watching. If you're expecting for political candidates to come out and for Protestants to
128 vote as a block for a single political candidate, that is not going to happen any time soon. But this
129 kind of articulation with civil society is going to happen at this other level. So that's worth
130 watching.

131
132 A second, a more concerning trend that is worthy of note is in which religious pluralism creates
133 arenas of conflict in civil society. In certain parts of Latin America, this has played out violently,
134 as in Chiapas, where Catholics and Protestants have taken violent action against one another over
135 conflicts over land and culture that are framed in a religious discourse. Farther south, in Central
136 America, most notably in Guatemala, but also in El Salvador and Honduras, two countries where
137 large-scale conversions to Protestantism have taken place as a response to serious social
138 challenges such as natural disasters, gang violence, and narcotrafficking, religious organizations
139 serve as functional substitutes for ineffective or absent civil, governmental, or judicial structures.
140 Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, may assume the duty of providing basic services such as
141 daycare, primary health care, education, leadership training, and other forms of "*capitación*."
142 And one can certainly see that in Haiti, which is a good example of a place where you find
143 NGOs and church/faith-based organizations moving in to fill a void left by ineffective
144 governmental organizations even before the earthquake. We can assume that they will also fill
145 the vacuums that Haiti is encountering today.

146
147 To address the questions posed to us before we came here, there is tremendous ground for
148 conflict between faith-based organizations and secular NGOs. But there is also an area for
149 collaboration, for cooperation, for non-duplication of efforts. Certain church groups can do
150 certain things very well. NGOs can do other things very well. And if there could be a comity
151 agreement of sorts for how best to distribute the many tasks that need to be met, then there is real
152 promise in that kind of structure, especially when there is no one in charge. Some of my recent
153 work has been on the Guatemala earthquake of 1976, and there one also sees a case where no
154 one was in charge for roughly a month and a half. It was church organizations and to a lesser

155 extent NGO's, though one didn't use the word back then, that were the ones who were the first-
156 responders and helped to frame what happened in the aftermath. This is one reason why
157 Guatemala is so heavily Protestant today - not the only reason, but it is one of the reasons.

158
159 But parachurch groups may also take on more intrusive, extralegal roles as well, such as in
160 Guatemala, where, in the absence of an effective judicial system, religious mobs engage in the
161 lynchings of alleged criminals in order to "cleanse" their communities of undesirables. This, too,
162 is a trend that demands our attention.

163
164 **Marianne Loewe:** I would like to start with thinking about the topic "Is the church having an
165 effect on public life? Is that changing?" And what first came to my mind when I saw the question
166 was the men and women martyrs of Latin America. Indeed, they have made a change in public
167 life of the church. Oscar Romero is a saint in many homes in El Salvador. Samuel Ruiz Garcia in
168 many places in Chiapas has made an effective change within the indigenous communities,
169 though Rome did not like it, by ordaining men and women deacons, which was more from the
170 Mayan tradition. So welcoming the Mayan tradition into the Catholic community did change
171 how that community was able to position itself to make a change for itself and the region. I
172 would add to that list today the men and women martyrs of the natural disaster of Haiti, and I
173 hope that they stay with us in our hearts for decades. That did not happen to them perhaps by
174 choice, but they will be with us in our hearts for decades, I am sure. There are many other names
175 that we could mention here, but what all of these men and women did consciously was follow the
176 preferential option for the poor. That phrase came to us in Vatican II and was reinforced in the
177 bishops' conferences in Latin America. The preferential option for the poor put before the lives
178 of the Catholic community what we need to do to change to transform the society in which so
179 many people in our world are living in material poverty. As an organization, in fact, we look for
180 church people who continued to choose the preferential option for the poor as their way of doing
181 parish life or doing community work. Initially, perhaps, that meant charity to the poor, but
182 certainly, in our own experience of community in Latin American churches at this time, it means
183 the empowerment of the poor. And that empowerment is real and it is actual if we listen and we
184 share the skills that we have to help them become what they need for their communities. In many
185 places there are base communities as we have seen in Latin America. Certainly Liberation

186 Theology in El Salvador was very rich and full when the base communities were very much alive
187 and encouraged. But it is the base communities that probably formed Oscar Romero. It was not
188 Oscar Romero that formed the based communities. And the same is true of any other leader that
189 we would know. They changed because they went to the people, listened to the people, and were
190 changed by the people, understood the needs, understood that the people themselves want to be
191 part of their transformation. They don't want it imposed on them. Within our own organization
192 whose primary work is what we call health promoter training to the level of a nurse practitioner,
193 the people really are empowered to diagnose and treat the primary diseases that they find in their
194 communities. When we gather people chosen by their communities to be the health care
195 providers in their communities, and when the doctors that train them or the medical professionals
196 that come from our country to train them really allow them to do the work, we find that not only
197 are they helping their communities medically, they are building civil society. They are building
198 the trust, reciprocity, cooperative work - they are building what they need for their community to
199 really move forward and transform itself. Allow me to give an example of this from Guatemala.
200 We are an international refugee and aid organization. So we worked with the refugees in Mexico.
201 It was quiet work because Mexico didn't want to admit that refugees had come, and Guatemala
202 didn't want to admit that refugees had left. So it was really, really quiet work, but we were
203 invited by the refugees to go back to their communities. So one of the places where the bishop
204 was really concerned for the poor and where the local priests were really concerned for the poor
205 was the Peten - kind of a forsaken, big block of land in Guatemala - not the beautiful, traditional
206 high lands, but the hot, humid plains of the country. And when we first went to talk to the
207 Catholic community there, they interviewed us as much as we interviewed them. "Are you
208 really here to help the poor?" And indeed they were. In one of the parishes, we have wonderful
209 priests who themselves say "we are outsiders as we consider America are outsiders." But we are
210 really here to support and encourage and facilitate that transformation. Once when the local
211 priest, who was a Spanish national, had to leave for a couple of months, another priest was put
212 into the parish as a temporary pastor. That pastor took away all the power of the people. He
213 locked the doors, took away the keys, and wouldn't let them use the vehicles or the spaces for
214 meetings. And that is the risk of the Catholic Church - let me say as a Catholic myself - the
215 power is at the top. However, when the power is shared, and the people are allowed to engage in
216 their work, huge transformation can take place. When the priest returned from Spain, he said,

217 “We have to do this differently now. So we’re going to create a cooperative, a legal entity of our
218 ministries so that this will never happen again.” And that is what they did. We see that civil
219 society does indeed change when that kind of empowerment happens. A woman in the town of
220 Las Cruces in the middle of the Peten became mayor last year. Women are not usually elected to
221 political positions in Latin America, ever. The first act of this woman was to paint the military
222 post that stood at the gates of the town from the military green so that war would not welcome
223 people when they entered Las Cruces anymore. It is a transformation that is quite real, quite
224 lasting, and in the areas where we work, the Church facilitates it. I have another story from
225 Columbia of how this transformation does take place when people are empowered. On the last
226 day, one of our workers in the country was invited by the local radio station, now we are talking
227 about a community that can only be accessed by river in the middle of an ugly civil war -
228 absolutely ugly civil war. So this Afro-Columbian man was the radio announcer, and he asked
229 Curt, the PA running the program for the first 5 years “What changes have you seen in the region
230 since you got here?” And before Curt could answer, this man himself said, “Let me tell you what
231 I’ve seen. Martha is my doctor.” Now Martha is an indigenous health promoter who was trained
232 in the program. For an Afro-Columbian man--probably 6’4”--to recognize Martha, who is
233 probably 5 feet tall as his doctor who took care of him every month for the hyper tension and the
234 health problems that he had, is a huge transformation. The church there in that town is run by the
235 Claretians. One of the things in preparing for this that I’ve read was that of all the institutions in
236 Latin America, the church has 70% confidence of the people. That is huge. That can actually
237 continue to change public life. And then one other thing that I’d like to mention is that again in
238 an effort to empower people to reach out to communities that have been devastated by civil
239 conflict the Church has been engaged in the process of “nunca mas” in Guatemala. One senior
240 [indistinct] was killed for that particular process which was to remember the past, to write down
241 the past, to reconcile the past. In the region where we work they do another project, and we talk
242 about popular religion. This is where the spirit world of Latin America is something from which
243 we can really learn. It is deep, it is penetrating, and it has practices that go far beyond what we
244 understand. The church takes the Virgin’s statue from community to community. It is the Virgin
245 who was the witness to the mutilation and death of about three hundred people by the army in
246 Dos Eres, about two kilometers from Las Cruces. She speaks about what she saw so that the
247 community of people who might be afraid of what they saw, of saying what they saw, or

248 speaking about it have the freedom to then say in the presence of the Virgin statue what
249 happened to them in their lives during the civil conflict. These are really powerful movements of
250 local communities within a larger community. And it is not exclusive to Catholics or Christians.
251 It welcomes everyone. Indigenous communities teach us so much about the earth, about the
252 rhythms of the earth, about how we need to care for mother earth. We learn every single day
253 from our experiences with the people with whom we work. Thank you.

254

255 **Fernando Lopez-Alves:** Thank you to all of our panelists.

256

257 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** So we have time for conversation and questions. Actually I'd like to take
258 the opportunity to ask the first question of the panel. I've been thinking while you were talking.
259 The social, political impact of some of the new movements and trends, particularly the
260 Pentecostal movement and the Charismatic movement in Roman Catholicism, in some ways
261 these are anti-authoritarian movements. They challenge the hierarchical structure of the Church
262 and the relationship that the Church has had with society and politics to shore-up the traditional
263 status quo. I mean it may be a good thing to challenge that and shake it up, particularly in terms
264 of old oligarchies and landed aristocracies. But doesn't it also have a problematic side in making
265 it possible for the promotion of new populist, extremist and decentralized social movements that
266 make it hard to work with NGOs or with outside agencies? Does it make it prey to the influence
267 we saw in El Salvador, of right-wing American religious groups manipulating and having
268 influence on some of these new Pentecostal movements? Help us understand the complexity, the
269 good and bad side, of this kind of new religious popularism and its social and political impact.

270

271 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** I think you are exactly right. It is very complicated, and it is hydra-
272 headed. It is very hard to speak about it as a single movement because it is not a single
273 movement. I will say that, in general, Guatemalan Pentecostals do not need Americans to help
274 them be conservative. The general thinking about Pentecostals is that they are very much
275 influenced by the United States and that they are very conservative in their political outlook,
276 although the data doesn't show that they are. The perception is that they are conservative, but the
277 reality is that they are everything because they are very theologically diverse. In terms of
278 ethnicity, they are diverse. In Guatemala, some denominations are almost completely Mayan,

279 Mayan-run, and some of them are absolutely not. Urban and rural - every divide you could
280 imagine, except maybe gender. Women tend not to move to the top of Pentecostal hierarchy.
281 They do have power within. So it is a little hard to talk about them as a single movement. It just
282 does not work that way. I have argued elsewhere that that may be a benefit to them - that they are
283 not particularly organized. They do not even all get along with one another. They divide as
284 churches do over theological differences, and those become absolutes. "We don't have to do with
285 this group because they're not dispensationalists or because they're not Pentecostal." There is
286 much more unity among non-Pentecostal Protestants in most of Central America. But, they
287 actually have a lot more in common, with Ecumenical Catholics. So, it is hard to generalize. In
288 terms of a populist leader coming to the fore, there is a danger there because pastors tend to be
289 fairly authoritarian. There's not a lot of pastoral training in Pentecostal churches. They may get it
290 after the fact, but all you need to become a Pentecostal pastor is a revelation and somebody to
291 come to your church. A lot of seminaries now will have these extension courses so somebody
292 can come in during the week to get some Bible study, get some other training. So some of these
293 people who rise to the fore are very authoritarian. That is the old branding of Pentecostalism -
294 people said back in the sixties that people would move into the city and become Pentecostal to
295 replicate the authoritarianism of the hacienda. It might be pretty, but I don't buy it. On the other
296 hand the very system that brings them up also mitigates against it because if somebody becomes
297 too bossy, too authoritarian, too populist that people don't like, they will leave and start their
298 own church. So it is both a strength and a weakness. Further, there is something that bears
299 looking at, and that is a popular perception of what constitutes evangelical behavior that does
300 influence people who are not even Evangelical themselves, maybe especially not Evangelicals
301 themselves. There is a perception that Evangelicals, *Evangelicos*, I mean using that broad term,
302 not using it in the English sense, that they are honest, trustworthy, that they are reliable. They get
303 things done. They are can-do people, which may or may not be true. I would say that
304 Guatemala's history has not particularly borne that out, but perception is different from reality
305 many times. That could certainly help a populist get some traction. I've heard stories of people
306 who, when they want to smuggle something into a prison, will take a Bible, hollow it out, and
307 stick whatever it is they want in there because nobody is going to search an *Evangelico*. So there
308 is that perception that really could have somebody get some traction. But, by the same token, I
309 was at a conference this summer in Guatemala, and it was a group of Pentecostal leaders who

310 came together in Guatemala City. The idea of the conference organizer was “We have a
311 tremendous amount of social capital now in this country, and don’t we have a responsibility to
312 do something with it? We have one of the highest percentages of evangelicals in Latin America,
313 and also the worst social statistics, outside of Haiti, in Latin America and the highest percentage
314 of murder per capita of almost any place in the world. And so what good is it doing us if our
315 society is like this? If it’s gotten worse since it’s become more Protestant?” Which was a hard
316 question for those people in that room-a very hard question. Number one, he had a hard time
317 even getting people to come because they were afraid of coming to a meeting that even implied
318 that there was some sort of broad political agenda that all Evangelicals should take. It was hard
319 to even get people to come. Then when he just threw this idea out as the whole purpose of this
320 week-long seminar, there was great reluctance in the room to even accept the hypothesis. And I
321 think it is from their history. They are also afraid that they are going to get killed. That is not a
322 small consideration in that country. But they are also afraid that it is just going to woefully
323 misfire in a way that they cannot quite expect, and they’ve seen well-meaning, positive-minded
324 movements misfire so many times in that country that they are very afraid to seize the moment
325 that they have.

326

327 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** Other questions?

328

329 **Katherine Marshall:** I am interested in your comments on a couple of questions. One is, how
330 much tension you’re seeing as these religious dynamics are playing out. We have heard hair-
331 raising stories of the tensions between the *Evangelicos* and the Catholic Church and even to
332 some extent the indigenous religions in Guatemala particularly, but I am not sure how much
333 further it goes. Bishop Bramazini walks around with four bodyguards because he has had so
334 many death threats - a lot of sense that the religious tension is increasing. And secondly, I do not
335 think that I heard anyone mentioning the right-wing Catholic side and some of the tensions with
336 human rights groups - Opus Dei, some of the other movements. I have heard some people
337 agonizing over the irony of a Catholic Church which has the preferential option for the poor
338 aligning itself with right-wing groups because of their deep fears about human rights and the
339 concern that human rights may be forcing them into accepting women priests as well as issues of
340 abortion and family planning. Where is this playing out most actively, the tensions within the

341 Catholic Church? Some of your numbers are 90% Catholic across Latin America which seems
342 awfully high according to the numbers that I have seen. But still it is very high. How far are the
343 tensions within the Catholic Church playing, spilling over into the socio-political, economic
344 sphere? And then the third question is we have heard a lot about growing tensions around
345 extractive industries - environmental issues - where some of the religious leaders are playing a
346 very active role.

347

348 **Jennifer Hughes:** I guess I get to speak to that. [laughter] These figures - 90% are still Roman
349 Catholic - I don't know what that means, because I think it means different things in different
350 places. And also that 70% support of the Catholic Church, I don't know what that means either
351 or how people are understanding a survey that would ask that question. My experience in Mexico
352 is that I asked everywhere I went, "No es Catolico? Es Catolica?" and they would say, "Bueno,
353 soy criente" "I'm a believing person. " The Catholics are those little old ladies who lived in
354 church all day long. So, 90% Catholic, I don't know what that means. And I think I would also
355 say this irony that you have pointed out between the option for the poor and Opus Dei, I don't
356 think that is an irony. That is inherent to the many different strands of Roman Catholic tradition.
357 Certainly, the Roman Catholic Church has been a conservative force in many places and many
358 times. That is not any surprise, and that strand has existed in most places in most times with
359 other strands that are more liberative strands. There is this conception of the new sort of religious
360 pluralism or a more open religious marketplace in Latin America, and yet Marianne has spoken
361 about the liberationist strand. At the same time I think there has been a winnowing of the options
362 with the institutional dismantling of the liberationist strand within Roman Catholicism. So, there
363 are few options on some level for Roman Catholics.

364

365 **Fernando Lopez Alves:** We have another question...

366

367 **Otto Maduro:** I completely agree with Jennifer, but I would like also to add something related
368 to historical processes to place some of these things in perspective. It is almost a caricature, but
369 also reflects part of the reality. There has been a very significant backlash within the Roman
370 Catholic Church from the very last years of Pope Paul VI himself, not just the people around
371 him, until today which has among other things pushed back all the inroads that were made by

372 progressive, liberationist, socially conscious, humanitarian, human rights Catholicism beyond the
373 grass-roots of certain locales of the Roman Catholic Church. I am very much in the movement to
374 liberation theology, but I hate all these universalizations, generalizations, and exaggerations that
375 make it out to be this huge movement - it was always a minority movement. Always. However,
376 in some countries, the majority of the religious clergy, the clergy of religious orders, not the
377 diocesan clergy, and in a few countries, like Brazil, a very large chunk of the bishops were
378 supportive of this new form of Catholicism. From the late 70's on, there has been a regression,
379 and nowadays we find fewer and fewer bishops, fewer and fewer leaders of the conferences of
380 religious orders that support this kind of thing. So right-wing conservative Catholicism is not a
381 marginal movement any longer. In some places, they say the Opus Dei looks progressive
382 compared to the Legionaries of Christ for example and other movements that have taken hold of
383 bishoprics and archdioceses in many countries in Latin America.

384

385 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** Can I add something to that? I may not have this correct, but isn't it
386 something like 82% of the bishops in Latin America were appointed under John Paul II or
387 Benedict? So it would certainly reflect a much more conservative trend than before. What also
388 bears noting is that despite every institutional reason for it to die out, Liberation Theology has
389 not completely gone away, because it has grassroots support. [audience comment] Very deep
390 roots that have undergone some changes, and it has certainly retracted from where it was - look
391 at a place like Nicaragua where it probably had its greatest flourishing in a lot of ways. But it is
392 still there despite every pressure against it.

393

394 **Fernando Lopez-Alves:** More questions?

395

396 **James Wellman:** I have done work on mega-churches in American culture. What did we find in
397 the vital, growing mega-churches? Every one of them had unbelievable networks of small groups
398 which were all about pastoral care, fundamental desires, and needs of families and individuals
399 trying to grow and be nurtured. I read Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose-Driven Life*, and having
400 some background in clinical, pastoral education, pastoral ministry I read the chapter on small
401 groups, and it is very good in terms of personal accountability, moral accountability, being open
402 and transparent with one's needs and praying for each other. So Virginia, I was fascinated with

403 your question or your comments about the cell groups and their agenda. Has anyone compared
404 that to base communities? And from my point of view, these small groups are enormously
405 powerful ways of creating social movements.

406

407 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** They can be manipulated. To get back to Mark's question, you can
408 have somebody at the helm of a church who has a very clear patriarchal agenda that he can
409 spread through the [indistinct]. But, in general, they do tend to be very supporting and nurturing
410 in building up the leadership and capability. They can be manipulated. They sometimes are
411 manipulated, but by and large they are not committees for defense of the revolution. They are
412 something different than that. The two of us were talking briefly about Lakewood Church in
413 Houston last night at our dinner, and I was trying to call that church one day because there was a
414 church in Guatemala that is supposed to be the largest church. They just built it. It is supposed to
415 be the largest church in the Americas, and I did not think it was. I thought Lakewood was larger.
416 So I emailed them to find out how many people fit in their stadium church. I had to fill out this
417 questionnaire. They did not get back with me for several days, and I was surprised. I thought
418 they would be on it in a second, and it turned out the reason why was that they could not quite
419 pinpoint what group leader should contact me - that it did not quite fit any profile that they were
420 looking for. But they are very careful. They want the right person to contact the right person. The
421 person that fits whatever it is you are looking for.

422

423 **James Wellman:** Do you think outsiders underestimate the social networking of these systems
424 and the power of them? Is that your feeling?

425

426 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** I completely feel that way. I certainly do. The other thing about the
427 small groups is they replace other social networks that people might have had. And it may have
428 been one's friends at the cantina, but it might be something else. So it might also have been one's
429 *confredia* membership.

430

431 **Cecelia Lynch:** This is just a transnational comment on all of your talks, but especially
432 Jennifer's point about not being sure if there is such a thing as Catholicism or Christianity. When
433 we social scientists look at religion in the world, we still want to say somebody is X or

434 somebody is Y. And one of the things I am finding in Africa is that the numbers do not add up so
435 that if you have 80% of the population in Cameroon following traditional religions and 60%
436 following Christianity, and somewhere between 20% to 40% following Islam, then obviously
437 that's way over 100%. And I just think that seeing these things as more fluid is an important way
438 to look at them. It is important for me to hear this, that this trend is that strong in Latin America
439 as well, not just in Guatemala, but throughout. So thank you for that.

440

441 **Sarah Kline:** I just wanted to make some comments about Mexico. In particular, the
442 anticlericalism in Mexico has been very strong for a very long time. And in the 1980s, the
443 Roman Catholic Church has some small numbers who were active with liberation theology in the
444 North, but the Roman Catholic Church there in the north in particular found that it could gain a
445 much broader appeal by pushing the notion of the development of civil society and open
446 elections. And this is where Mexico really opened up from a single party system with the
447 Institutional Revolutionary Party to having the National Action Party which was founded by the
448 Catholics to be a much broader-based movement and brought about in the year 2000 an actual
449 Panista win for the presidency. And this was the perception that the kind of bankruptcy of the
450 Mexican system at that point could be counter-posed with a Roman Catholic Church which was
451 appealing to middle class people who wanted genuine electoral openness and good government
452 and the like. Now, whether it's played out since then is another thing, but the Church as a
453 political force in Mexican politics cannot be ignored. We are short of time. I have other
454 comments, but I won't make them.

455

456 **Audience member question:** To follow on Virginia's comments, is there any evidence the
457 cellular movement has in fact connected to civil society organizations?

458

459 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** Not directly in Guatemala... They have in Columbia. It is very, very
460 widespread in Columbia. They have connected ... What they actually do in Columbia is they do
461 field political candidates. So that is new and successful. Columbia has such a troubled political
462 system that once again it is the association that *Evangelicos* are incorruptible and honest and will
463 avoid graft that has made them very successful. So it has been a way that they have identified

464 talent and mobilize political society around it. But Guatemala does not have that level of
465 organization yet, and I don't know if it will. It may.

466

467 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** Thank you panel...

468

469 **PANEL 2: Do religious institutions play a positive role in supporting humanitarian**
470 **activities?**

471

472 **Sarah Kline:** I am Sarah Kline from the history department at UCSB. And our second panel is
473 entitled: "Do religious institutions play a positive role in supporting humanitarian activities?"
474 We have three panelists, Kurt Frieder, Otto Maduro, and Katherine Marshall. I would like to
475 have the panelists go from the practical, on-the-ground to the academic, although Katherine
476 Marshall does both in a sense. I would like to start with Katherine Marshall, then have Kurt
477 Frieder, who has a short video for us and then have Otto Maduro present. So... Katherine
478 Marshall, she is a very distinguished on-the-ground, senior person in both academia and in
479 institutional work for the World Bank. She has an extensive experience in international
480 development. She is currently at Georgetown University's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace
481 and World Affairs and has published a significant number of things with the World Bank on
482 development in the third world. I would like to turn it over to her for a short presentation, five to
483 ten minutes.

484

485 **Katherine Marshall:** Good morning again. I was a little in a quandary as to what to do with this
486 subject. So I will do what comes to mind. At a simple level, the answer is yes, and I could stop
487 there [laughter]. And certainly the dramatic picture that we are seeing in Haiti of what
488 religiously-latent/inspired groups are doing, the various substantial role that they are playing and
489 have played, in other words that was revealed by the crisis, but also that they are playing and
490 clearly will play in the humanitarian relief is a vivid case in point. But what I thought I would do
491 is first talk a little bit about some of the definitional issues that come from framing the question.
492 And secondly, [to] take this opportunity to talk a little bit about some of the ideas and questions
493 that came out of a very similar exercise that we ran in Antigua, Guatemala this January which
494 was on the role of faith-inspired organizations, faith across Latin America, and its links to

495 development. So this is the only opportunity that I will really have to do that, and it makes sense
496 that we share because the Orfalea Center and the Berkley Center with LUCE's godparent-ship
497 are in a sense doing almost the same thing. We should be cross-fertilizing.

498
499 First, on definitions, the question of what is humanitarian is a question that I think we need to
500 address. To some extent, the assumption is that humanitarian is the purely relief side, whether it
501 is feeding the hungry, taking care of widows and orphans, or whether it is relief after war or
502 relief after a crisis - a natural disaster such as we have witnessed so many [times], too many
503 [times], in the past years. One of the interesting trends as we actually look across the world at the
504 remarkable universe of organizations that have some affiliation with religion, some people call
505 them FINGOs [Faith-Inspired Non-Governmental Organizations] is an extraordinarily diverse
506 group. And ... one of [the things] we are doing and I think [that] you are doing is what we call
507 "mapping", which can be everything from GIS-linked (i.e. where there is actually a facility) to
508 the journalist mapping which is who, what, where, why, when, with what resources, for what
509 purpose? And [we are] also trying to get at this question - "Is there seriously a difference
510 between a Catholic Relief Services, or the Jewish Joint Distribution, or Islamic Relief, and
511 CARE, Save the Children, or even what the bishops conference, or the world conference of
512 churches is talking about?" And I think we all know that the answer is that it is very complicated.
513 There is no simple answer, though interestingly I heard Ken Hackett speaking at a conference at
514 Georgetown a few weeks ago where he was trying to argue that what Catholic Relief Services
515 does is fundamentally different. And I frankly do not buy it. When you are building a well, there
516 may be some difference, but there is also a lot of fundamental similarities. Trying to impugn the
517 motivation of non-religiously oriented groups, which is what comes out of it, is not useful for
518 anyone.

519
520 But one of the historic tendencies is that many of these groups actually were formed around the
521 humanitarian challenges post-WWII and have been shaped by some of the huge humanitarian
522 disasters of recent years. And that is true of CRS, but it is also true of CARE. I mean, what are
523 care packages? The packages that were sent after WWII. The relief business is actually, as came
524 out again in Haiti, primarily a logistics operation in the initial stages. I spent some time in
525 Mauritania and in refugee camps, both on the border with Senegal and on the border with Mali,

526 and came away quite surprised that this kind of noble, wonderful work that is done is about
527 trucks and logistics and procurement and some effort to try to deal with the immediate logistics
528 of water and so on. And that is true everywhere.

529

530 So almost every one of these groups has migrated in a sense towards what we do not want. First
531 of all, we do need this relief, but secondly this is not really about band-aids. This is about trying
532 to stop it from happening again and trying to find ways in which you can move so that you
533 reconstruct in a better way. And already there is some of that thinking in Haiti - that we do not
534 want just to rebuild what was there before. We want to move forward. So you see this migration
535 in virtually every one of these organizations. You also are dealing with an evolution as you see in
536 many parts of the development business from very simplistic views of development that were
537 post-WWII, 50's infrastructure ports - investment, even that it is measured in terms of income to
538 much more complex visions of participation, empowerment, understanding, complex
539 understandings of different models of society and coming to grips with not only abject poverty
540 and misery, but the move towards more equitable societies, which is both ethically and
541 practically very complex.

542

543 So one of the symptoms of that is that you are hearing--and this is particularly true within the
544 Catholic world, and CRS is putting tremendous efforts into it--talking about peace building. So
545 what is peace building? I mean peace building ... That is where one had a simplistic view that
546 there was war, then there were negotiations, then there was the
547 mobilization/demobilization/reintegration stage, then there was the transition, and then there was
548 normal development. But of course what exists is just this ups-and-downs, and even in DRC for
549 example but also this would be true in Central America. There are some areas where prosperity
550 is taking off, but you have other areas where you are locked into conflict. So in many senses
551 peace building and the kind of development we want to be talking about are indistinguishable.

552

553 But it is also impossible to define development now because development is everything.

554 Development is progress. It is modernization. It is trying to follow human rights. It is trying to
555 have jobs. It is trying to have education, health, fighting trafficking. All of that is development.

556 But in any event, what one is trying to do is to do that with the tools that people call peace

557 building with the lessons that come out of humanitarian efforts. And one of the big stories in this
558 is the enormous experience that comes out of the universe, the galaxy, of organizations that have
559 some religious link. In that though, I want to highlight one issue and one tension which again
560 comes out of the Haiti story immediately.

561

562 The current estimate is that there are about ... at least 10,000 NGOs operating in Haiti. I mean it
563 is just a phenomenally complex issue. But this is part of a piece of the development story that is
564 out of control. I mean not only do you have the Latvians and the Basques with development
565 programs, multiple UN agencies, you have this extraordinary diversity of civil society
566 organizations of all species. You have private companies getting involved whether it is Nike or
567 whoever, and if you take a look at a country like... Guatemala or Bolivia, it is just completely
568 unmanageable. So you have a whole set of thinking around the need to “get a grip” - that you
569 have simply got to find some way to have some coordination - not to have initiatives driven and
570 born outside being driven in the country. And that is where you have the whole aid coordination,
571 aid harmonization efforts. These are less relevant in Latin America than they are in Africa or in
572 some parts of Asia because development aid is actually far less important as a factor in all but a
573 very few Latin American countries. I do not think there is any country that depends for more
574 than 25% of its budget on development assistance except maybe Haiti, not even Bolivia
575 anymore. But still, you have this general sense that the development world is out of control and
576 that there must be more harmonization and more coordination whether it is on procurement or
577 whether it is on education strategies or water. But then you do have another view, and there have
578 been polls taken of this in a variety of places. And it breaks down roughly 80/20 in the polls that
579 I have seen. There are about 80% on the ‘get a grip’ side and about 20% who say creativity is
580 better, “let a thousand flowers bloom,” government is hopeless, coordination will bring us
581 nothing but disaster - State planning. So you know, let it rip. So there are these tensions which
582 affect the development community, affect particularly civil society which really is the tendency
583 to buy and lease, and the religious organizations are out on the extreme of ‘let the thousand
584 flowers bloom, let’s not get into this ... don’t try to mess with me, don’t try to coordinate me.’
585 And clearly I do not need to say this because it is pretty obvious [that] religion is part of the
586 problem and part of the solution. And thinking through how that fits, whether it is on gender,
587 whether it is on reproductive rights, whether it is on humanitarian etc.

588

589 **Sarah Kline:** So our second presenter is Kurt Frieder ... He has done significant work in the
590 public health sector in a very pragmatic sense. A short introduction for somebody who has been
591 very active in this sphere...

592

593 **Kurt Frieder:** Well, thank you very much. My presentation will not be very spiritual really. I'm
594 not coming from the religious side, and [I'm] not an academic strictly speaking although I have a
595 degree in public administration and public health. But I focus on the operative side of public
596 health, and I've been working [for] the last twenty years in this area. And I must say that I feel
597 that we are facing big problems. We heard this morning about Haiti. I just wanted to add to that
598 yesterday night when we were talking about what was going on there, we also mentioned there
599 was an earthquake somewhere in the United States and the buildings moved from one side to the
600 other but with no serious consequences. They only saw the buildings moving. And in Haiti
601 where you do not have high-rise buildings, only slums and small houses, almost everything is
602 gone. That has to do with the reality that we are living in in Latin America.

603

604 I wrote down a few things, because for me it is not as easy not [having] English [as] my mother
605 tongue. I would like to say that Latin America is the greenhouse, the future of our planet. We
606 produce three times more food than required. But there are millions of under-nurtured children.
607 190,000,000 - one third of the total population - are poor, and this figure is growing. In
608 Argentina alone, we have about 900,000 youngsters aged 14 to 24 years that do not study or
609 work.

610

611 In the region, Catholicism continues [to be] the dominant religion. I don't know if it is 90% or
612 less - it is not so important really. But the reality is that in this region local conservative groups
613 still hold great power in political and institutional structures. And the Catholic Church's voice
614 and opinion is almost decisive when it comes to some conflictive matters related to education,
615 health, and civil society activity. Governments have to deal with enormous social complexities in
616 Latin America, and public policies are often mixed with politics in the struggle for power. Social
617 reality clashes [with] and confronts ... religious and dogmatic beliefs maintained by the Church,
618 not only by the Catholic Church but mainly by the Catholic Church. And issues like

619 homosexuality, diverse sexual orientations or identities, gay marriage, adoptions, and mono-
620 parental families are especially conflictive for the society and for religion for all of us. But there
621 are other situations that relate to strict public health issues like wide condom promotion to avoid
622 STDs or HIV infection, and safe and legal abortions for the 3.9 million women that each year do
623 it illegally in the region and are performed anyway with severe health consequences and death in
624 many cases. The number of dead people in illegal abortions goes in the thousands and many
625 millions of those then finally have severe consequences for their future lives.

626

627 Saying that, I would like to share a very short video - 2 minutes- with you that I think will add to
628 our conversation.

629

630 [video]

631

632 OK. This video is part of a program that we are showing on TV every year in open TV that is
633 involved with the global media AIDS initiative. This one we presented four years ago. It finishes
634 with a phrase that you didn't read. It was in Spanish there but ... it is a phrase from Susan Sontag.
635 She said, "AIDS is a relatively new disease, but the reactions that arise are as old as humanity."
636 And that reminded me of something that the Nobel Laureate and human rights warrior Aung San
637 Suu Kyi said when he mentioned that fear is not the natural state of civilized people. But the
638 reality is that stigma is still far more of a problem than it should be especially in heavily hit
639 countries. And churches have to do with that and have to deal with that. HIV is a profoundly
640 social disease. Its' causes and consequences are deeply embedded in the social, cultural, and
641 political processes that shape national development, social institutions, and civil society,
642 interpersonal relations and everyday life. And it is impossible to separate the response to AIDS
643 and add the problems that have to do with sexual reproductive rights from the largest issue of
644 global health and social justice and protection of human rights. In Latin America, we are facing
645 social issues that are burning for the region, especially poverty, violence and insecurity,
646 alcoholism and drugs, youth pregnancies, gender inequalities, and also HIV/AIDS. The society is
647 becoming more and more dissociated and we need sustainable programs that address the origins
648 of social inequality resulting in disparate health outcomes. In this scenery and looking into my
649 field of expertise, there are big tensions between humanism and organized religion. And mainly

650 because, besides the HIV and AIDS epidemic, everything existed already before sexuality
651 stigma, discrimination, harassment of women and poverty. And once we have an effective
652 treatment and a vaccine for HIV/AIDS, if we do not change the conditions, which will be the
653 next epidemic that we're going to face? And I think that this is a very good opportunity to talk
654 about these things because religion, all religions, have a lot to do with these things and have to
655 deal with things that are very difficult to address for us, ourselves individually, but also for
656 society. Finally, what I wanted to say, I said already. I don't want to repeat myself, but I feel that
657 with what's going on in Haiti this may not be the day's problem, but it is the problem we are
658 facing in Latin America. Thank you very much.

659

660 **Sarah Kline:** And last, but certainly not least, is professor Otto Maduro, a very distinguished
661 scholar of religion in Latin America, author of multiple major studies and particularly on
662 liberation theology. So not taking more time on introduction, over to you.

663

664 **Otto Maduro:** Thank you very much. Let me start a little like Katherine did with the question
665 itself ... My answer would be 'yes', 'no', 'sometimes', 'depends'. [laughter] And I'm gonna
666 touch on one legal aspect of the "yes" and the "sometimes" and the "depends" being very aware
667 that the "no" is also there, including of course in the Pentecostal, Evangelical churches and
668 denominations which is where I'm going to focus right now.

669

670 One thing that I want to say at the beginning ... One of the problems of talking about anything,
671 especially when you have only 5 to 10 minutes is that you have to proffer a lot of generalizations
672 that really wipe out and erase all the differentiation that is found anywhere. I come from
673 Venezuela, a country that prided itself in being different until we went down the tubes like any
674 other country. And I am therefore very acutely aware of how many generalizations are proffered
675 by journalists and scholars and teachers and just plain people in conversation when we talk about
676 Latin America and the Caribbean. Something that maybe nobody here knows is we had a stable
677 rate of exchange with the dollar for over a century - 335. And then we had a stable one for the
678 next...something like 20 years - 440. So a 25% devaluation in more than a century and then all
679 of a sudden Friday the 13th, 1982 all hell broke loose and we are deeper in hell 30 years later.
680 That's the context where many of these changes, but also needs, in religious institutions played a

681 role in relation to humanitarian activities often takes place. And I am going to say a couple of
682 things in relation to that.

683

684 We all know, at least indirectly, the important role that Roman Catholic institutions have played
685 both for and against humanitarian initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean for the past
686 century and the beginning years of this new century. What many people do not know, and that is
687 where I want to put a little accent in my intervention is the increase in what could be called
688 Social Ministries sponsored by Evangelical and Pentecostal churches throughout the region. In
689 the last half century or so, which are becoming increasingly visible sometimes not because of the
690 humanitarian activities but rather because of the accusations against Pentecostal and Evangelical
691 groups of doing the opposite of humanitarian activities, which is also true for many of these
692 organizations as it continues to be true for many Roman Catholic institutions and for, of course,
693 many non-religious institutions in the area. One of the things that I want to underscore is that part
694 of what has happened in recent years is that things that were not considered humanitarian
695 activities but at best charitable give-outs or hand-outs have become so urgent, increasingly
696 urgent, for such a large percentage of the population that we can hardly continue to deride those
697 activities not realizing at the same time that these are the activities that very often are saving the
698 physical, mental, and emotional lives of people in the subcontinent.

699

700 Another thing that I want to underscore is, many of you have heard the expression, “the lost
701 decade.” I hate that we are not talking more clearly about what has happened. It has been three
702 lost decades now. Basically things have not gotten better anywhere in Latin America or the
703 Caribbean in the last thirty years except of course as usual for a few chunks of the population. I
704 was in Grand Central Station, picked up the Economist with this headline “The Crisis Is Over in
705 Latin America.” I did not know it was over. [laughter] So I picked it up. I read. Basically what it
706 said is that there are more billionaires now in Latin America than ever before, which is true as
707 well. But, as well, and what we very often do not pay enough attention [to] is the other side of
708 the “as well” is that poverty, illiteracy, homelessness, nonpolitical violence, to give it a name,
709 like any other name, including domestic violence, migrations-internal and abroad, child
710 abandonment, child prostitution, child traffic[ing], and all sorts of diseases, particularly but not
711 only HIV/AIDS on the one hand but also diseases that were thought to be eliminated like

712 tuberculosis, all of these are on the rise in the last 30 years, I think in every single country in
713 Latin America without exception. So we are living through a catastrophe of lesser or greater
714 proportions depending on the period, the region, the country, and so on and so forth in these last
715 30 years. And we find fewer and fewer public agencies meeting this catastrophe because the
716 dogma of the IMF, World Bank, WTO, and North Atlantic countries is ‘you don’t do that any
717 longer.’ We also find fewer and fewer businesses doing that. We find more and more church
718 agencies doing that, trying to meet the needs that are growing and meet this catastrophe in Latin
719 America and the Caribbean. And there, when Latin Americans feel increasingly left on their own
720 individual means to survive the catastrophe, Pentecostal, Evangelical leaders and groups are
721 increasingly daring to what amounts to crossing the line that divides, sometimes from the outside
722 but sometimes also from the inside, their views of social ills.... [These] tended to be either cast as
723 or actually in many groups and leaders and denominations seen as individual ills, not social, that
724 should be met with what is often called in a pejorative way ‘pie in the sky’ messages, apolitical
725 messages, or even anti-political strategies or conservative approaches to politics and social
726 change. More and more leaders, more and more denominations, more and more congregations
727 are crossing that line, knowingly or not and doing stuff that they did not used to do that they
728 were not used to be asked to do 10, 15, 20, 50 years ago in relation to the growing needs
729 emerging with this catastrophe.

730

731 And let me just close with something that is partially related to the question and the answer, and
732 that is at least an interesting fact that I see often not taken into account. All these new populist
733 leaders that have emerged in the continent in Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador, Venezuela, Paraguay,
734 Haiti, and so on and so forth who have won the majority of the popular vote in democratic
735 elections have done it more often than not also with Evangelical, Pentecostal support and with
736 Evangelical, Pentecostal opposition and with Catholic support and with Catholic opposition and
737 in some cases with leftist-socialist support and with leftist-socialist opposition. So just [in]
738 closing I would say these tendencies certainly introduce new elements for responding in the 21st
739 century the question about “Do religious institutions play a positive role in supporting
740 humanitarian activities” and to complicate the “yes”, “no”, “sometimes”, depends” answer to
741 that question. Thank you.

742

743 **Sarah Kline:** Before opening it up, I would like to give Katherine Marshall a chance to finish.
744 I'm managing time here and you may want to respond to your fellow panelists. So over to you.

745

746 **Katherine Marshall:** Just as an observation, it is clear that we are talking about this word
747 "humanitarian" in very different ways, and I think there are at least three things. The first one is
748 the classic UN definition of "humanitarian" which is really emergency relief and assistance to
749 people in the most desperate straits. That is, within the international community, what
750 "humanitarian" means. The second is more human needs, basic human capabilities, including
751 education, health, HIV/AIDS, etc. And the third is this distinction which I think is a very
752 important one and which is an evolution in the way people think about the development world
753 between charity and efforts that are based on compassion and the ancient religious traditions of
754 charity which ironically were more for the benefit of the person who gave than the person who
755 received to the contemporary view which is important but hard to translate into practice of a
756 rights-based approach. In other words... trying to provide people with basic support whether it is
757 for orphans or for children or for mothers or for whatever, that is not being given out of the
758 goodness of your heart or because you happen to feel like writing a check or responding to an
759 email, but because it is basically the right thing to do. And I think we're caught in all of these
760 tensions. On the humanitarian side, we're caught on this awareness that life is not a line, that it
761 does not go from emergency or from war through classic predictable stages, as people used to
762 think, to development, but that it is very bumpy, up-and-down, mixed-up, very complicated all
763 the way. The understanding of human needs and humanitarian is one that I think is very jumbled
764 in a lot of people's minds. Peter Berger who often says to me, "Well when you're talking about
765 religion, you're talking about welfare." And that he thinks it is wrong. To me, education and
766 health are not welfare. They are basic investments. But that is a classic tension [as it] was with
767 HIV/AIDS. A lot of the organizations we are talking about talk about rights-based [approaches],
768 but when you actually ask them "What does that really mean?" and particularly when you have
769 the imbalance of power that goes with who has the money and who is receiving the money, we
770 are, all of us, in a dilemma which is what all of this work needs to focus on. In other words,
771 "What do we mean?"

772

773 Very, very briefly, I would like to put on the table the issues that came out of our two-day
774 consultation that we had which was in Antigua, Guatemala. First of all, and it has come out a
775 couple of times here, this issue of deep concern that there is a dramatic increase in the existential
776 life challenges for children - more and more people seeing children on the street, dysfunctional
777 families, tremendous violence within families, the phenomenon of gangs, and it is not quantified
778 [inaudible words] ... I have not been aware of a single country where we really know what is
779 happening. But this is what we were hearing from a group of practitioners - that it is getting
780 worse, we are very worried. And they translated, and this is one of the characteristics of many of
781 the faith groups, as the challenge to the family. And you hear this from, of course, Catholic and
782 Protestant/Pentecostal but also from some of the traditional religions (Jewish, even some of the
783 Hindu groups) that this is why you get this sense of the family - we have to protect the family.
784 But then the question is "What do you mean?" And of course the family then translates into "Oh
785 my God, abortion!" That is what they are really talking about ... I was struck in Guatemala by the
786 fact that the Vital Voices, which is Molan Vermir's group (she is an ambassador for women and
787 very close friend of Hillary Clinton), ... did not want to hear about the religious side. I mean,
788 there is almost a complete wall of separation between women's groups and religious groups
789 around a lot of these issues. So I think that that was an important one.

790
791 What do we do with indigenous groups and of course the overlap, the tremendous syncretism,
792 which is a characteristic of the region. We were trying to get a handle on the 2008, 2009
793 economic crisis which is playing out very differently in different countries. But of course the
794 remittances, drop in tourism, drop in orders for certain manufacturers, the sense of increasing
795 food prices, volatility of energy prices, all of these are having an effect which is not well-
796 measured and not understood. The physical security, the gang issue was a tremendous issue. Lots
797 of concern about inequity, almost no idea what to do about it. I mean, inequality ... Latin
798 America is the ... world champion in inequality. What do you do? And it is apparently very
799 sticky. I mean, even Chile, with all of its performance, still has extraordinary inequality ...
800 Religious roles in education, not well known and understood, are obviously important. Emerging
801 roles on environment, including the extractive industries (oil) and then the issues on violence
802 including gangs where in many cases the religious people are the only people who are there.

803 Migration, reemerging issues on land tenure. So ... that is just the agenda that came out of our
804 discussion in January.

805

806 **Sarah Kline:** Shall we open it up?

807

808 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** [Tell us] about religious groups moving in and filling the vacuum often
809 where government is not or can not operate, and yet that does create a curious kind of dilemma.
810 In some ways it lets government off the hook. In some ways it also brings in international
811 elements that challenge in some ways the sovereignty of governments. We are seeing this now in
812 Haiti. I mean, this is a very interesting moment where the United States military particularly has
813 the ability to bring an organization into a situation that desperately needs it, and yet there is very
814 difficult political consequences. But at a different level this happens all the time when
815 international organizations, particularly international religious organizations, come in and play
816 social service roles that maybe traditionally a government has, or at least should have, occupied.
817 Are there issues here of sovereignty and of independence that are being challenged through these
818 organizations? Maybe it is for Otto. I don't know.

819

820 **Otto Maduro:** One thing that I would like to put on the table related to your conversation about
821 humanitarian activities is, not this crisis of the last few months, but the one of the last thirty years
822 in Latin America and the Caribbean has in many ways and in many places blurred the line
823 between charity, concerns for human needs, concerns for human rights, and then almost erased
824 the other understanding of humanitarian activities that was more prevalent in the 60s and 70s
825 which was the struggle for social justice and structural transformations. I would put it this way,
826 these thirty years of increasing poverty to oversimplify (it is more than poverty) have pushed on
827 the one hand many people that did not have any social concerns to develop them and then on the
828 other hand many people that were fighting for radical transformations of the economic and
829 political structure to just give up because these urgent needs are such, and the obstacles to real
830 deep transformations are also such, that this has been put in many respects on the back burner.
831 And for Cecelia's questions about the state of liberation theology in the region, right now I
832 would say that is part of the issue. Liberation theology was born mostly with its sights placed on
833 social justice and structural transformation. And people are just dying all over and killing each

834 other all over. So this has gone onto the back burner - the more comprehensive social justice,
835 structural transformations - except in those countries now where these populist leaders have won
836 elections in recent years, and that has awakened the hope that maybe it is not impossible yet to
837 dream again of more than just charity, if you wish.

838

839 **Katherine Marshall:** Can I add one quick comment on that. At first, I think that I have never
840 heard humanitarian, the word humanitarian, specifically equated with social justice and social
841 transformation, but that does add a fourth category, which I think is clearly an important one.
842 Second comment is that I think that there is a real dichotomy, but also a model, in thinking about
843 your basic question. And it does come back to this nagging debate around the role of the State. In
844 other words, is it a good thing or a bad thing that the Jesuits are running schools all over or that
845 the evangelicals are starting to run schools or that they are running orphanages? Should that be a
846 responsibility of the State? We see it most acutely in hospitals ... I've had some really interesting
847 discussions with Catholic cardinals and bishops, and they see the Catholic role in health services
848 as a permanent and integral facet of the Catholic Church. As one cardinal said, "The hospital is
849 our cathedral." And yet, the basic assumption in most thinking today is that health is essentially a
850 public responsibility, that it is not a religious responsibility.

851

852 **Sarah Kline:** But where the government can not actually go in and do that in a comprehensive
853 way.

854

855 **Katherine Marshall:** So it's only as a last resort and temporarily. But you can not build an
856 Adventist or a Catholic or whatever health system if it is only for two years... and I think that's
857 where academics and some people like us can try to help move that debate forward as to ...

858

859 **Sarah Kline:** Well, the Red Cross also, in Latin America, has hospitals. It performs a function in
860 certain Latin American countries that is not here because there is that absence of State
861 intervention.

862

863 **Katherine Marshall:** But what are you trying to build?

864

865 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** ... In the area of education, you do not seem to be concerned that
866 churches are running schools in Latin America, but in Muslim countries we are horrified at the
867 idea that education is a religious institution.

868
869 **Kurt Frieder:** I would say that I am so glad to be on this panel because... we came down to earth
870 with what we are discussing now. The main words are here: poverty, inequality... In each society
871 in Latin America you have inequalities. Katherine mentioned it and it is absolutely true. Each
872 society [is] divided. You have part of it that looks like Europe or the United States, the best of
873 the United States, [but] the main population is living in increasing poverty, and the problem of
874 the youngsters, the youth. [As] I mentioned, in Argentina we have about one million, one
875 million, youngsters that are not going to school, that are not working, and that are producing
876 poverty. Their families are producing poverty. And I feel that this is something that the world
877 will have to address. Of course, I think that the churches... because of being so much involved in
878 the local community, in the base community, they could have a bigger role. But I think it is
879 something that is not well understood by governments... I'm glad to hear that it is being
880 discussed already because... those are the real issues that we have to deal [with] in Latin
881 America. It doesn't matter where you are coming from.

882
883 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** So I have some questions... Number one, Katherine, I hope you will
884 share the website where we can read more about the Antigua meeting because it is fascinating.
885 But one of the issues that we get into [is that] ... religious groups get involved in humanitarian
886 projects for a variety of reasons. Sometimes there is a structural reason or it is tied to theology
887 such as liberation theology. Sometimes it is about charity - that is, that it is as much about the
888 benefactor as it is for the people who benefit. But the areas where religious groups are most
889 likely to get involved for what I would just call "theological reasons," really religious reasons,
890 are also the areas where they are most likely to become very controversial. That is, when you
891 talk about the family, the family, the family - who objects to families? You know we all probably
892 came from one in some way or another, and yet, when you say that, any number of things are
893 evoked in your mind. [If] Focus on the Family (a very conservative political movement in the
894 United States) and the Catholic Church get involved with family issues or health, you are
895 probably correct in assuming that it is also going to have a strong anti-abortion agenda. It is

896 going to have issues tied to women's reproductive rights and health that many people are going
897 to find controversial. To look at a very extreme case, ... I hope that those American evangelicals
898 who are advising people in Uganda could anticipate the toxic turn that that made... [bringing
899 about] the travesty that gay people would be executed in Uganda for being gay. And yet there
900 does seem to have been some sort of involvement there. Those groups are becoming involved in
901 these issues because of religious thinking, because they feel like there is a moral cause involved
902 that they become involved. And yet, I am guessing that not everyone in here would really
903 approve of all of those outcomes. And so how do you grapple with that - that religious groups are
904 willing to spend a tremendous amount of their own time, their own money, their own personnel,
905 their own infrastructure to put into different kinds of social projects? But they have a reason for
906 it ... Of course we all know that's why people tend to be very suspicious of religious groups.
907 Some of that is well [indistinct] and I think some of it probably is not. But how do you address
908 that? How do you deal with that? Isn't that one of the challenges that we face? Right?

909

910 **Fernando Lopez-Alves:** Well, I don't know what I can say that can lift the gloom around the
911 conference right now. [laughter, chatter] And on top of that, the sun has gone now. This is
912 gloomy. Yes, Latin America is a gloomy region, and as Otto was saying, it is a long story. And
913 those of us who have studied this part of the world know that maybe it is longer than 30 years.
914 Maybe, you know, I can go back to the 19th century. I can go back to who knows when. And we
915 can go back and back and back and always be messy and always be terrible and horrible and the
916 poor are not doing better and the rich are not doing better either. That is another thing that we
917 need to say. Neither the poor nor the rich are doing much better except only, according to my
918 research, only 3.5% of the rich are doing better. The rest of the rich are not doing that much
919 better either. Everybody is doing a little bit worse. And inequality is worse. And that is also true.

920

921 But let me share very briefly the results of a survey that I've been running with some colleagues
922 in Latin America for the last 5 years, and this includes Columbia, Argentina, Venezuela, Chile,
923 Ecuador and Paraguay - so all these countries. And there are 3 basic questions. One question is
924 "Do you trust your government?" Second question is "Do you trust your church?" - if you go to
925 one church. Third question is "Do you trust your neighbors?" Well the government comes out
926 really pretty bad, not only because they do not trust the government, but because when I ask

927 secondly “Do you think you owe anything to your government?”, people say, “The government
928 owes me.” Right? They owe me. When you say “Do you trust your church?” “Do you owe
929 anything to your church?” [They respond,] “Yeah, I owe something to my church, but the church
930 owes me. Because I go to church and I’m there and I’m a part of it and so the church is
931 something that I am helping [to] construct.” And the third thing that is important is the idea of
932 the neighbors. “Do you trust your neighbor?” “Not all of them, but we try to help each other any
933 time we can.” The survey was about self-confidence and entitlement. And I think entitlement... if
934 something good has happened in America in the last 30 years is entitlement. People believe they
935 are entitled to many more things than they ever believed they were entitled [to] before.
936 Everybody wants to have that little piece of middle class life, that only before... I’m sorry about
937 that ... only Argentines, of course. (I thought about that before, when [indistinct] said “we are
938 all Europeans in exile.” I’m sorry about that. The Argentines we will leave aside and not deal
939 with them. And I do not want to offend anybody.) But this sense of entitlement is positive in a lot
940 of ways. The church, according to our research, but we are not experts on religion or anything
941 like that, but “the church is something that I built” - that is very, very different from a Catholic
942 tradition in which the church had been built by other people and I just attend and sit through
943 service and make a contribution when I can when I go out. “No, no. The church - I built this
944 thing. They owe me. I come here, and I’m needed here. And if I’m not here, there is no audience.
945 Without audience, there is no religion. Without religion, nothing happens.” So this idea of a
946 leadership, religious or political - or even community leadership - that needs me to function... is a
947 little bit different in Latin America today than it used to be before. I don’t know whether this is
948 good news, but I take [it] as some good news in the middle of a very cloudy day. Thank you.

949

950 **Kurt Frieder:** May I add something? I wonder ... We did not mention the power of
951 communications and the internet and all those things that changed the real world today.
952 [audience comment] I know, but there is a tool there that has to be used much more than today.
953 In Argentina, we [have] some Evangelical groups that are using it on radio and on TV. They
954 have their own ... Every day you find some information or something. And those groups are
955 growing. Those groups are growing. And when you look at the Catholic Church, it comes again
956 with the old information ... I feel that the strength of using communication is something that we
957 have to consider because, I don’t know if I mentioned it, but this presentation I did is part of a

958 major program that we are doing that has to do with the Global Media AIDS Initiative, that was
959 launched by Kofi Annan ten years ago or something like that, considering AIDS and sexual
960 reproductive rights and discrimination, but with the idea that more than 70% of people only
961 inform themselves through TV. And in all those countries, when you go and look at houses, all
962 houses have TVs. All houses have TVs, ... or if they haven't got TV, they have the radio. There
963 is a tool there that has to be used much more ... the tool that transmits information that may
964 change cultures - that may change cultures.

965

966 **PANEL 3 - Do NGOs find religious ideas and/or institutions are a help or a hindrance?**

967

968 **Claudine Michel:** Welcome back, everybody. Let's continue our conversation of this morning.
969 Our third panel is "Do NGOs find religious ideas, religious institutions are a help or a
970 hindrance?" In terms of ethical values, moral values, and service to others the areas of
971 conjunction between religious institutions and NGOs are very clear, but there are also areas of
972 disjunction. And I hope that our panelists will help us highlight both aspects of those two entities
973 that we are looking at. Let me now proceed to introducing our speakers. Our first speaker will be
974 Mary Becker who has a background in financial planning and investment and works in
975 Louisville, Kentucky. And her main area was helping people develop strategies for socially
976 responsible portfolios. She retired and has been with us in Santa Barbara since 2004. And she's
977 also the president of the board of Fonkoze which is a micro-finance organization and an
978 educational organization in Haiti dealing with recovery and rehabilitation, and it's one of the
979 organizations that we Haitians respect the most. In fact, the Haitian Studies Association
980 newsletter recommending where to send funding, Fonkoze is listed number one with Direct
981 Relief Services, Partners in Health, and Doctors Without Borders. Mary will be telling us more
982 about Fonkoze. Our second presenter will be Victoria Riskin, who is a founding member of
983 Human Rights Watch, the California south branch that she co-chairs. It is the largest US-based
984 human rights organization with a staff of over 250 people working globally. She sits on the
985 international board of Human Rights Watch and helped create the Human Rights Watch council.
986 She also chaired the Helen Hammett prize committee, a grant program for writers who have been
987 victims of political persecution. [She] has worked in particular in India, Nepal, and Tibet. And
988 our third presenter will be Thomas Tighe ... who serves as president... of Direct Relief

989 International which was created actually in 1948 in Santa Barbara. And we all know that this is
990 one of the largest [indistinct] organizations in terms of material assistance to locally-run health
991 programs and also intervention in times of crisis. He also worked as chief operating officer of the
992 Peace Corps, and also served as associate counsel to the US Senate committee on Veterans'
993 Affairs. So we look forward to your presentations.

994

995 **Mary Becker:** Thanks, Claudine. The question of this panel is “Do NGOs find religious ideas
996 and/or institutions are a help or a hindrance?” And the answer to the question is “yes.” At times
997 they are a help, and at times religion seems to be a hindrance. But I want to try to lift the gloom,
998 as the day has done. The sun has come out, and even though things look very, very dark in Haiti,
999 this day I’m going to speak personally about my experience with the Haitian institution,
1000 Fonkoze, which has benefitted both from religious ideas and from religious institutions’
1001 involvement.

1002

1003 The founder and the animator of Fonkoze is Fr. Joseph Philippe who was born into a Haitian
1004 family, peasant family. He became a priest and was sent to study in Canada, in France, and at the
1005 Chicago Theological Union where he earned a master’s degree in Liberation Theology which has
1006 already been mentioned here today. At some point, he also read the works of Paolo Friere who
1007 was a Brazilian educator and author. And he took both of those to heart, and he developed a
1008 vision that synthesized the concepts of liberation theology, Friere’s ideas on popular education,
1009 and micro-credit - that is, the providing of small loans, very small loans, to very poor people.
1010 And again, to lift the gloom a bit, one of the things that has been a powerful idea that has
1011 emerged over the last 20 to 25 years is micro-finance. It is happening all over the world in
1012 various cultures and is primarily being carried forward by women in those cultures. [It] has
1013 proved to have many, many effects, not just in those women gaining economic self-sufficiency,
1014 but it raises the level of living of their children, their families, and, in fact, shows that as women
1015 become economically self-sufficient, they choose to limit the size of their families. So it has an
1016 effect upon population control as well. Fr. Joseph came to believe that it was possible for poor
1017 people in Haiti to master these concepts and that would allow them to gain autonomy. At that
1018 point, Fonkoze the institution started. This was in 1994.

1019

1020 But an idea is one thing, and it takes money to carry that out. And the earliest investors were
1021 religious women, Catholic religious women's organizations in the United States. And they have
1022 proved to be the most faithful and steady supporters over the years. They, early on, invested in
1023 Fonkoze and have stayed with us through thick and thin. And in Haiti, it is very much thick and
1024 thin. Over the years, Jewish, Protestant, non-denominational religious organizations have
1025 become engaged in lending. And I assume that all those organizations are motivated by their own
1026 religious beliefs and social justice tenets, particularly that one of solidarity with the poor.
1027 Fonkoze is not allied with any religious institution. However the reality is that Haiti is a very,
1028 very Catholic country. So Fonkoze does utilize networks of parish priests and church leaders to
1029 find clients and employees and leaders for the bank's operations around in the communities
1030 where it operates. So just again, to lift up the whole role that liberation theology has played - and
1031 not just in Fr. Joseph's mind, but also in the country of Haiti over the years - ... [liberation
1032 theology] was really what inspired him and some of the women, even though they may not have
1033 been involved in these little groups, but they are able to imagine something beyond the current
1034 reality and better their situation. I think it is interesting that several speakers have mentioned
1035 small groups, and ... that is the model of micro-finance that Fonkoze follows. I think James
1036 mentioned, you know, small groups that are meeting in these very large churches and gaining
1037 knowledge and become empowered by simply that structure. There was a mention of cells... And
1038 even though it may look somewhat different than the base communities, it draws upon much of
1039 the same dynamics.

1040

1041 Just to interject a personal note: one of the things that got me to Haiti in the first place was that
1042 kind of a formation process that I did in a program called "Just Faith" and it might be of interest
1043 to the folks. There is a "Just Faith" program that is geared for college students and is happening
1044 on campuses. It is very much a focus on poverty. And I was talking to a couple of the students
1045 before we started this panel, and we agreed that there really is no way of understanding how the
1046 majority of the people of the world live without actually seeing them and going to their
1047 countries. Our own reality is so much a bubble. We say in Santa Barbara, we live in a bubble,
1048 which we do. In the United States, we live in a bubble, most of us. And so, meeting in a small
1049 group gives one the courage to go out in the big, wide world. I think that is what I wanted to say

1050 about that, and [I] appreciate the opportunity to be here with this group, and I am learning a lot.
1051 Thank you.

1052

1053 **Claudine Michel:** Thank you so much, Mary. Victoria.

1054

1055 **Victoria Riskin:** Well, I just want to say what a pleasure it is to be on a panel with two people I
1056 know very well and admire so much. You do fantastic work.

1057

1058 I am with Human Rights Watch. I am on the board - I am not a staff person. So I have the
1059 responsibility of helping them meet budget every year and other daunting worries. Human Rights
1060 Watch, many of you may know but for the students who might not, is one of the largest human
1061 rights organizations working globally with a staff of 250 people. And we are a secular
1062 organization. Our mission is to identify human rights abuses where they occur, document them in
1063 as much detail as we possibly can, and then issue those reports and findings as widespread as we
1064 can to journalists around the world, (particularly in the region) to work with local groups (civil
1065 society) to bring about change where we can, and to work on governments to bring about
1066 changes, but also to work with collective governmental organizations like the EU or [indistinct].
1067 And we work in five major regions of the world: Africa, Middle East, Asia, the Americas, and
1068 (what am I forgetting?) Eastern Europe. And we also have worked on particular issues having to
1069 do with women and children and on arms trade. So, for example, we did a big initiative to bring
1070 about a treaty two years ago that ended the use of cluster munitions. And we had over a hundred
1071 countries sign on to that, and that was kind of an interesting project. So I tell you all this to set
1072 the stage for our relationship over the years to Latin America.

1073

1074 I think the principles of caring and concern for one's fellow human beings is fundamental to all
1075 the religious traditions, obviously. But it was also the same spirit and longing that helped the
1076 design of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that's our tent-pole instrument going
1077 forward. Religious institutions have within them people who are dedicated and work tirelessly
1078 for good, and like all institutions also have inside of them people who grab for power and
1079 support dictatorships. Latin America is still, at least, and I should really defer to the experts here,
1080 dominated by the Catholic Church and [it] enjoys a special status. But of course, we have seen

1081 the rise of some of these other Christian organizations - Evangelicals, Pentecostals - where they
1082 have also been engaged in good works, but also been complicit in some of the atrocities. One of
1083 the important growth spurts, in my mind, in the human rights movement came, for Human Rights
1084 Watch in particular, came in the late 70s and early 80s from Latin America and from the Catholic
1085 Church and from the liberation [theologians] who were so deeply engaged in fighting
1086 dictatorships on behalf of those people who were being crushed underneath repressive regimes.
1087 So until this particularly repressive era with Chile, Brazil, Argentina, and El Salvador and so on,
1088 this so-called “lost decade” that someone referred to earlier, human rights, which was basically
1089 focused on the Eastern block countries in the Soviet Union... it was at the height of the Cold
1090 War.

1091
1092 But the atrocities in Latin America were so enormous and overwhelming that we founded this
1093 separate division of what was then the beginning of Human Rights Watch to focus on Latin
1094 America. And some of you who were around long enough and old enough to remember
1095 “America’s Watch” as we were called, and then we mushroomed into “Middle East Watch” and
1096 all these watches. And finally we became Human Rights Watch. So the Catholic Church and the
1097 organizations that we worked with in those early years were instrumental in helping to build
1098 Human Rights Watch. I know that you were involved in the early days, the Concern
1099 Organization, with our work in El Salvador.

1100
1101 There is a particular book that I love because I optioned it to make a movie called “A Miracle, A
1102 Universe.” ... I commend it to you who are professors, but it is a description of Brazil at the time
1103 when there was a slight opening for a freedom of expression and gathering of information. And it
1104 was the Archbishop Arnes of Sao Paolo and Jamie Wright... who built a coalition of individuals
1105 who went from police station to police station gathering information about who had been
1106 disappeared and by whom, a monumental task and to do this a little bit under the radar. This
1107 coalition of 30 people were so frightened of what might happen as they collected this
1108 information that they sent it to our team in New York where we could keep it safe. They did it
1109 very quietly, not saying a word. Then one day they published it, and it hit the streets and
1110 everybody knew who had done what. This process of fact-finding, truth and transparency is the
1111 rock bed of the human rights movement. Fortunately, Arnes and Wright survived that, but life

1112 was not so kind to Oscar Romero in El Salvador who was gunned down for his supporting those
1113 who were criticizing the government, nor for some of the Maryknoll missionaries who went
1114 down to El Salvador. I also was involved in a film project about those very brave women. So the
1115 fact-finding and exposing the atrocities is seminal to what we do. In those years, Human Rights
1116 Watch focused, for example, in El Salvador, unearthing how the United States government was
1117 complicit in supporting those atrocious regimes, particularly in El Salvador because the Reagan
1118 administration was denying it. So we had to gather the facts and expose the truth.

1119
1120 In Argentina, the church was not, I believe, so brave. But in Chile and Guatemala, church
1121 leaders, of course, from the very beginning were. And many human rights groups really spawned
1122 out of that beginning, those seeds that were planted by the Catholic Church and have continued
1123 on and been partners with us since then, but no longer necessarily affiliated with the church.
1124 Perhaps the Catholic Church's activist role has been a little bit muted, and you are experts on
1125 this, but the rise in power of Opus Dei and the more repressive elements of the church... And that
1126 makes it more difficult for the progressives to find their voice. In Guatemala, Amazing things
1127 happened, even though we are far away form Guatemala being a healthy and vibrant society. But
1128 after the peace initiative, the efforts toward a truth commission was a very brave step. And one
1129 of the things that... Monsignor Gerardi put together [was] a process by which he gave people
1130 who were going to testify a chance to practice. There was a practice commission before they
1131 actually went to the real commission and told what had happened. And then of course, there was
1132 the issuing of the famous report "A memory of silence," and Gerardi was killed. But that did not
1133 squelch the human rights movement in Guatemala because there have been teams of lawyers
1134 who have worked diligently over the years to identify who had committed those killings, and
1135 finally the perpetrators are in jail. But the story of the human rights movement and religion in
1136 Guatemala has to be also underscored by the role of Rios Montt, the nightmare that he
1137 perpetrated, and his affiliation with the evangelical church and of course Pat Robertson.

1138
1139 So here was a question for all of you, why is it that devoted church-loving people who were
1140 evangelicals could stand by and watch atrocities being committed while the Catholics did not?
1141 They stood more in coalition. Is there something intrinsic, is there a relationship one has as an
1142 evangelical that if you are good [then] God will reward you and if you're bad you're punished

1143 and so you therefore must have been bad and you deserved the punishment? Is that part of the
1144 ethos? So one has to look at those issues...

1145

1146 I do not want to take up too much more time, but in recent years, as the civil society and
1147 NGO/human rights groups have mushroomed in Latin America, we have had partners on many
1148 important issues from police brutality to the treatment of children to domestic violence to failure
1149 to hold abusers accountable and so on and so forth. Where we find ourselves parting ways, say
1150 with the Catholic Church in particular and other church groups, is over the issues of a woman's
1151 right to choose and gay rights and HIV rights. And there the church has not been so much in
1152 partnership. Although, we have found that for example in Mexico where we did an initiative,
1153 many women that are active in the church were working with us to make sure that women had
1154 access to legal abortions in the case of incest and rape. And we found that those women are not
1155 as dogmatic as women in the United States, religious participants in the United States, who tend
1156 not to even tolerate the idea that a woman should be allowed to terminate a pregnancy if she has
1157 been a victim of rape or incest. So in some ways, we are not so far away from the religious
1158 community, it is just not so much church-sanctioned. I think one of the things that we all must
1159 work on, and I say this in closing based on the comments today, is to push, in all of these
1160 countries, accountability for past abuses. That is something that we are working on constantly,
1161 but I do not think we will reach a level where we will have stable, open civil society,
1162 democracies, healthy governments unless there are systems of accountability for past abuses, and
1163 that includes the United States of America.

1164

1165 **Thomas Tighe:** Thank you, again. It is my pleasure to again be on the panel. It is more
1166 comfortable up here than following the first panel. I thought, "Wow, that's a really smart panel
1167 of academics. 'Publishing their ninth book on this subject...'" So thanks. [laughter] We were just
1168 going through your upcoming books, which was intimidating.

1169

1170 It is a fascinating question coming at it from an NGO perspective, as Mary said. Religious
1171 institutions were sort of the original NGOs, weren't they? You had the sovereign, and then as
1172 commerce evolved they figured out the shared responsibilities and the taxing authority, and then
1173 religious institutions took up the social services. My take on the explosion of NGOs is the failure

1174 of old institutions to provide things that people otherwise think ought to be done, but
1175 governments aren't not doing them enough to satisfy people. There is no business reason to do
1176 them because you cannot make money, particularly with poor folks - although, some of the
1177 micro-finance pushes back on that assumption to a large degree. And then old institutions get
1178 hidebound. And so you have seen people in the past 40 years in particular say, inspired by faith
1179 in many cases, say "Well, that's great words on Sunday or Saturday, but it's not happening in my
1180 life. And I want to manifest those and do something about it." The example of the Fonkoze
1181 founder is a perfect example of that. And ... our organization, Direct Relief, is non-sectarian. We
1182 do not ask what motivates people. You sense that there is something else that is motivating folks
1183 based on their family traditions, their faith traditions, their life experience. So I think it is really
1184 an interesting question.

1185

1186 Defining an NGO, what an NGO is, is itself an interesting academic question. Isn't it? ... With
1187 the stipulation there may be a false distinction between religious institutions and NGOs, ... one
1188 may be a subset of the other. Mary was smart. She [answered] "yes." And I would say "I don't
1189 know." I really do not, because at times we tend to look at the functions that religious institutions
1190 perform. As a non-sectarian, humanitarian organization you tend to look at, as in Haiti today,
1191 "Well, who's capable of getting the job done?" ... There's food, water, shelter, medical attention,
1192 medical supplies, and medical services - who can do that? If you can not sit down, if you can
1193 stand up, and most of those that stand up have some- either religious institution directly or some
1194 arm of religious institution- that has grown up parallel to the religious element in particular. In
1195 Latin America, again, in a room with experts of which I am not one I would certainly defer to
1196 your judgments, but I can offer that every time that we work... religious institutions of all types,
1197 they are embedded in the culture. Whether the religious component is embedded as deeply as the
1198 institution itself or just the cultural and social identifiers, you cannot avoid it. Even people like
1199 me - Catholic school, altar boy, still ostensibly Catholic - I am not sure if they would consider
1200 me one just based on my church attendance and personal views. But I identify with it. And
1201 growing up and going to Catholic school and meeting no one other than other people who went
1202 to Catholic school, I was not aware that there was anything other than Catholic people. But I am
1203 not sure that made me a good Catholic or a theological Catholic or gave me any particular
1204 expertise in the Catholic tradition or dogma, but it was certainly my tribe... Religious institutions

1205 have an effect on people's lives through identification and culture and social interactions that is
1206 divorced from the religiosity of the faith itself. So we certainly see the tremendous value that
1207 religious institutions play at a functional level. Who knows the most people? Who's hooked in?
1208 Who has a hub and a network and a distribution channel and a communication... They are
1209 religious institutions in Latin America. Unavoidably it is going to be someone who is working in
1210 a bishop's office in Peru, when there is an earthquake in Peru. Find the chief operating officer of
1211 the archdiocese and you are going to find a very good source of information and make a very
1212 coherent plan or at least someone who is hooked in. So we certainly see ... religious institutions,
1213 which have been deeply embedded in societies for a long time, playing a helpful role.

1214

1215 Some of the things that ... [are] risks for NGOs who are particularly pursuing an advocacy role or
1216 are trying to do something, ... in the human rights arena, that the long-standing religious faith or
1217 institutional stance is inconsistent with... (gay rights or access to family planning, access to
1218 abortions if necessary) that goes foursquare at the church. And so if you are trying to say it is a
1219 human rights violation to deprive people of making those kinds of choices, you are going to find
1220 the church in its place of hindrance. If you are trying to distribute food and water and medicine
1221 and medical supplies and shelter, you are going to find the religious institutions with high
1222 credibility among their followers an extremely effective vehicle.

1223

1224 One of the dilemmas that we confront as a non-sectarian organization is if you just look at the
1225 function, are you unwittingly advancing the faith? ... Who is the best food distributor? It may
1226 well be a deeply committed, passionate evangelical group that is trying to gain credibility with its
1227 people. So if you look at what their capability is to deliver services because they have a
1228 passionate group of people engaged, even though you do not have any religious agenda, you may
1229 actually be advancing a religious agenda by virtue of participating with them. That is a playbook
1230 perhaps from the Catholic Church which was educating people and doing a lot of things in a way
1231 to, perhaps one might say, both pursue their faith and attract followers. This faith, this tradition,
1232 this set of beliefs in this God can do these things for you. So as a non-sectarian organization, we
1233 always try to check ourselves. "Well, we know we want to work with them because they do this,
1234 but what if it was Satanists Against Hunger? And they had a very devoted crowd of Satanists
1235 who were really against hunger and their programmatic reach was better, they had the best

1236 warehouse and inventory system, would we do that?” And that is a nice hypothetical question,
1237 but I think some people view other faiths’ encroachment like “Who is this upstart faith? They
1238 seem to be doing good work and having good meetings and attracting people.” You look at the
1239 function and try to define what is the driver. Is it [that] they are doing that for an ulterior motive?
1240 We have worked on and off with the philanthropic arm and humanitarian services of the Church
1241 of LDS - LDS Charities - which has an amazing reach and a deeply committed group of
1242 followers, and their missionaries go out and do good work. In emergencies, they can turn on
1243 material supply, and food supplies, and shelter supplies, and leverage financial resources. And
1244 they are very good at that. But that is one of those things where they understand and the people
1245 who work with them understand, in our perspective we will work with folks but let’s not make it
1246 about that. Save that for another time and another moment. Let’s not add too much literature,
1247 nothing should be conditional. We are basically a support organization that does not paper and
1248 flag everything, and there are no conditions other than it is non-discriminatorily provided when
1249 we provide aid to anybody. But it is an interesting question that requires good antenna.

1250
1251 We are also a non-political organization. But the same thing arises in the political arena. If you
1252 are doing something for apolitical purposes, are you making a political statement if you try to
1253 provide services, humanitarian services in Gaza? Are you making a political statement about
1254 oppression? Some may be and some might not be, but really trying to be consistent over time is a
1255 challenge for NGOs both religious and non-religious.

1256
1257 The other distinction is religious NGOs probably don’t find religious institutions a hindrance. If
1258 it is unclear what an NGO is (and hypothetically churches are NGOs themselves), [then] NGOs,
1259 in providing types of services that NGOs have, [gain] a very effective means to advance a
1260 religious belief as well as to perhaps develop a way of providing services - educational, financial.
1261 If the Catholic Church or the evangelical groups or the Church of Latter Day Saints, for example,
1262 established the best micro-finance institution, how would that be perceived? Would it be a smart
1263 play if you are trying to say “This is cool. This is attractive. How do we embed this?” Because
1264 religious institutions always have a great way of co-opting and umbrella-ing and morphing, and
1265 so a thousand years later you think, “No, that’s their idea.” So it’s a very interesting question that
1266 you have the answers to far more than I. But ... to just reflect upon it and just give you how

1267 difficult it is to make those judgments, particularly today on the fly when there are Saint
1268 Damian's Pediatric Hospital that we have been working with, Justinian University Hospital that
1269 we have been working with, Partners in Health ... they sure seem to be faith-inspired because
1270 they do all the things that Jesus said you should do. But they do not say "It is because we are that
1271 way." ... But their founder, Paul Farmer, seems to me one of the (if not *the*) most morally rooted
1272 people I have ever met. You just think that there is some faith inspiration underneath it out of the
1273 liberation theology model.

1274

1275 So, again, thank you for inviting me. I can't answer your question. I get at least a C- in this
1276 seminar. It is really fun to listen to you. And every time I am invited I know it is going to make
1277 me struggle, but congratulations on all your academic work and struggling with these issues
1278 because they are very important and they can inform us doing a better job and having better
1279 intended not to do something that we do not intend to do while trying to do something good.
1280 Thanks.

1281

1282 **Claudine Michel:** Thank you very much. This call to a higher order is always a difficult
1283 rebalancing act.

1284

1285 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** Ready for questions? I just want to follow up from Thomas Tighe's
1286 remark, and we get grades when we answer these questions. But when you answer the questions
1287 you answer it with supplies and decisions about whether to service people. And... man! You have
1288 a tough job... First of all, how do you analyze a group? ... You work with local NGOs, and you
1289 work with a lot of religious-based ones and not just Christian but Jewish and Muslim and Hindu
1290 and Buddhist. So how do you check them out? And... I would like you to give us some examples
1291 (but if you do not want to give the names, that is OK but)... are there instances when you've
1292 decided this group is over the line? "We can not give to this group. We are furthering an agenda I
1293 am not sure we want to be involved in."

1294

1295 [off mic, off camera audience member]: That [example] was "Satanists [Against] Hunger." That
1296 was "Satanist [Against] Hunger."

1297

1298 **Thomas Tighe:** We are still debating whether we are going to approve them as a partner.
1299 [laughter] But they do good work. OK?

1300

1301 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** But tell us an example for those of us [indistinct].

1302

1303 **Thomas Tighe:** It was the “Witches Against Homelessness.” [laughter] ... What we look for is,
1304 first of all, “Do they know what they’re doing,” “Are they doing good work?” before you get to
1305 the other questions. “Are they properly trained?” If you are equipping them, “Are they properly
1306 licensed?” Then you start to ask, just as you would do if it was an interview for an employee or a
1307 professorship, “I’ve seen your excellent resume. Hmmm... Let me kinda work around the outside
1308 and see what other people are saying about you.” ... As in Haiti, we have made some good calls
1309 and have worked with people that we thought were doing good work today and would be doing
1310 good work for the foreseeable future. So it was important, because you are taking care of people
1311 without much money. They need a subsidy just like the richest country in the history of the world
1312 needs to figure out how to find its healthcare system, the poorest country in the Western
1313 hemisphere... need[s] outside help. But let’s find the good ones who are going to actually use it
1314 to strengthen services for the poor. And so when you find groups that have the credibility, ...
1315 there is no particular scientific way to do it. You look at their finances. You look at what they
1316 say about themselves. Then most importantly, you try to see if they have standing within the
1317 community which they are working [in]... You would probably do it the same way we would do
1318 it. Who do we know, and whose judgment do we trust in this country where we can get a good
1319 disinterested read on reputation on longevity on the quality that people associate with it? And
1320 then, if we cannot answer those questions to our satisfaction, we tend to defer. It is not that we
1321 are against you. We just do not know... There are a lot of people we do know and have that kind
1322 of trust. But... when the faith element is just so front and foremost, it is hard for us to see beyond
1323 that because sometimes it does not seem that they see beyond that. So if they want to work with
1324 us because... they have a calling to do that, it makes it tough to say, “Before we get to that,... do
1325 you have doctors? Because you want a lot of medical material.” But we expect very good
1326 antenna, and we have to do our homework. And I think it is not as complicated in Latin America
1327 as it is in other places. But if, you know, what’s a big challenge with jihadism? They provide
1328 good service and they have good clean schools, professor. So if you are looking for a person who

1329 is just going to provide good services in poor areas and do good feeding programs... Greg
1330 Mortensen is a lone exception to the work of other folks in the Wahhabist schools who are doing
1331 it exceptionally well and recruiting people by providing services that may or may not be
1332 advancing either religious agenda or some other political agenda wrapped in religion. But Latin
1333 America, for all of its tortured history, it is much less intense now. And as the pendulum swings,
1334 it is not swinging as far out right and as far out left...

1335

1336 **Victoria Riskin:** If I could just coattail on this little bit because there are two examples in the
1337 human rights movement that might go to your question. The first is scientology. Scientology is
1338 building a very strong “human rights presence” particularly going after young people. If you go
1339 on the web, you’ll find something that talks about human rights education for high school
1340 students, and it looks like an ideal website that wipes Amnesty [International] off the map in
1341 terms of its bells and whistles. And then you have to scroll down and scroll down and scroll
1342 down, and if you really get all the way to the bottom, you see that it is Scientology. So it is a
1343 very scary thing. And they have been circling around Human Rights Watch and trying to build a
1344 partnership. And you do not always know when someone approaches you and says “Oh, gosh !
1345 We would love to partner with you on a symposium on blahdy-blahdy-blah.” That all sounds
1346 very, very good. But you are actually about to enter into what I feel is sort of the snake pit. A
1347 little bias on my part, but I think I am accurate about that.

1348

1349 Another example, however, where religious groups were very actively involved in Southern
1350 Sudan; part of it was out of humanitarian compassion, some of it was... missionary. They were
1351 trying to convert people. But there was a lot of good that was going on in Southern Sudan on the
1352 part of fundamentalist churches who are not natural allies for the human rights movement. At the
1353 time that Darfur broke out, it was very tough... Human Rights Watch was the first group on the
1354 ground and reported out... video and reports and news releases. But it was hard to get the Bush
1355 administration to pay attention. And we were scrambling to find somebody who had credibility
1356 because we did not have credibility with the Bush administration. Imagine that. [laughter] And it
1357 went downhill from there. So we met in a quiet meeting with some of the leading fundamentalist
1358 groups, church groups who were working in southern Sudan and said, “Do you know what’s
1359 going on in Darfur? And can you go to the White House and get the Bush administration

1360 engaged? We will stay on the sidelines. In fact, it will not help you if we walk in with you.” And
1361 they did. Now, we have not solved Darfur, but the United States engagement or concern on the
1362 issue did at least make a difference in terms of the engagement of the UN to some extent. They
1363 were not organizations that we have partnered with since or will probably ever partner with on
1364 anything that I can imagine. But in that moment and in that situation, they had the right access
1365 and we did not.

1366

1367 **Thomas Tighe:** Mark, if I could just say something. When I was thinking of Fonkoze and some
1368 of the great work that has been done and some of the earlier comments today about the cell
1369 approach - small groups of people bound by faith - then you see as these things grow, the
1370 challenge of organizations - they get big, they get all screwed up. So the question is, “Can you
1371 get all the micro right and get the macro wrong?” I think the only criticism I have heard of
1372 micro-finance is that it is micro. It is almost inherently limited because it will not build the big
1373 road and it will not put the port in. It will not get a coherent network so goods and services can
1374 be brought. And that is the challenge... Is there something that happens in the scaling of a
1375 movement from small groups of people who are bound and meet four times a week? It was
1376 fascinating. Then you think, 2000 years from now, those groups ... [are] going to be more
1377 bureaucratic than US government. Right? I mean, it is just institutional. And it was an interesting
1378 question both for the aggregate size of micro-finance. At some point, you need the macro activity
1379 because it is self-limited in some way and so then the need for the institutional large-scale
1380 institutions to kick in is really important or ultimately frustrating. But I just thought it was an
1381 interesting [idea]... when you were talking, and [I was] thinking about what some of the other
1382 speakers had said, which is totally off the point of this panel...

1383

1384 **Mary Becker:** Just to pick up on that... Given, there have been hurricanes and there has been...
1385 an earthquake, but the agenda of the organization is to build the economic and social structures
1386 in Haiti. And so one of the things that I did not say was these solidarity groups, when they get
1387 together, they learn, pay their loans back, they talk with each other about what is going on with
1388 their children and their families. That is not the ultimate end. The next thing that happens is these
1389 solidarity groups elect delegates and there is a general assembly every year, an annual general
1390 assembly, and women who at the beginning of getting into the program could not even look you

1391 in the eye and would never think of getting up and standing and talking - you have seen Haitian
1392 women here today - they are able to get up. They stand at the microphone. And these are women
1393 who, yes they start with micro-loans, but they come to have macro aspirations... That is going to
1394 be the thing that really changes a country is when people not only think it is a good idea to go to
1395 the polls and vote, but they actually field candidates and they actually are leaders in their
1396 communities. [From audience: And women candidates] Women candidates, another thing... who
1397 was it who said the last thirty years [is] the lost thirty years. I mean the role of women across
1398 cultures again is another very bright spot.

1399

1400 **James Wellman:** You know, I was thinking about the small group comments. And I think what
1401 you all are getting is the ability to survive in the moment: food, shelter, medicine, whatever. But
1402 what religious groups do, they may do that, but then they give a culture from which a village can
1403 be sustained. And that is a totally different mechanism. I guess Scientology is the demon now,
1404 but even they give a culture, a network, and allow people to survive because they care for one
1405 another and then they build up mechanisms, social capital for living. But that is what Christian
1406 groups do, and Hamas, Hezbollah do the same. So I guess that's the answer to the question is
1407 that "Can you provide a culture to a people who have none?" I kind of put you on the spot but
1408 that ...

1409

1410 **Thomas Tighe:** It is a fair question. That is not the aspirational goal of our group. And the
1411 humanitarian tradition was to be eminently respectful of all cultures, recognizing that it is... the
1412 Haitian's determination to define how Haitian culture is going to evolve just as it is in El
1413 Salvador. And I think the [indistinct] of the pushback, whether it is Mayan versus Catholic or
1414 whatever, you see the desire to present and provide a culture... towards what end? We don't have
1415 any ultimate agenda. So we are for everybody, and the humanitarian definition is "You are for
1416 humanity" ... to allow each person to realize the inherent potential that they were born with.
1417 [indistinct]

1418

1419 **James Wellman:** I am not at all criticizing you. I am just saying that there is a way in which you
1420 have an implicit culture. You said your Catholic culture, which I think is fantastic... which
1421 clearly motivates you to do these good acts.

1422

1423 **Thomas Tighe:** Well don't say that. That is going to keep me up tonight, that "Why am I doing
1424 this?" [laughter] I said I wasn't active ...

1425

1426 **James Wellman:** No. But when I ask my students at the University of Washington, "Do you
1427 know the story of the Good Samaritan?" 90% no longer know it. You were raised with it. That
1428 gave you a culture of charity, and whether, you know, I am just...

1429

1430 **Thomas Tighe:** And I was smacked with rulers too, [laughter] so don't forget that.

1431

1432 **Claudine Michel:** But, let me say something about this. In the case of Fonkoze for example,
1433 they are particularly effective because they do employ communal thinking and communal
1434 organizing which is part of the fundamental ethos of this African-based society. Even in the
1435 school system, when you use methods from the West where students have to compete with one
1436 another they do not do as well. Whereas from what I understand from Fonkoze, it is one woman
1437 teaching another woman, and helping her with this and all the educational programs that they
1438 have. So it provides a culture, sustains a culture, [in respect to] the models that are foundational
1439 to Haitian society.

1440

1441 **Mary Becker:** One other thing I would say, because it has come up a few times about the whole
1442 reproductive rights and birth control and all that. What I have noticed in Haiti, we have a
1443 reproductive rights module, education module, and it is one of the things that the women talk
1444 about in their groups. And it is based on the type of education that is 'education is conversation'
1445 - not too unlike book clubs that American women had back in the day, in the 60s. Consciousness
1446 raising is what it does. And certainly in that the materials don't say "you must practice birth
1447 control" but it raises questions about what do you do if your partner comes back from the city,
1448 has a girlfriend, and has you know an illness... And it certainly talks about condom use and raises
1449 the issue, and then people do with it what they will a lot like the dance that American women do
1450 with official Catholic Church teaching on birth control... It all exists. [As Jennifer said] there
1451 really is no church position on this because it is all over the place, and the same very pragmatic
1452 stance that Thomas really explained well is... what happens on the ground too. And we see it.

1453 That is what gives me faith that we are not going to be taken over... People are not going to be
1454 taken over as long as they are given tools of empowerment. And one thing that makes us very
1455 edgy personally as an organization is if we feel that someone that we would partner with does
1456 have very much an agenda to advance their own power, their own power... and not to empower
1457 people themselves.

1458

1459 **Thomas Tigue:** The question we are floating around, “Do religious institutions find the ideas
1460 and actions of NGOs a help or hindrance” could be similar because... if it were flipped and we
1461 were religious institutions looking for a way to advance our cause and attract followers, NGOs
1462 could be enormously helpful to establish our credibility because it would allow us to get our
1463 word out and show our good works and that we can deliver for the people. And that is the tension
1464 Mary was talking about. Who is leveraging what here? ... And that is a dance you just have to
1465 have good antenna to realize you are in that moment, and it is hard.

1466

1467 ... [indistinct chatter, laughter]

1468

1469 **Victoria Riskin:** I would just add that in the human rights movement, we have a proactive
1470 obligation to help groups protect their culture - whether they are Mayan or whether they are
1471 Tibetan - that is at risk of being obliterated. So that is where we might come into conflict with
1472 those groups that are missionary underneath it all. Even if it is Fulong Gong or some group that
1473 wants to take over another group, we must think first and foremost about what is crushing in on
1474 this culture and how can it be protected because that is part of the human rights movement.

1475

1476 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** First, I have to say, going way back when you started Tom was that,
1477 Jennifer and I were talking before we started that we hated to follow people who actually knew
1478 how to do something. [laughter] You know, we had our panel this morning.

1479

1480 I want to clarify something that, and maybe I am wrong about this, James, but when you talk
1481 about culture (I do not mean to speak for you - I hardly know you) but I do not think he meant a
1482 new culture. I think it meant more a system of living, and it may be networks more than
1483 imposing an American culture. That isn't what you meant, but maybe I am wrong. But... the

1484 point I wanted to get to was when you talk about agendas, and I haven't worked around
1485 missionary groups and responded to missionary groups in Latin America for a long time. You
1486 always hear people talk about "Well they have this hidden agenda that they want to convert
1487 people." And I think religious groups have three motivations. Sometimes they [indistinct] and
1488 sometimes they do not: social justice, charity, and evangelization. And evangelization is not
1489 hidden at all. It is what they are about, not all religious groups, but a lot of them. And far from
1490 being a secret, covert thing they want to impose on people, it is why they are there. In their
1491 minds, it is the best thing they have to offer. It is the most important thing they have to offer.
1492 And yet from the point of view of people who are not part of that organization, let's say it is the
1493 Mormons or the Satanists or the Wiccans or the Episcopalians, how can you reconcile that? You
1494 are talking about, "Well let's put this aside for the moment and address emergency in a moment
1495 like Haiti is facing right this very minute." I do not think that is very hard. Everybody can see
1496 that this is a crisis. And maybe you do need to baptize people who might die quickly. There
1497 might be some sort of religious actions that you need to take immediately because there is no
1498 time to waste, from a religious point of view. But eventually people who are evangelical in their
1499 outlook, evangelical in whatever religion it is, are going to get to the point which is they want to
1500 do evangelism. And so how do secular, non-sectarian NGOs deal with that? ...

1501
1502 **Thomas Tighe:** I think we all deal with it differently. [In] Haiti it is really cut through... It is
1503 interesting that it was acceptable for kids to die in Haiti last week but not this week. Right? It is
1504 hard to understand why certain things cut through, pierce through the consciousness. But when
1505 they do it is a wonderful reflection of our species that sometimes - and some events just cause
1506 everyone to kind of set aside whatever they were doing - it gets it to a deep place that you see
1507 this outpouring of genuine emotion. But at the same time the last time it really happened was in
1508 the tsunami in 2004. And in northern Sumatra and Aceh province, which is the one Sharia law
1509 governed area, there was a lot of concern about the motivations of people coming in, ostensibly
1510 to do good work. And it caused tension. There are folks here in the room who were there. And
1511 we just said, "You know what? We can't work with you because we don't know you." And if the
1512 question is significant enough to the culture that exists now that it is a distraction (and there are
1513 plenty of other folks) that was an easy call. And that got some prominence. And [there were]
1514 folks who were... not overtly evangelical, but they scratched the surface and it came out. It was

1515 controversial and a huge distraction. I have not seen any of that in Haiti, and I do not expect to...
1516 [It helps that] it is not sharia law that is governing the territory. But different organizations do
1517 it... differently. I think we are pretty open that we do work with everybody that we think is
1518 credible in the communities in which they aspire to work.

1519

1520 [indistinct off-mic comments]

1521

1522 **Otto Maduro:** Thank you... I have an anecdote to connect with Mary's reflections. In
1523 Venezuela, the archbishopric ordered a survey of knowledge, women's knowledge, about Roman
1524 Catholic injunctions on birth control. To oversimplify, basically 90% of Roman Catholic women
1525 in Venezuela did not even know there was a connection between being Roman Catholic and
1526 using or not using pills or condoms. [laughter] So the survey probably made them know, some of
1527 them know, that there seemed to be a connection. When the results were taken to the archbishop,
1528 the mediator, the guy who received the study, reordered the study because this could not be
1529 shown to the archbishop. [laughter] The archbishop could not know that Venezuelan women did
1530 not know that there was a connection between them. And I want to tell that story because I
1531 connect this with some things that Victoria said there. It is important to appreciate the internal
1532 diversity of religious institutions and never think that the official doctrine is what all the bishops
1533 really think or that what all the bishops really think is what most of the people or all of the
1534 people that are under their power think. That is one thing.

1535

1536 And then again, with Victoria's comment about these possible, almost essential, differences
1537 between Catholics and Protestants in relation to human rights, I want to recall one thing - until
1538 about 1958, it was absolutely abnormal for any Roman Catholic priest or bishop in Latin
1539 America to support democratic constitutions, governments, elections, or parties. Democracy was
1540 the thing of Commies and Protestants. This was not a healthy, Christian thing. And it was around
1541 1957, 1958 that slowly, among other things with the presidency of John F. Kennedy in the
1542 United States and with the papacy of John XXIII in Rome, that democracy became thinkable for
1543 Latin American Christians, and Catholics in particular. Even Argentinians and probably
1544 Guatemalans know this better than anybody else in [Latin America], until just a few years ago -
1545 two or three - a significant proportion of bishops was very supportive of torture, military

1546 dictatorship, elimination of enemies of the State and the Church. So this is not at all a Protestant
1547 stance. And on the other side, you can go as far back as probably 1955, if not earlier, in at least
1548 two countries that I know of (Venezuela and Chile) and you will find Pentecostal groups that
1549 were fighting for democracy, that were fighting for equality. So I do not think we can do any
1550 generalization as to differences between Catholics and Protestants in relation to humanitarian
1551 aid, human rights, democracy, dictatorship, torture. We have to examine more in detail the
1552 particular denomination we are talking about, the particular period, the particular country, and
1553 the inner diversity even then and there of the group we are referring to. And then we will find
1554 probably a richness that allows for things like the ones that Victoria mentioned. You can work
1555 with women, not just in Latin America [but] also Catholic women in the United States, a lot of
1556 them that are very supportive of initiatives regarding women's reproductive rights, even though
1557 their bishops would think that they are going to hell because of that. No?

1558

1559 **Victoria Riskin:** In some ways we made more progress, in Mexico, on our initiative to make
1560 sure there were protections, legal protections, for women to terminate pregnancy in the case of
1561 incest or rape than I am seeing today in the United States where we have had this vibrant
1562 women's movement. The problem, of course, is the implementation of those laws in say Mexico
1563 where... women go to clinics and they have been victims of incest or rape and the clinic says,
1564 "It's a family matter. It doesn't belong here." Or they do not help because of the cultural
1565 discomfort. But legally, in some ways, it seems like a more open arena.

1566

1567 **Claudine Michel:** OK. We will take a last question.

1568

1569 **Fernando Lopez-Alves:** It is just something that I wanted to put on the table. Maybe you can
1570 give me an answer to that or not. My daughter... manages an NGO in Cambodia and deals with
1571 human trafficking, especially sexually abused children, and all that kind of thing. And I went
1572 there at the [indistinct] in Cambodia... My daughter belongs to a church, so does her husband, in
1573 Northern California - Folsom Town, you know, Folsom, ex-gold rush town all that - another
1574 world from this. Another world. So I went to a couple of churches because my daughter was
1575 giving talks in these churches. And to my total astonishment, these churches had a strategy... The
1576 strategy they had was to place young people like my daughter and her husband, etc. in NGOs.

1577 They place them in NGOs, and they didn't tell them "go and transform the NGO from the inside
1578 out... and transform the NGO [into] something our church can support or can do something with
1579 it." They told them "No, no. Just be anonymous. Work on the NGO, and from there you contact
1580 people that you're working with and try to, you know, distribute our faith. And try to convince
1581 them to become Christians..." whatever it is. So this is like a secret service, a church secret
1582 service infiltrating NGOs to work with these people, and my daughter is one of these agents. And
1583 so [they] infiltrate the people in order to work together, and I think that is not such a bad idea
1584 that the church does that, in fact. And the NGO that she works for actually knows about this. She
1585 has been very clear about it. The NGO is delighted that there are people that come as volunteers
1586 to work with them for free, basically. They get donations from the United States, so the salaries
1587 are always low. And so it is a very good partnership in that regard, I believe... And when he was
1588 talking about this alliance between NGOs and churches, I immediately had to say this. I had to
1589 put it on the table, because I thought it was really very interesting, and particularly important that
1590 the church had this strategy, clearly-thought-out strategy, at least the two or three I went to see.
1591 [They have] new pastors, these kinds of local churches that have this pastor that make up the
1592 shows on the stage and had a great band. Actually, I enjoyed the band. It was very good.
1593 [laughter] But they have this idea as a thought-out strategy. It was conscious. It was done on
1594 purpose. So... I don't know what you make of it, but...

1595
1596 **Thomas Tighe:** Well unions do it. They "salt." At non-union shops, they have union members
1597 go in and start working and try to organize. Community organizing, organizations of all types do
1598 it. It is a long tradition of trying to put people in other institutions and spread virally throughout
1599 other organs... But it is interesting. That is a question, "Who's leveraging whom," if there is
1600 some leveraging going on. Depending on the radio station, as members of the academy you
1601 might not listen to these things, but occasionally just to see what the other side says, [I listen].
1602 And [they claim that] ... the academy has a secret, hidden agenda that is trying to pollute the
1603 minds of people and frustrate the inherent conservative values that humans had that have been
1604 overtaken. [audience comment] The Communists! Yeah! I mean, you hear these things, you
1605 think, "Wow, what an interesting accusation." But you have got to hear that stuff... When I hear
1606 it on those stations (which I don't listen to often) I think, "That's bizarre. People actually believe
1607 that." But there is a lot of that, particularly with religion, because you tend to connect with

1608 people who are more like you than less like you in the normal course of the day with respect to
1609 culture, religions, etc. Sorry.

1610

1611 **Claudine Michel:** OK, we will take one last comment or question. OK.

1612

1613 **Jennifer Hughes:** In light of this opening question, ... I was just recalling that under the military
1614 regime in Brazil that the church, the Roman Catholic Church, really provided an umbrella, a safe
1615 space for NGOs. And... in a very deliberate way, understood that, in providing that space, was
1616 holding open the possibility of a strong civil society. And in fact, I recall when I was there, the
1617 Roman Catholic Church was actually trying to help people to prepare to participate in democracy
1618 when that democracy was still just a dream and a hope. And so in some ways,... there would not
1619 have been NGOs during the course of that regime if it was not for the Roman Catholic Church
1620 providing a safe space for that.

1621

1622 **PANEL 4.1 How Can Academic Programs Be Reshaped to Integrate the Role of Religion in**
1623 **Latin American/Caribbean Public Life?**

1624

1625 **Kathleen Bruhn:** The panel today, all of our panelists, have some experience with administering
1626 various programs in either religious studies or, in the case of Dr. Lynch, the Center for Global
1627 Peace and Conflict Studies. Our own Giles Gunn leads the Global Studies program here, and I
1628 know that we have several others around the room who have been directors of academic
1629 programs, interdisciplinary programs in particular. And the challenge of discussing religion in
1630 the academy is one that we all face. So I look forward to hearing the comments of each of our
1631 presenters.

1632

1633 We are going to start with Dr. Lynch since her name is listed first on the program, although it is
1634 out of alphabetical order. I don't know how that happened exactly. But Dr. Lynch is a professor
1635 of political science at the University of California, Irvine, has studied as she mentioned earlier,
1636 not Latin America, but in general the issues of international relations, peace movements, and
1637 religion and ethics. [She] reminds me a bit of a friend of mine and former colleague, Dan

1638 Philpot, and looking at the use of ideas and the influence of ideas in international relations. So,
1639 Dr. Lynch.

1640

1641 **Cecelia Lynch:** Thank you... Thank you Mark for inviting me. And thank you very much for
1642 your introduction. The program I direct is not a course program. We are a research program at
1643 UC-Irvine, but I do teach classes in international humanitarianism and also religion in world
1644 politics. And knowing something about the Orfalea Center and the program, the master's
1645 program at UCSB, I have been thinking all day, "What does what everyone has said... tell us
1646 about what students need to know as they're going to be entering this kind of field?" And it
1647 strikes me that there needs to be an awareness of intersecting landscapes - the landscape of
1648 religion and politics in Latin America and the landscape of the development of this field of
1649 humanitarianism... and NGO work as a couple of the speakers have alluded to. So one question
1650 that I have for some of you from NGOs is "To what degree is it really important to know
1651 something about Latin America?" And of course, if you are going to go work in Latin America...
1652 and as a scholar it is always important to know about the region that one is going to. And I was
1653 thinking about what we began the day with - the current, horrible tragedy in Haiti, and obviously
1654 the unhelpful words of Pat Robertson that we all know about, that Claudine was alluding to this
1655 morning as well as what I heard the Haitian ambassador say on the Rachel Maddow show the
1656 other day when she was asking him about what was happening at the time. In the midst of all this
1657 tragedy he said, "I want to take a moment to respond to that [Robertson's comments]." And he
1658 went back into history, and he said the Haitian revolution is a critical point in history that is often
1659 forgotten, and that if it were not for the Haitian revolution, the US would not have the Louisiana
1660 Purchase at such a cheap price. And he also talked about the impact of the Haitian revolution on
1661 Simone Bolivar and all the independence movements throughout Latin America. And to me what
1662 that says is that, knowing the history is important, and knowing one's internal memory, domestic
1663 internal memory, and regional memory is also very important.

1664

1665 So with that said, I want to move a little bit to the religious landscape. And I think one of the...
1666 even though I am not a Latin Americanist... from the outside, looking at Latin America and being
1667 interested in the difference, the ethical difference over time that liberation theology made, one of
1668 the things that we see in Latin America over the past forty years is this tremendous relationship

1669 between religion and politics, especially Christianity and politics. And one of the things that
1670 liberationism did, although it did it overtly - it was not that it was not there before - is make this
1671 relationship very explicit. And so I think that going into the field it is important for students and
1672 academic programs to take account of the religious landscape in this region of the world and
1673 what it has meant, both in Latin America and to other areas of the world. And clearly, from what
1674 everybody has said today, that religious landscape includes primarily Catholicism, but it is a very
1675 dynamic religious landscape that also includes Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism and also
1676 indigenous forms of religion. And all of those have their institutional components and also their
1677 social justice components. They also have their political components even though some of those
1678 are more overtly expressed than others. At least, this is what I am drawing. So if one is going
1679 into the field, ideally academic programs to prepare people to go into the field should be talking
1680 about that landscape and also that landscape as dynamic and not simply as a static landscape.
1681 Just as liberationism today has a checkered reputation and did not live up to the potential that its
1682 adherents and promoters set out for it, at the same time, a number of you have said that it is still
1683 there. It is still there in base communities, and it is still there certainly in the ideologies of a
1684 number of NGOs that work in the region. Pentecostalism seems to be what a lot of people who
1685 are interested in religion and world politics are interested in right now, and that is extremely
1686 important. At the same time though, we also need to be aware of what the political limits and the
1687 internal, ethical contradictions of Pentecostalism might be. For example, between the prosperity
1688 gospel and this whole idea of empowerment of the poor, what kind of tensions are there in that,
1689 just as in the Catholic Church and liberationism? And also as somebody who has become
1690 increasingly interested in Africa and working in Africa, the presentations on indigenous forms of
1691 religion and the way in which they are intertwined with everyday practices of other forms of
1692 Christianity is also incredibly important. So just that complexity of both the genealogy of the
1693 religious landscape and the different meanings that different faiths hold with their relationship
1694 with politics and what is possible in Latin America is important.

1695

1696 I also, listening to the talks today, found some interesting points that are important about the
1697 transnational humanitarian landscape. And one is the issue of definition that Katherine and others
1698 have pointed out - "What is humanitarianism today? What is development today?" And as
1699 Thomas pointed out, "What is an NGO today?" And all of these we have a general idea, but the

1700 definitions are somewhat in flux and also might be situationally contingent, might be somewhat
1701 different humanitarianism for some religious groups than for some of the secular groups, for
1702 example, or the UN. The issues of relationship with the State continue to be something that
1703 students who are learning about religion in civil society need to understand. And again, one of
1704 the issues that Haiti brings to us is the necessity of understanding the capacity of the State, the
1705 simple things of, “Can the State provide airfields?” or “Can the State provide... infrastructure...?”
1706 And then, “What are the limits of NGO work?” Also, as part of NGO landscapes and intersecting
1707 with religion are the existence of long-time religious institutions in, whether we call it
1708 humanitarianism, development, and whatever kind of work. But education and in health that is
1709 something that any program training workers or talking about religion in civil society in Latin
1710 America has to talk about or has to teach about. And also both the possibilities of contestation
1711 between religious groups and cooperation among them on certain issues. In Latin America, the
1712 cooperation and the contestation also has to do with historical memory about human rights and
1713 human rights abuses, and that line then between. That definitional question of “What is
1714 humanitarianism? What is development in Latin America?” also has to deal with the question of
1715 “What is building a democratic society?” and “What is the role of memory in human rights?” I
1716 will just end by saying again that Haiti does help us bring to the fore both the immediacy of a lot
1717 of the problems that programs that want to train people to work in global civil society and
1718 understand religion confront because of the richness of the religious landscape there and the
1719 fascinating part of it, but also brings us to both the immediate necessities of relief in this
1720 incredible tragedy and reflection on the way Haiti has been discriminated against because of its
1721 revolution. And ... there are certain historical reasons as well for why Haiti has been in the
1722 position that it has been in and always to keep in mind looking at the immediate as well as
1723 thinking through the genealogy of the past.

1724

1725 **Kathleen Bruhn:** I am going to ask Dr. Wellman to go second. So [indistinct]... Dr. Wellman is
1726 the chair of Comparative Religions at the Jackson School of International Studies, and although
1727 like Professor Lynch he does not work in Latin America *per se*, he has also dealt at some length
1728 with the area of religious culture and its impact in society. So we look forward to what you have
1729 to say.

1730

1731 **James Wellman:** I have changed my talk about three times since I have been here today. So I
1732 feel a good deal of ambivalence but not about you. I enjoy being in here, but it has been a
1733 learning experience. I do American religion and politics and culture. And more recently I have
1734 done US religion and American foreign policy and was going to comment on the Haiti situation
1735 as well, but you told that story, so I will not do that. One of the interesting things about Haiti,
1736 not only was it a problem which allowed America to take the Louisiana Purchase, but it became
1737 a symbol in the South as to what could happen if the blacks became free. And that, as far as I can
1738 tell, was really a part of the nineteenth century and the reason, in part, for continued oppression
1739 of that nation. So the relationship of the United States to Latin America is of course important
1740 and growing in importance, but the most recent thing I have done is on mega churches, and we
1741 did a study of eleven national ... large mega-churches and out of that we did three hundred
1742 interviews. And... there is a sense in which it changed the way I think about religion, and I want
1743 to talk about that, but I want to talk a little bit about Latin America, evangelical culture, and what
1744 I think about it. And that is, from this research on mega-churches, in these 300 interviews which
1745 I coded and looked at, what was important to these people in these congregations was not a belief
1746 system but a form of deep desire and longing for what they call the divine. And I did not expect
1747 to find that... I expected to find some theology, and I found none. Now that could be a
1748 compliment or not, but what I did find was an enormous desire and for a sense of God's
1749 presence, a sense of God's activity, a sense of healing, a sense of hope. And it was so
1750 overwhelming that I recently wrote a paper on six forms of desire from the data that I collected.
1751 And I began to really reflect and really rethink my own thinking about religion. I began to
1752 construct this definition of religion which is "A socially enacted desire for the ultimate." And
1753 this relates also to work I have done on religion and human security. And we came up separately
1754 with a definition of human security as a desire for human welfare, a need for human rights, and a
1755 deep sense of the need for social and subjective freedom and autonomy. And so I began to think
1756 that there is a structural, cultural relationship between religion and the movement for human
1757 security as we have seen in the UN and other places more recently. And then reflecting more
1758 empirically and historically on Latin American religion, (I have not done empirical work in Latin
1759 America, but I have read others who have done that research) and there are a series of factors
1760 which we can learn from or I can learn from Latin American Christianity. And I want to share

1761 those with you, think with you a little bit about “What is the relationship of evangelicalism to
1762 political culture?” And that is where I will end.

1763

1764 The first thing, and Jennifer said this before, is the multiplicity of Christianities. The more you
1765 study Christianity, the more multiplied it becomes. And as I said with the mega-churches, I don’t
1766 know what kind of Christians these are after reading the transcriptions. How would you define
1767 them? As people who desire the ultimate. But that is not very helpful. Anyway, it was
1768 fascinating, again, as far as I can tell, Latin America is a variety of Christianities.

1769

1770 Second thing (and this is something also that I have discovered in my own research) is that the
1771 contradictions that we think of if we do not know about them, we think there are contradictions
1772 between this-worldly and an other-worldly stance among Evangelicals today, and I do not think
1773 there is one. I think they are perfectly at home thinking the other world is coming and they are
1774 joyful about it. And they are perfectly at home thinking, “This world is fantastic, and I am going
1775 to prosper in it.” And there is no contradiction. I think some liberal scholars or scholars who
1776 have no relation to religion think there is a contradiction, and I have not experienced it. It is
1777 both/and. The same with the spirit and the body. Perhaps it used to be that the spirit and body
1778 were dichotomous. Now spiritual health, bodily health, it is both/and. And this physicality which
1779 I have seen in evangelical culture, certainly in Latin American culture in what I read, is just so
1780 powerful and it is obvious. There is no need for these contradictions. The next supposed
1781 contradiction is between divine agency and human agency. I think it is always both. There is
1782 both this powerful sense that divine will work and we can ask for everything, as well we can be
1783 humans who have drives... I was reading David Martin’s work on this. I think he makes a great
1784 point that the change, a shift, over the last fifty years (and this kind of goes to Fernando’s point
1785 of entitlement) that is “I don’t have to give in to fate, I don’t have to give in to destiny. I can
1786 create my own through the working of God in my life.” So there is that contradiction I don’t
1787 believe is there.

1788

1789 And then, finally, and this is complicated, and I haven’t figured this out. And maybe you have.
1790 But “What is the evangelical?” “What is the political?” “What is the political polity that results
1791 from evangelical culture?” And we can say, “Well, it is manyfold,” and we can say, “Well, the

1792 New Testament has no political governmental polity that's inherent to it." You can take anything
1793 you want. But still, I wonder, what is it? And my sense is that it is really more a culture than a
1794 politics, but I will say a little bit more. And that is, within the evangelical culture that I have
1795 looked at is, the power of the family is always critical. Small groups are another family through
1796 which I am held morally accountable for my actions. It is neither conservative nor liberal, and
1797 Otto... we have talked... [and] you gave me great examples of both, conservative, liberal - what
1798 are these people? And you find this, and certainly in American evangelicalism as well. It is
1799 generally egalitarian, but certainly authoritarians can pop up. But in my experience (and I would
1800 like to hear more about it from Latin Americanists) these congregations will not allow these
1801 pastors to become too hideous in terms of their authoritarian behavior. I sense when I study these
1802 evangelical mega-churches, these pastors have power, but it is conditional. If they preach well. If
1803 they do the right thing morally, etc... One more thing - that there is no metaphysic of a common
1804 good. And so, somebody was talking about "Well, how are we going to get together in
1805 Guatemala and talk about what we can do for the common good?" There is no philosophical
1806 mechanism to reflect on that, as far as I can tell, within evangelical culture. And that is, it is
1807 generally libertarian, generally ahistorical, and therefore not much historical reflection going on
1808 here, and really no real systematic sense of how to create a common polity. And to this point, no
1809 real attempt to do so that I have seen. Anyway, those are unhelpful or helpful comments that I
1810 have.

1811

1812 **Kathleen Bruhn:** Thank you. And finally, last but not least certainly, Dr. Giles Gunn, the
1813 director of the program at UCSB in global and international studies. He also does work on
1814 literature, but literature as it intersects with culture with religion and is therefore housed in the
1815 English department, but has wide-ranging interests. And I hope among other things that he will
1816 touch briefly upon the master's program in the program for Global and International Studies
1817 which is in fact attempting to train people to take these kinds of positions in global and
1818 development agencies... So, Dr. Gunn.

1819

1820 **Giles Gunn:** Like everybody, I am sure, today I am a little humbled at the thought of taking up
1821 questions like the ones that we are considering in the face of the enormity of the crisis in the
1822 South. I also think, though this may be a personal prejudice, that of all the questions that you

1823 have posed this afternoon and morning, the one that this panel is organized to confront is
1824 probably the least interesting. [laughter] In any event, I could answer the question fairly simply
1825 as somebody did on an earlier panel, “How Can Academic Programs Be Reshaped to Integrate
1826 the Role of Religion in Latin American/Caribbean Public Life?” My simple answer would be, in
1827 innumerable ways, but it depends. And that probably means that if I go on to answer this
1828 question at all, I am going to have to talk to you a bit about the complexities it has aroused in my
1829 mind. And this risks getting the grade of F, not C- that Tom was in endangering himself with.
1830 But in any case, it may be that by sharing with you some of my own confusion about this
1831 question, I can at least provide places where the rest of you can find traction and the discussion
1832 can go forward. It would be helpful to know in the first instance, given the question, just what
1833 kinds of academic programs we are talking about in addition to the academic program I have
1834 some responsibility for along with Mark Juergensmeyer. In the second, it would be useful to
1835 know exactly what is meant by religion and how one is to assess its role as in, I suppose, the part
1836 it plays, especially if one is interested not only in differentiating the no doubt various roles that
1837 religion does or has played or might have played in this connection, but also if one is interested
1838 in evaluating their constructive as well as unconstructive or even destructive consequences as we
1839 were talking about it in the panel just previous. So a third imponderable is related to the Latin
1840 American/Caribbean public life itself, which I would assume is quite different and various
1841 throughout the Americas, but is mainly examined or can be examined with academic seriousness
1842 in departments and programs that include concentrations and emphases in this part of the world.
1843 In other words, this kind of study, it seems to me needs to be fairly concrete.

1844

1845 All this, I suppose, is pretty obvious but it does matter. Different academic programs in the
1846 social sciences and the humanities have different parameters and methods, and while none of
1847 them are fixed or given with the disciplines that make them up, all have their limits as well as
1848 their limitations. It might be easier to mount an inquiry into the role of religion in some aspect of
1849 civic life in a History or an English, or an Art History, or a Communications, or a Geography, or
1850 a Chicano/Chicana, or, for that matter, a Religion Department than in an Economics, or an
1851 Environmental Studies Department, but it would in any case play itself out in relation to the
1852 diverse idiosyncrasies of whatever department is considered.

1853

1854 In any case, I suspect that this dimension of the question is slightly loaded insofar as it has a
1855 particular kind of department or program in mind, or at least an academic program with a
1856 particular agenda. And that agenda would be the study of civil society, or at least public life, as
1857 it bears on the rest of the question about how that form of study will reshape the structure of said
1858 programs so that they can integrate inquiry into the role of religion. Religion is not, as we all
1859 know, one thing but a great many. To some it is an institution, to others a theology, to still others
1860 a creed or set of scriptures, to still others a group of narratives, to yet others specific feelings,
1861 again to still others an assemblage of aspirations or merely inclinations. In truth, every complex
1862 religion we know about is comprised of all these elements, any one of which by itself or in
1863 combination with others can inspire or has inspired religions to involve themselves, whether for
1864 better or worse, with public life. Nor is this, as a matter of fact, all. Numbers of societies contain
1865 a good many hidden as opposed to visible religious formations, some of which are folk based or
1866 indigenous as Cecelia was saying and only loosely organized, and not a few of these religions
1867 exist and sometimes thrive in the Latin America/Caribbean world somewhat out of public vision
1868 or sight but not necessarily without public consequences.

1869
1870 Nonetheless, the religious issue – whose religion are we talking about and what in fact do we
1871 mean by religion to begin with – is a good deal more complicated if we think about the kind of
1872 religion that not only makes itself felt in public or civil spheres but that takes expression
1873 consistent with those spheres. One of the most dramatic forms of this public manifestation of
1874 religion, though the Latin American and Caribbean worlds undoubtedly possess something
1875 analogous, is what in the United States, at least, is known as itself civil religion. A distinctive
1876 religious formation different from all the denominational varieties belonging to say, American
1877 Protestantism, and easily differentiated from Western or Eastern Catholicism, or Judaism, or
1878 Islam, or Buddhism, or Hinduism, or Confucianism, or Shinto, to name just the big eight, though
1879 quite happy to exist alongside them. American civil religion was first identified back in the fifties
1880 and associated with a common core of beliefs widely shared by most citizens in what was then
1881 called “the American way of life” and associated with the promotion of democracy. Insisting
1882 that this common core of beliefs was not a distillation of the creeds of all American religions or
1883 even necessarily compatible with all the beliefs of more mainline, convention religious bodies,

1884 the man who proposed this definition of civil religion in America, Will Herberg, had found the
1885 fundament of commitments to democracy that upheld and explained American civil society.

1886

1887 But soon thereafter this kind of spread-eagleism was challenged by another church historian,
1888 Sidney Mead, who argued instead that the real civil religious alternative to traditional
1889 Christianity and Judaism in the United States was created by the Founding Fathers in their, as he
1890 put it wittily, monotheism of the First Person of the Trinity, a religious formation centered on a
1891 creative God who left evidence of his intentions in the orderly patterns of the book of nature.

1892 But Mead was himself challenged by a more famous sociologist, Robert Bellah, who argued that
1893 civil religion in America was by no means confined to the ideas of the Enlightenment but simply
1894 set for itself a task somewhat different from traditional faiths by attempting to re-situate the
1895 nation's entire cultural experience in a transcendent or sacred perspective. Neither a sectarian
1896 offshoot of rational American Protestantism nor a sacralized version of American Protestantism,
1897 civil religion in America constituted for Bellah a system of national symbols and rituals that
1898 construe the American political experience in representative government as a decisive event in
1899 what Old Testament theologians liked to call 'the mighty Acts of God.' Documents like the
1900 Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, Lincoln's Second Inaugural, or
1901 Jefferson's Act for Establishing Religious Freedom in the State of Virginia all served as sacred
1902 scriptures of this social and political religion. But Bellah was himself then quickly challenged by
1903 somebody else, another sociologist named, John Murray Cuddihy who pointed out that Bellah's
1904 heavily Protestantized version of American public religion was merely itself a religion of civility
1905 bent on managing sectarian diversity through the promotion of religious amiability. But if this
1906 religion of civility was most preoccupied with good manners than good morals, it was
1907 nevertheless, Cuddihy concluded, possibly indecorous, since it was always invading the sacred
1908 precincts of more traditional faiths or religions to render them religiously inoffensive, even
1909 innocuous.

1910

1911 One could go on with this. I merely wish to point out that this civil religion does confuse matters
1912 a good deal in countries like the United States, but does exist, it seems to me, at least as a
1913 potential in all those countries whose development of state identity is supported by a strong sense

1914 of national identity, since nationalism as an ideology always seeks to create a kind of sacred
1915 ethnos surrounding itself which can very often define things in particularly this way.

1916

1917 I should also add that, in the United States, this kind of civil religious formation has been
1918 radically challenged by a tradition of writers and thinkers, moving from, let's say, Mark Twain to
1919 Doonesbury which sees much of it as merely a theological form of cultural pretension, and they
1920 seek to remind us that over against all these proud commodores and custodians of our pretended
1921 virtues, both national and transnational, there is a different world, a world of the vulgate, the
1922 ordinary, what Ralph Waldo Emerson referred to in "The American Scholar" as "the common,"
1923 "the familiar," "the low," and the vulgar" that specializes in by turns comic or ironic
1924 transgressions against its supercilious solemnities. This is part of what clearly animates some of
1925 the newest religions in America, such as the Internet's Kick-Ass Post-Apocalyptic Doomsday
1926 Cult of Love or its Church of the Bunny, together with the Holy Temple of Mass Consumption,
1927 the Jedi Religion, Church of the Profit, and The Church of the Last Laugh, dedicated to St.
1928 Stupid, whose formations are neither stupid nor uncivil. Let's not forget that the Internet is
1929 quite clearly the largest and most unified site of civil society despite the fact that it is
1930 unregulated, boundary-less, and, as we say, virtual. And there are also many sites on the internet
1931 which of course specialize in religious practices such as prayer, meditation, and pilgrimage. And
1932 then there are also those sites that deal with alternative religions, with outworn religions, or, as in
1933 the case of some of those I've just mentioned, fake religions.

1934

1935 But I have gotten ahead of myself. If America has its civil religions that are engaged with one
1936 another in shaping or misshaping civil society, whether they should be or not, so clearly do many
1937 of the societies that make up Latin America and the Caribbean. In the Caribbean world, or Black
1938 Atlantic as Paul Gilroy has named it, some of their effects in fact are very conspicuous inasmuch
1939 as that world, composed of peoples produced by the slave trade but defined by all the movements
1940 of emancipation, cultural expression, nationalist aspiration, historical memory, and religious
1941 longing that now defines them was created in considerable part out of common struggles for
1942 freedom, for political rights, and for citizenship. But how many of those struggles were
1943 informed and supported by religion, or at least by Roman Catholicism, and how many were
1944 informed and supported by the resistance to that religion? These are questions that are

1945 fascinating to pursue, and that could be, and no doubt have been pursued, if or when any
1946 academic program has decided to turn the Black Atlantic into a laboratory for the sake of
1947 exploring them.

1948

1949 But this leads me to my third problem with the question. What do we in fact mean by Latin
1950 America and the Caribbean? In what sense are its linkages religious and in what sense not? Are
1951 enough of those linkages yet available for inquiry when, as in the case of Argentina, I was
1952 informed by several of our civil society actors when I was there this summer that religion played
1953 almost no role in civil society because religion, or rather the religion of the state and the elites it
1954 served, lacked much interest in civil society. This surely does not mean that religion was without
1955 its influences in the conduct of Argentinean civil society, but one would need instruments to
1956 assess that role that could measure the effects of its absence or indifference. Or, again, there is
1957 the case of a country like Bolivia, or, for that matter, large parts of Ecuador, where there is little
1958 civil society as we would recognize it perhaps, and yet where religion does have an impact, for
1959 good and ill, and undoubtedly much of both, on public life, whether that life is organized or
1960 informal and improvised. And so one could continue.

1961

1962 Little of this would matter if our question was a bit clearer, but its very openness tends, at least
1963 for me, to blur its focus. Can the roles that religions, I would prefer to say, have played, or do
1964 play, or could play, or should play in the Latin American/Caribbean world be examined
1965 academically? I would answer yes. Can academic programs be reshaped to accommodate that
1966 focus? I suspect they might, but it all depends on the program. Should this focus involve
1967 integrating the role of religion in Latin America/Caribbean public life? I would prefer to leave
1968 that up to the citizens of the Latin America/Caribbean world, but this is the question that I think
1969 the title of our panel somewhat begs. The real issue here is: to what purpose, and to what end?
1970 What is it that we really do want to find out, or, rather, what is it that we might want to do?

1971

1972 **Kathleen Bruhn:** We will open up the floor now to questions and comments.

1973

1974 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** I just wanted to follow up on Giles's comments because, my friend, you
1975 and I are about to do just what the question implies because we decided as a faculty in our

1976 master's program in global and international studies to create four tracks for the second year: one
1977 in development, one in environment studies, one in human rights, and one in religion and culture.
1978 And the religion and culture faculty are Esther Lezra, myself, and a guy named Giles Gunn. So at
1979 some point, probably sooner than later, you and I and Esther are going to have to sit down and
1980 figure out what we want to do with our course because we talk about having at least one central
1981 course in the area of religion and culture for this graduate program in global and international
1982 studies. And I do not know about you, but I am kind of curious how this is going to come out.
1983 And I also kind of wonder how we are going to approach it. I do not quite know what we are
1984 going to commonly agree upon because all three of us are going to be teaching this course, I
1985 imagine, at one time or the other, we are going to try to agree on some basic things that we want
1986 to include in the course. But at least for my purposes, I would like you to have at least a big
1987 chunk of the course be case studies, to take like the Church of Satan that Thomas Tighe talked
1988 about ... So I do not know. At the risk of putting you on the spot, Giles, what is it you think that
1989 we might end up doing?

1990

1991 **Giles Gunn:** At the risk of putting Mark on the spot, I will be happy to answer that question. As
1992 Mark does not know because he happened to be absent from the meeting in which this was
1993 decided [laughter] the faculty unanimously voted to remove the word religion from the focus that
1994 is going to be devoted to culture and globalization, not because it was in any sense uninterested
1995 in studying religion but because it felt very uncomfortable isolating religion as the name of only
1996 one focus in our program. That is, people wanted to reserve the right to talk about religious
1997 issues in relationship to globalization and the environment, globalization and human rights,
1998 globalization and governance, as well as globalization and culture. But by the same token
1999 everybody felt that we would have to take this up in relationship to very careful considerations of
2000 exactly what sorts of situations we wanted to think through. And so what you might want to do,
2001 that is put case studies into however you might organize this course, sounds terrific. That might
2002 not be what I would want to do. I might want to talk about religion in relationship to issues of
2003 cross- and inter-cultural understanding. Others might want to talk about religion in terms of the
2004 way in which ideas of human rights have been informed by religious traditions, could be revised
2005 in relationship to certain religious traditions, or in any case going to have to be rethought in
2006 relationship to other religious traditions. So I think the idea was simply that, in this case, what we

2007 were wanting to do was to take account of the complexity of considering religion in relationship
2008 to the things that we were setting out as the foci of our program without making religion the
2009 subject of a single one.

2010

2011 **Audience Member:** I've got to leave, so I just wanted to make a comment to James. You might
2012 be interested in the work of Andrew Chesnut on Pentecostalism in Brazil. He says that they are
2013 looking for the "numin." And what I say is they are getting high. But they are not all getting
2014 high... Most people do not achieve the divine in their lives even though they are striving for it in
2015 Latin America. Thank you.

2016

2017 **Otto Maduro:** Contributing a couple of pieces to ideas about what to teach when teaching
2018 religion in the Latin American and Caribbean, two things are important that we already
2019 mentioned and discussed in this meeting. One, which should never be missed is the role of the
2020 US in the shaping, interruption, and reversal of social, economic, political and religious
2021 processes in the region. And three case studies come to mind but there are probably thirty or
2022 fifty: Venezuela 1948-58, the overthrow of the first democratic experiment in the history of
2023 Venezuela; El Salvador, 1980's (I think we all know about that); and then Haiti, the two
2024 removals of Aristide from power and the process in between. And second, which is not unrelated
2025 to the first, but is different, is the role of the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO, and the US in
2026 imposing among others policies of privatization of productive units of any kind including
2027 education and hospitals, deregulation, reduction of state expenditures except military and police
2028 expenditures which are the only ones that they never impose a reduction on and other policies
2029 that have been imposed in recent decades on states over the world including Latin America and
2030 the Caribbean that have ended up disabling Latin America and Caribbean states and governments
2031 as actors in the processes of meeting basic needs and of responding to humanitarian emergencies
2032 and therefore have basically automatically thrown in the lap of NGOs, including churches, the
2033 task that the state is increasingly prohibited and hindered from doing, which is social
2034 expenditures and responding to humanitarian emergencies.

2035

2036 **Kathleen Bruhn:** I am going to take advantage of sitting here and ask one question for the
2037 academics and one for the practitioners in the room. And my question for the academics is,

2038 having tried to teach American college students about religion in Latin America, there is a
2039 problem that we have with false cognates in that they assume that the role of religion in Latin
2040 America is the same as it is in the United States. So they identify religion with a particular brand
2041 of social conservatism, and they completely do not understand Christian Democrats, Liberation
2042 Theology, and all these other things that are going on in Latin America. And they are very
2043 surprised to learn that there are people in Latin America who were both evangelical Christians
2044 and social progressives. This does not make sense to them. And so my question to the academics
2045 is, “If you were to go at the American college student, what would be the main things that you
2046 have to teach them that are different about Latin America from what they experience of the role
2047 of religion in public life in the United States?” And in a related vein, the practitioners in the
2048 room, I would like to know what you see as the problem with academics coming down to study
2049 you and find out what you are doing? What are the misunderstandings that academics seem to
2050 carry away from them as they look at the work of NGOs who are affiliated with various religious
2051 organizations?

2052

2053 **James Wellman:** Well just two things... When you teach American religion, the sad side of this
2054 is that fundamentalism in a sense has colored everything people think of American Christianity,
2055 and evangelicalism in particular. But what you can do and what I do or try to do is say the
2056 nineteenth century, an evangelical in the nineteenth century [was] much different in terms of his
2057 or her social and political perspective than post-1910s America. And even in the 20th century,
2058 you can have Evangelicals for Social Justice and you do have them. Their voice is simply not
2059 strong. And so you know, there are many examples that you can take from the American scene to
2060 say, hey, wake up folks. Fundamentalism is an aberration, historically, in Christian history.
2061 Period. And most of them will say, “Fundamentalism is Christianity, isn’t it? It’s always been
2062 that way.” And it is a real problem though.

2063

2064 **James Wellman:** I am not sure if there is a great solution.

2065

2066 **Jennifer Hughes:** I was going say, your question, Kathleen, is really exactly to the point because
2067 there is this incommensurability of these two ways of living and thinking and being in the world
2068 in a way. The other thing that I have seen in the classroom trying to teach say, liberation

2069 theology, in the classroom is that another kind of mis-recognition where students from
2070 evangelical backgrounds say, “Oh, well, that’s what we do. We do that... we read the Bible. We
2071 have bible studies. We work in poor communities.” I have to say I have struggled with that and I
2072 don’t know... I would like to know the answer because it is in some ways an encounter with the
2073 religious other. Right? And so, as a professor of religious studies, we are always trying to broker
2074 these encounters with the religious other that does not homogenize in a way, ... but I think the
2075 question of Liberation Theology is particularly difficult. Particularly difficult.

2076

2077

2078 **Virginian Garrard Burnett:** ... I teach a course called “Religion and Society in Latin America”
2079 and I face that all the time. But I completely agree with Jim that fundamentalism is an aberration
2080 and they do not know that. And we talk about that and say, what about the civil rights movement
2081 in the United States? Who was involved with that? What was Martin Luther King Jr.’s day job?
2082 He was a Baptist preacher. And you know, they are like, “Damn, that’s right. Never thought of
2083 that before.” But as a pedagogical tool, the thing that I have found and I do not know if it is
2084 working, but in my imagination it is working, is to let people read what people themselves are
2085 producing... Let them look at the murals that were produced in Nicaragua. Let them listen,
2086 because you can get it on YouTube (I think YouTube is a great teaching device now), they can
2087 listen to Archbishop Oscar Romero give his last radio address with English subtitles on
2088 YouTube... And that is true if you are reading about nineteenth century missionaries, let them
2089 read letters that they wrote, and you can see that they are not the jingoistic people that they think
2090 they are. Just let the people speak.

2091

2092 [Audience: That must be especially hard in Texas]

2093

2094 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** Well you know actually, you would think. But actually in that
2095 particular class, the majority of the students are Mexican-American Catholics. So they are
2096 coming with a different point of view anyway... or Mexican-American Pentecostals.

2097

2098 **Kurt Frieder:** I am trying to answer the second part to your second question. I can not talk for
2099 all practitioners as you mentioned or NGOs. I can talk only for myself. We have nothing against

2100 academics. We have nothing, really none. We think that from the theoretical they give us the
2101 theoretical background that we certainly use from time to time... First of all, we have to divide.
2102 We have academics in the south and academics in the north. Academics in the north means the
2103 world is being seen from the United States and Canada and Mexico and the North... and South
2104 America is in the South if you are looking at this part of the world only. We would like to see the
2105 opposite way, we are on the top and you are on the bottom. That is number one. Because if you
2106 are on the top, you patronize. You go down with the idea. It happens many, many times that
2107 things that are developed in the north are being sent to the south as revealed truth. And we would
2108 like more people to put their hands in the mud and to see what is really going on. I learned a lot
2109 of things today here, but I must say that I learned most of them from people that have been in the
2110 South and that are working in the South. And that means in the South, seeing as Latin America
2111 and the Caribbean are the South. And we have nothing really [against] academics. We are
2112 working at my foundation... we have a lot of academic people that are studying the issue and are
2113 going with us to the communities and are studying the communities and researching and
2114 preparing the materials that we are using later on in the actual work. But the problem comes
2115 really when you receive a book, you have to follow a recipe coming from the north, or from the
2116 US in this case. The main problem is - it has to do with the thing that Otto said - the
2117 multinational organizations, the World Bank, the UNDP, all those big international corporation
2118 funds that are being really managed by academics, by theoreticians and not by people that have
2119 experience of working in the south. And the recipes are not always what has to be done or what
2120 is really useful for the communities. I repeat myself - I have nothing against academics, really.
2121 They are very good to write books and so on. [laughter]

2122

2123 **Denis Garvey** (Audience Member): I don't mean to pick on academics either, but we used to
2124 subscribe to a thing called Foundation Search. I think we paid about 2,000 dollars a year, which
2125 is a lot of money for us to have computer access to funders who give money, and it seems to me
2126 (and I am only one person) that of the one hundred fifty top foundations in the US, they are not
2127 in the least interested in programs on the ground. They fund policies and studies and stuff like
2128 that. Or they will fund the University of Manchester because it is doing something. But they are
2129 not in the least interested in something that our organization is doing. They tell you right up
2130 front, "If you're asking for program funds, please don't come to us. We can't be bothered with

2131 you.” It is just odd to me, but that is my experience. So after three years, we dropped our
2132 relationship with Foundation Search because it was useless to us. We get a lot of money from
2133 groups in the US who happen to be religious women - Dominican Women of XYZ. It is odd to
2134 me, but maybe they understand preferential option for the poor too. Thank you.

2135

2136 **Sarah Kline:** Well, I’m an academic, but I also feel like I’m a subversive. In the course that I
2137 teach in the Latin American and Iberian Studies program, I talk about commodity chains,
2138 sustainable development, and NGOs. And part of what informs my lectures there is the work of
2139 Heifer International, and I also make presentations on micro finance and the various kinds of
2140 work that NGOs do. And quite frankly, after that course is over, I get lots of emails from
2141 students who want to work in NGOs, not just read about them, not just hear the theory, but
2142 actually work in them. One of my history students actually ended up in the MA program in
2143 Global and International Studies. [He] did an internship in Columbia and is now working at
2144 Direct Relief International. [audience comment] Yeah. Exactly. I’m evangelical for the kind of
2145 work that can be done, and theory is fine, but I’m the Praxis Axis. And this is the kind of thing I
2146 want to see happen. So there can be a useful dialogue between academia and work that can be
2147 done on the ground.

2148

2149 **Kathleen Bruhn:** Although there is a risk there. I once had a student come back to me and say I
2150 owed her fifty bucks. And I asked her why. And she said, because you taught me about the
2151 World Bank, and I went to the protests in Washington and I got arrested. [laughter] And you owe
2152 me fifty bucks. That was my bail.

2153

2154 **Sarah Kline:** I tell all my students... I was in college during the late sixties and I said, one of my
2155 achievements was never getting arrested because you don’t want to have to check that box, “Yes,
2156 I have been arrested.” So, this teach[es] in all kinds of ways.

2157

2158 **Kurt Frieder:** I would like to add that we’ve received a lot of students from the United States
2159 from different universities that come to [indistinct]. And we take them always... We take them to
2160 our outreach [indistinct]. Sometimes we also use them for translations and things like that that
2161 we require... Part of the commitment when they come to the foundation is they have to go

2162 wherever we go, and we take them to the suburbs and we take them to the community. And
2163 many of them after they came back to the States continue studying here and continue [to be]
2164 related to the foundation, and they write to us and they are really seriously thinking of coming
2165 back to Latin America and continuing doing this kind of work. That's great.

2166

2167 **Victoria Riskin:** I think increasing numbers of students are interested in the practical, in the real
2168 world partly, at least American students, because they're children of 9/11. And it was a wake-up
2169 call. There's a world out there. It's angry. It's complex. It's hurting. It's angry. And how can I
2170 understand that? And then how can I take my sense of helplessness and do something
2171 constructive and become empowered? So whether it's Heifer International or whatever or your
2172 organization or Fonkoze, I think young people want to feel that they are part of the army of good
2173 so that academics have a responsibility to nurture that along but give context and realism along
2174 the way.

2175

2176 As an NGO doing human rights work, I have two different, completely opposite reactions to
2177 academia. I sometimes find academia frustrating and theoretical and disengaged, from my point
2178 of view, not that it's in fact that way. But when the war broke out between Russia and Georgia,
2179 we didn't want to sit around and talk about it. We want to deploy and stop the atrocities from
2180 happening. So we're all about getting out there and getting onto the field and figuring out what's
2181 going on. But the other side of me says that to be good at our work, we have to understand
2182 historical context, social context, tribal context, religious context, and that has to help inform
2183 how we look at situations. And so, in that regard, academia is incredibly invaluable. In addition
2184 to which, the ability to step back and look at trends and where we have been and where we're
2185 going in a particular [movement] - say in the human rights movement - is invaluable to... and
2186 what are the principles involved? Because when I work with young people, I want to make sure
2187 they know that there's an underpinning, that human rights are not built on "airy-fairy" ideas but
2188 that there is a body of knowledge, of laws, of treaties, agreements. And wherever you start that
2189 journey of educating students, that's invaluable. So whatever impatience I have in moments of
2190 crisis, I'm indebted in the long run to what academics bring to students.

2191

2192 **Katherine Marshall:** Well, these are big questions, but as somebody who has come from the
2193 practitioner world into academic just a few comments and some of my surprises. The first, I've
2194 thought for a long time that one of the largest bodies of knowledge that exist is what there is in
2195 practitioners. And almost by definition, a lot of the practitioners don't write. They don't have
2196 time. They may or may not have time to reflect, but there's very very little... [It is} very difficult
2197 to tap their knowledge. And that's true of most global institutions, whether it's CARE or
2198 Catholic Relief Services or UNDP or the World Bank etc., these huge networks which make at
2199 least some effort to try to draw the threads together, but there are a huge number of broken links.
2200 In other words, it's very difficult. It takes a really wise leader whether at the global or at the
2201 regional or whatever level it is to be hearing all of the different pieces and then making it into a
2202 coherent story. And there's far too little effort to do that. In fact, a lot of the policy work and the
2203 analytic work is done by people who are viewed as academic within institutions like that. And
2204 academic, you realize, is a bad word. Basically, it means detached from reality, somewhere up in
2205 the space cadet or space capsule or something. But this challenge of trying to tap the real
2206 knowledge and wisdom of practitioners in an enormously complex world hundreds of different
2207 countries and societies and situations, it's part of what we're trying to do with our interviews -
2208 finding ways to draw that out from the individuals in ways that then has to be used. But at least
2209 that's part of what has inspired me on that. So you do have this huge wealth of information very
2210 very poorly tapped and very very poorly analyzed.

2211
2212 Coming into the academic world, I had looked forward to sort of this wonderful paradise of
2213 reflection and ideas and knowledge and curiosity. A couple of things that have really surprised
2214 me and coming into the academic world apart from the unbelievable union card business of "If
2215 you haven't done this stuff you have no standing within the academic world" which is frankly
2216 weird, but that's another issue. But I find the decentralization of the academic world incredible,
2217 that there's all this knowledge but the integration... and that is actually very different from the
2218 operational world where there is at least a forced effort to integrate - to try to integrate across
2219 sectors, across disciplines. And it's fairly disciplined. I mean, if you're dealing with HIV/AIDS,
2220 there's a genuine effort to say "What is the experience? What is the evaluation and monitoring?"
2221 Whereas in the academic world, everyone does their own thing, and that really is something
2222 that... was very surprising to me. And I've been very surprised by the general lack of curiosity. In

2223 other words, it's very seldom that people are really asking questions. They come with theories
2224 which they're testing more than the kind of openness that I'd expected. But those are very
2225 personal observations.

2226

2227 Just one last comment, I'm not going to rise to the bait of the World Bank [or] IMF, but I do
2228 have one reaction which is that I think there needs to be a proper discussion of the history
2229 because I think there's a lot of myth out there. And sometimes when I hear this from students, I
2230 wonder "Where in the hell did you get that?" And I think I have some insights into where it came
2231 from.

2232

2233 **James Wellman:** Well, I was just going to respond. In terms of the core courses in the
2234 international studies program at the Jackson School, I like them very much because in part, the
2235 goal is to explain the modern world and how we got here. And my course, the one I do for about
2236 250 students, is called 'Intercultural Relations in an Interdependent World.' And it really is the
2237 culture course, and you can bring religion in, which I do, but I don't do much of it because for
2238 whatever reason in my context ... and I've asked students this... I'd say most of the students don't
2239 find religion relevant to understanding the contemporary world. That's a problem, but what are
2240 you going to do? That's the way it is. But the project that I give them at the end of this course is
2241 a practical/moral project. They can pick any cultural, political conflict in the world historically or
2242 in the contemporary world, and then they have to go analyze it. And they have to make some
2243 determinations about their bias coming into it, what they've learned, and what, in a sense, they're
2244 going to do about it. And, you know, one of the amazing things coming out of that course is
2245 those papers when they come in. It's unbelievable, the incredible diversity that you get and the
2246 moral engagement that is going on with the students. So, I don't know if that helps, but to me
2247 that's very exciting.

2248

2249 **Cecelia Lynch:** A couple of things... One, in terms of what one should be teaching or what
2250 module should be [implemented]... Far be it from me to say whether religion should be a
2251 separate module or not. But... when I was at an SSRC conference in San Salvador in 1998 (So it
2252 was after the end of the civil wars) and at that time a lot of the NGOs appeared to be more
2253 technocratic than religious based and there was a big influx, so it seemed, of secular NGOs. And

2254 anyway, as part of this conference, we were all grantees, and I'm very grateful for the grant, but
2255 even though a lot of people's projects didn't have to do with Central or Latin America, the SSRC
2256 McArthur Foundation had gone around San Salvador and found a number of experts to come and
2257 talk to the group. So there were people from political parties... there were people from technical
2258 NGOs who were there to build pipelines and bring electricity and plumbing to poor
2259 neighborhoods and slums. And there were some scholars too to talk about the history. Well, my
2260 project was on religion and I used the opportunity to call up some people at the... Central
2261 American University run by the Jesuits. And I did speak to a couple of people including a base
2262 community organizer and another person I tried to talk to was John Sabrino, one of the big
2263 liberation theologians, and I didn't get a chance to meet with him, but I remember I felt very
2264 embarrassed because he said "Oh, the SSRC MacArthur foundation's having a conference there
2265 and they didn't invite any of us?" And there was nobody there to talk about religion. Now, I'm
2266 eternally grateful that they funded my project and a couple of other projects, but I think it was a
2267 sign of the times. And one of the advantages of the LUCE foundation project and the SSRC now,
2268 (I mean everybody's in on the act of trying to figure out what this is), but I think that what
2269 Sabrino was saying was in part we've had a tremendous impact... Even if it's ultimately a
2270 minority movement, the legacy of liberationism in El Salvador in the late 1990s was huge. And
2271 for a major North American organization to go down and ignore that was also significant to
2272 them. So... whether it's a separate module or not, it just reminded me of two things. It needs to
2273 be incorporated very strongly... I'm a Latin Americanist, but I think that some of the discussion
2274 of international financial institutions, for example, and this goes back to this overall ethos of
2275 liberationism and whether contemporary groups are different or similar or whatever was the
2276 structural critique so I do think that it's worth while to think about regional emphases and
2277 interactions with religious movements and what is the legacy and the meaning of that. And
2278 whether it's accurate or not, clearly, from what I've heard here and from what I've known in the
2279 past, the structural critique that has emanated out of Latin America in the last generation remains
2280 quite powerful. Whether that's accurate of say World Bank actions today or even then is a matter
2281 of debate... But... obviously US actions and other institutions are part of that. And it seems to me
2282 that... to study or to think about religion in civil society in Latin America for potential NGO
2283 activists, that those are issues that really should not be ignored. The whole legacy of the
2284 structural critique on the one hand, and on the other hand the variety of religions and the way in

2285 which there's been better reaction against that structural critique. And what is it that people go
2286 into today when they go into Latin America? They go into these layers that play a role. Again,
2287 I'm saying that as a non-expert, but it strikes me as important.

2288

2289 **Giles Gunn:** Thank you. Well, I want to go back and reaffirm something that Vicki said which is
2290 that I find myself, to refer to my own experience, that like Mark, I teach at least two courses with
2291 300 students very much on the model of the one that Jim teaches. I find that the students are
2292 extraordinarily open and interested. In fact, there's a moment that I keep telling my TAs every
2293 time we get ready to start it off again which is that about half way through this course, you're
2294 going to find a kind of transformation taking over in a classroom of 300 people. They suddenly
2295 grip down and begin to awaken, they get it. And what they get is not just the interconnectedness
2296 [indistinct] or the ways in which globalizers tie together on so many different levels, but they get
2297 in particular, because this course like many of Mark's is suffused with religion, how much not
2298 just forms of faith but religious constructions, religious needs, religious pathologies, and the rest
2299 shape the world that they are now living in. And I do find as well that they are very open,
2300 whether they come from traditional evangelical backgrounds or something else, they're very
2301 open to thinking that that is not the only way to think religiously or feel religiously. That's the
2302 first thing I would say.

2303

2304 The second thing then is that I do believe in fact, despite what I said, that indeed religion should
2305 be a primary factor in the kind of teaching we try to promote about the global. And in fact, we
2306 made that the case in many of our undergraduate courses. We haven't done very well in our
2307 graduate program. But I do believe that we will do better at it if we open, as it were, all the foci
2308 or emphases or modules of the program up to considering the religious elements and influences
2309 in these realms of experience than if we simply segregate it into one. That's a judgment call but
2310 I've been studying and teaching religion for now a bit over 40 years. I think this is a good one. In
2311 any event, I can't speak for how it needs to be inflected in the teaching of things in Latin
2312 America and the Caribbean world, though I'm very interested in that world. But surely in our
2313 program, religion is going to continue to become a still more important ingredient in the way in
2314 which we try to open up the meaning of world experience.

2315

2316 **Kathleen Bruhn:** With that, I'd like to thank these panelists and those panelists for a stimulating
2317 session. And I'll turn it back over to Mark.

2318

2319 **Mark Juergensmeyer:** I want to thank the panel very much and thank all of you. In the last few
2320 minutes of our gathering together I'd like to invite comments along the lines recommended to
2321 me, in fact demanded, by one of my grade school teachers, Mrs. Beasley, I think her name was,
2322 my homeroom teacher. We would all come back at the end of the day, and she would look at the
2323 class and she'd say "Now, boys and girls, what did you learn today?" And we would all have to
2324 tell one thing that we learned different every day we had to think "Oh my goodness, Mrs.
2325 Beasley's gonna ask us. I have to remember something that I can say that I learned today." And
2326 I'm not going to put you all on the spot. I'm not going to go around the room and ask all of you
2327 what you learned today. But I hope that some of you will contribute some thoughts as Kurt did
2328 just a few minutes ago, but what he learned differently, some insights that he had or gained from
2329 this gathering that he didn't have before. And I'm going to start off by telling what I learned
2330 today.

2331

2332 What I learned today was that the subject of religion and civil society in Latin America is on the
2333 one hand a very local thing. It is local in the sense that Haiti is not Argentina, and Argentina is
2334 not Venezuela, and Venezuela is not Mexico, and even within each of those countries as we
2335 learned in Argentina if you are talking about the north it's quite different than talking about
2336 Buenos Aires and talking about the [indistinct]. They're all different areas and different kinds of
2337 people. And of course, religion and the way in which religion functions is also a very local thing.
2338 There are many Christianities as I think Jim and several other people have reminded us. There is
2339 not just one kind of church and one kind of religious response in Latin America.

2340

2341 But at the same time that all of this is very local it is also very global. And it strikes me that
2342 religion in Latin American civil society is global in at least three different ways. When we are
2343 talking about religious involvement we're talking about networks and institutions that are not
2344 just Latin American. We're talking about global Christianity and institutional structure, whether
2345 it's Roman Catholic and the various branches of Roman Catholicism or whether it's
2346 Pentecostalism or evangelicals that reach beyond the area. And the interaction is a very vital part

2347 of the way in which religion functions in the region. We've seen that with the Evangelical
2348 missionaries and the Pentecostals. The same is true of course with the global civil society
2349 institutions, that they are sometimes local but they're also in many cases a part of a larger
2350 international network sometimes based in the US, sometimes based elsewhere. And the
2351 interaction between the local and the global is a very interesting situation. As Thomas Tighe
2352 indicated that Direct Relief International works through local NGOs. And many of these are
2353 NGOs that are based in a particular location, and that interaction and calculating that interaction
2354 (knowing what those signals mean, knowing what it means to be humanitarian in that context) is
2355 a juxtaposition of local and global perspectives. It's also global in terms of the interaction of the
2356 State. The State was an invisible partner in this activity and an invisible subject in our discussion
2357 today, but an important one. But State action in Latin America is, as in the rest of the world, is
2358 very much a globalized activity. That state action in Latin America is always conscious of the
2359 US and the US role, and as Otto Maduro reminded us, it's not just the US but institutions such as
2360 the World Bank and the World Trade Organization and the IMF. And even though we may
2361 misunderstand them or bring myths about them into our discussion, there is no question that
2362 these institutions play a role bringing the globalized world and understandings of what the
2363 standards of an accountable society or development must mean within global terms in a way that
2364 affects state policy, and therefore the way that it affects religion and NGO activity.

2365

2366 So the discussion today, it seems to me, touched both on issues and interests and activities that
2367 are in one sense very immediate, very local, but at the same time global and in that sense affect
2368 all of us. So that's what I learned today. What did you learn today?

2369

2370 **Mary Becker:** Today I gained an appreciation for how an idea which never was a majority of
2371 people, in this case, example number one, Liberation Theology, how many times it's been
2372 spoken today or alluded to, and just how powerful it has been even though it was never espoused
2373 officially by a large number of people. And yet it has animated a number of things in a number
2374 of the countries that we've talked about.

2375

2376 **Kurt Frieder:** Well you, Mark, already mentioned what I learned today. I learned a lot of things
2377 really today, especially that there are a lot of people in the north worried about what's going on

2378 in the south. And sometimes, not knowing the south really in depth, but at least are worried about
2379 it. And for me it was an incredible experience to be here. Thank you very much.

2380

2381 **Katherine Marshall:** I think one thing I come away with reinforced is how problematic it is to
2382 try to put together a coherent picture on trends and directions. I think it's difficult for anything...
2383 I mean, we know about demography. We can pretty well figure out demography and a few other
2384 areas like that. But religion is multiple times more difficult because almost every piece of the
2385 data is difficult. But we don't know where Pentecostalism is going. We don't know really what
2386 the impact of behavior is even in a single country much less in the region. Very difficult to know
2387 in a way that does reflect all of the experience of what's happening with the Catholic Church.
2388 Again, [we] should be more knowable [about] other things because of the elements of
2389 decentralization. But when you try to figure out what the orders are doing and how they're
2390 thinking,... we've got a lot of work to do is one of the things that I learned.

2391

2392 Another thing that I hadn't mentioned before... Well of course it's fascinating that you can have
2393 a meeting on roughly the same topic that has a completely different set of discussions. In other
2394 words, most of the issues that I had said had preoccupied the meeting we had on Latin America...
2395 almost a year ago... the agenda of topics that people were concerned about and that they brought
2396 to the table were very very different. And I'm not even sure what to make of that, whether the
2397 accident of whoever's there is the right people? Or whether it's some selection bias. I don't
2398 know what it is. But it's interesting nonetheless. But there was one issue that came up that we
2399 haven't mentioned very much but that is very action focused. That in the discussions with people
2400 who were from, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services, in other words a lot of the NGOs, but
2401 also some of the actual churches, there's a tremendous hunger for networking. But also a
2402 frustration as to what the networking would actually consist of because the people are so busy.
2403 They say they don't really need more emails. They don't have time to go to more meetings. They
2404 don't have time to read, but they have a tremendous hunger for networks, which I think comes
2405 back to something that's been mentioned a couple of times, the challenge of using
2406 communication well and creatively. But the issues are tied together. It is this question of trying to
2407 put together the different visions of the elephant, of very complex local realities. But [there are]
2408 some very important overall trends, some huge gaps between hopes and aspirations and realities

2409 -constant new challenges. And if you start from the perspective, say for example, of millennium
2410 development goals - specific things people are trying to achieve - or human rights or whatever,
2411 gender equality, and the huge gap between what is actually happening... how do you try to find
2412 ways to use these networks to have a more effective adding up? Those are still burning issues.

2413

2414 **Otto Maduro:** I'm going to talk only about the last thing that I learned because there are many
2415 things that I've learned throughout this meeting. And I'm going to preface that with saying that I
2416 am what I call an "Epistemological Masochist." That is, I like my convictions to be shattered
2417 every so often and the oftener, the better. And listening to Katherine and her perception at the
2418 lack of curiosity among at least some of us in regards to several issues, including, I gather, the
2419 World Bank... one of the things that came immediately to mind is I've been listening to Haiti
2420 news since the earthquake almost nonstop. And one of the things I heard twice was the new
2421 director of the World Bank expressing the conviction that things were not done well by the
2422 World Bank in the past and that there is some kind of rectification or transformation or
2423 rethinking of the ways the World Bank acts in the world. I dismissed that, and it was only when
2424 you [Katherine] pointed the lack of curiosity that I learned my lack of curiosity and the need for
2425 me to be a little bit more curious and more consistent with myself. I insist with my students and
2426 myself that institutions are multifaceted, institutions change. Why wouldn't I give the benefit of
2427 the doubt to the World Bank and take a second look especially after hearing the new director
2428 saying that things were not done so well in the past and that things are changing in the World
2429 Bank. I feel your critical remark as an indirect invitation to be humbler, more self-examining,
2430 and more curious about, among other things, the World Bank. Thank you, Katherine.

2431

2432 **Toby Volkman:** As someone who doesn't know that much about Latin America, I learned so
2433 much, but... in so many ways what we learned here today resonates with other parts of the world
2434 in terms of the complexities of religious traditions, religious actors, religious institutions, the
2435 importance of sorting out what's an institution, what's the church, what are local folks doing and
2436 thinking? The need for specific knowledge about context and history, the importance of history,
2437 the challenge of having academics and activists of various sorts meet in the same room and try to
2438 see what they can learn from each other. I thought it was very interesting... [when] Thomas [was]
2439 talking about the play of "Who's doing what for whom, or using what in what way?"

2440

2441 Just one thing I'd mention on the global point that Mark made, I thought it was interesting we
2442 didn't talk about a couple of things. We didn't really talk about immigration. I would have
2443 expected there to be more discussion about what role the flow and movement of people,
2444 especially recently is playing in religious change or religiosities. And also communication,
2445 although it was mentioned a couple of times as a tool. But what about the internet? What about
2446 social networking and social media? Is there a digital religious movement or movements going
2447 on that are also affecting these kinds of changes? So just a couple of questions - very provocative
2448 discussion for me.

2449

2450 **Thomas Tighe:** I was hoping to avoid it [speaking], but thank you. First of all, in... anything that
2451 involves religion, don't invoke Satan! [laughter] That was my first learning [moment], check
2452 yourself a little bit. And I think again as you said how much I appreciate the nature of
2453 academic work requires looking back and being reflective and waiting for the data to assemble.
2454 And the nature of what I'm doing now... you have to look forward and make decisions often on
2455 the fly with imperfect information. And rare is the opportunity to have both at the same time so
2456 you can actually make a more informed judgment that you have to make with access to great
2457 thinking that is burdened by reflective thought and has a lot to offer. We always learn from the
2458 same mistakes, and we'll learn them again in Haiti. And people know about them. So the
2459 integration of what is learned in the academy to translate down (the applications of them) are
2460 real. They're needed, and they are often disconnected from the judgments being made.

2461

2462 We have conferences all the time where people want to apply the best practices, and I've always
2463 hated that because if we take that to its logical extreme, no one will ever have the best practice.
2464 We're just chasing the tail. No one will ever do something different if we only follow the best
2465 practices. You need the engagement of folks who don't think like you do, disagree with you, mix
2466 it up with you, and shatter whatever you've formed on. That's important that the academic
2467 community can do. And I get concerned when I think it seems like they're trying to please each
2468 other and conform to a norm. Mixing it up hard is really important, working in politics... it's a
2469 way to do it that's not physically violent but intellectually challenging. As one of my students
2470 said, "A wise enemy is far better than a foolish friend," which I will now adopt as my own. But

2471 it's apparently an ancient Iranian saying. So I appreciate [this] very much... but I'd rather be a
2472 wise enemy than a foolish friend. And thank you for the invitation.

2473

2474 **Marianne Loewe:** I think my understanding and appreciation of Haiti has been deepened today.
2475 I thank you for that. I was really happy to hear that the methodology of Paolo Frerri is used in
2476 many places including our work, and that's a huge way forward for our world. The third thing
2477 was... I believe with Jane Adams that the way forward for all of us to transform our world is to
2478 do it together, not individually. That's been affirmed here today as well.

2479

2480 And I have a story about communications that I want to share with you, a simple story and short.
2481 A year ago October there was a serious flood in the town of Las Cruces, where we work. In the
2482 little house where a couple of the health promoters were sleeping, right next to the clinic, one of
2483 the indigenous men noticed in the middle of the night that ants were invading his cot. So, being
2484 an indigenous man, he couldn't knock at the door of the woman who was next door to him
2485 because that would not be the appropriate thing to do. So he took out his cell phone and he texted
2486 her to let her know that there were ants on his bed. And so she texted back to him and said, "well
2487 shake them off." And he said, "No. The ants are up on my bed because the waters are rising and
2488 we need to evacuate." I just thought it was a great story about communication, social networking,
2489 and indigenous peoples.

2490

2491 **Sarah Cline:** Well that's a hard story to top. As an academic that has quit going to conferences
2492 because I'm tired of the same old blather, this one has been terrific with its diverse viewpoints
2493 and academics who are engaged in very interesting research topics but also practitioners on the
2494 ground who are doing terrific work. And I have been very pleased to be part of this conference.

2495

2496 **Jennifer Hughes:** The state was sort of a hidden subject but present in our conversations. It
2497 was interesting for me to hear NGOs say we need stronger states. This idea that we need
2498 strong states for that social function of the state that NGOs can't replace that. In the light of all
2499 this thinking about transnational and post national. Also a little bit of effort to try to figure out
2500 what is the realm of NGOs in that public life. What is the role of the state?

2501

2502 **Virginia Garrard Burnett:** Does the emperor have no clothes? When we started off this
2503 morning there is such incredible need and urgency in Haiti. It is real and it is right now and I am
2504 going to talk about angels dancing on the head of a pin. As we have gone through the day I have
2505 felt a little bit better I have learned that NGOs are not universally hostile to religious workers.
2506 Those of us who are in the academy and aren't on the ground can provide some sort of context
2507 and ideas for people who are really doing it. Perhaps we are providing some sort of a useful
2508 service in that. I hope so.

2509

2510 **Fernando Lopez-Alves:** Satan is worried about world hunger! [laughter] One of the things I
2511 learned again today is this false dichotomy. It is a false dichotomy. Academics and practitioners
2512 I think this is a false dichotomy. Fifty years ago we would not be here sharing the same table.
2513 Why? We had two different worlds. We are not the only ones. The other thing is about the
2514 relation between NGOs and religion. What is the problem really? It is a good thing that this
2515 connection is being built and seems to be working. Religions and NGOs can come
2516 together...The same countries that are being the subject of oppression have representatives in
2517 those institutions...This is just to tease Otto Maduro! He is looking at me with respect which is
2518 something weird that I have never seen before. NGOs and religious organizations are working
2519 together.

2520

2521 **Kyrah Daniels:** Being reminded that there are so many approaches to "development;" political
2522 economic and cultural approaches to development. My own research is in cultural approaches
2523 and resistance...have provided models of resistance and rhetoric. I am going to take away that in
2524 addition to looking at short term relief efforts which include water, food, shelter, and medicine,
2525 we may think that these are things we need to talk about right now for short term goals and long
2526 term goals. But we also need to think about considering religion as a sustenance for short term
2527 and long term.

2528

2529 **Claudine Michel:** ...it is a moral imperative to do engaged scholarship there is no other way to
2530 go about it. Theory and praxis there is no choice...merging academia and community. I do
2531 want to thank everybody for engaging the situation in Haiti and for your compassion support and
2532 long term work. Whether it is in the field or with your academic work. To bring us to the

2533 practical, every time that Nadege or I stepped out of the room it was to learn about more
2534 destruction in Haiti. The destruction of the community library looking for one specific project
2535 Thank to you all on behalf of the Haitian people.
2536