

## a new culture of learning

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implications for pastoral leaders

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to begin...

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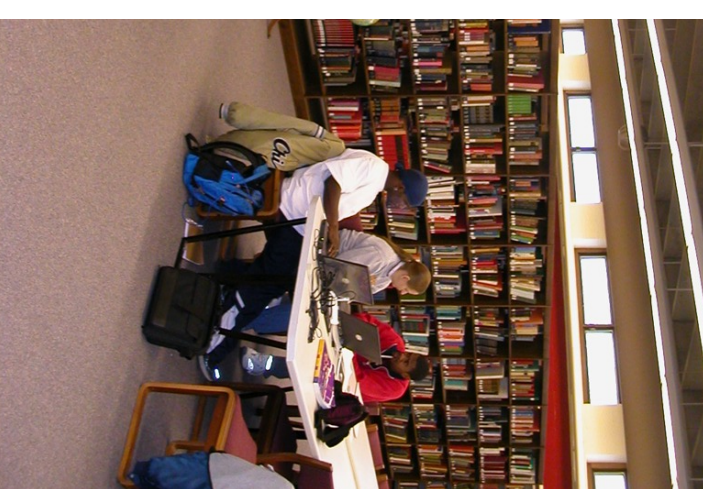
- *A New Culture of Learning*
- MacArthur Foundation's project on digital media and learning (see also [homago](#), and [Now You See It](#))

what is the “new culture of learning”?  
how does it intersect with theological/religious  
education and pastoral leadership?

limitless information  
bounded environments

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metaphors of an information  
network, and the culture  
of a petri dish (3-1)



## learning-based

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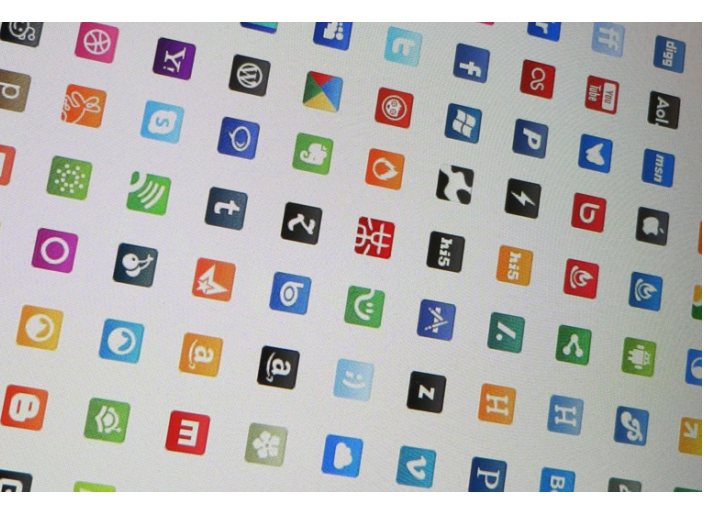
argues that a teaching-based approach is sharing stable information “about” the world, whereas a learning-based approach is learning through engagement “with” the world (37)



## construction of interpretive communities

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blogging is one example, but there are others as well (66)



## personal & collective

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as contrasted to the public and the private (56)



in communities people learn in order to belong, in collectives people participate in order to learn (56)

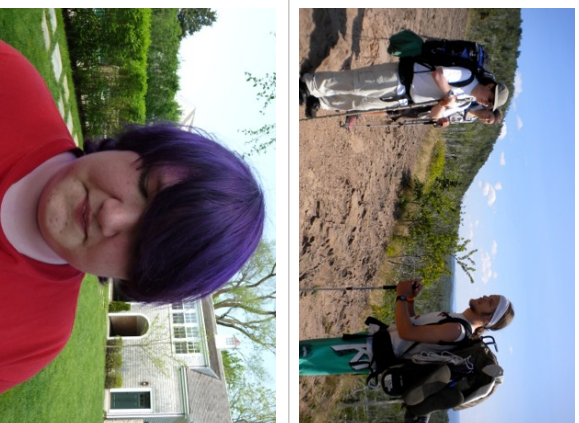
## tacit knowing

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stable knowledge is explicit  
knowledge, constantly changing  
knowledge is tacit (77)



inquiry: not learning what we know, but asking  
'what are the things we don't know, and what  
questions can we ask about them?' (83)



## inquiry → indwelling

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"indwelling is the set of practices  
we use and develop to find and  
make connections among the  
tacit dimensions of things" (85)





inquiry → indwelling

“indwelling is the set of practices we use and develop to find and make connections among the tacit dimensions of things”(85)

build inquiry  
from passion

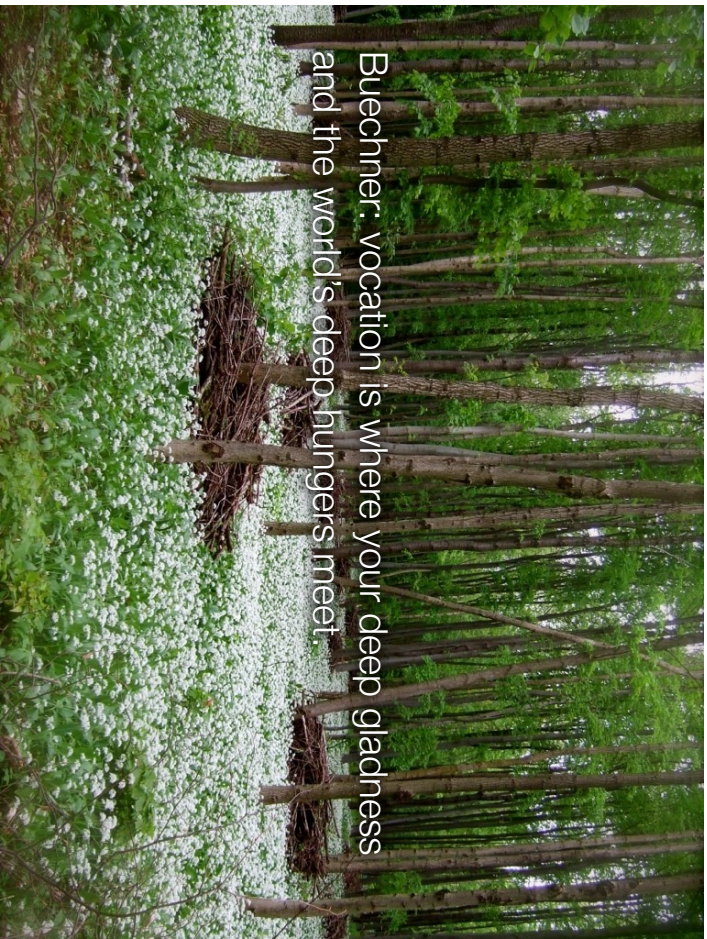
“the new culture of learning is about the kind of tension that develops when students with an interest or passion that they want to explore are faced with a set of constraints that allow them to act only within given boundaries” (81)



what could all of this suggest to pastoral leaders?



is this really all that new?



world's needs... what of brokenness?  
what of the hiddenness of God?  
what of faith in a world of pain?

## strengths of theological/religious education

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- esoteric knowledge
- Rahner: the recognition of our finitude points to awareness of the infinite (that is, in acknowledging our limits we recognize the limitless)
- Parker Palmer: whole sight of mind and heart
- we have practice with making explicit the knowing which comes from tacit sources (spirituality, practices of faith, etc.)
- we have practice with bounded environments that are open (worship, church teaching, parochial schools, etc.)

## challenges of theological/religious education

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- certain of our esoteric knowledge has become nearly inaccessible
- our lived sense of God's agency and power has been diminished
- our "bounded environments" are crumbling all around us (denominational shifts, sacred/secular, etc.)
- tacit knowing is often disavowed in certain Christian contexts; some of our "tacit knowing" is hierarchical power over, rather than kenosis
- much of religious education errs on the side of being "teaching-based" rather than "learning-based"

where are we  
*knowing?*

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- in churches
- in schools
- in neighborhoods
- around the globe
- with the Spirit

what could/should we do?

what/who are we  
*making?*

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- disciples (Matthew 28:19)?
- communities?
- collectives?
- scholars?
- teachers?
- learners?

*homo sapiens, homo faber, homo ludens*  
(90)





## how are we *playing*?

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- with ritual?
- with music?
- with the arts more generally?
- with philosophical argument?
- with social justice organizing?
- with theological argument?
- with institutional transformation?



“the new culture of learning is a culture of collective inquiry that harnesses the resources of the network and transforms them into nutrients within the petri dish environment, turning it into a space of play and experimentation” (1 18)

“that moment of fusion between unlimited resources and a bounded environment creates a space that does not simply allow for imagination, it *requires* it” (1 18)

can pastoral leaders “hang out, mess around, and geek out”?

