

Conscience Project Meeting 1-7-06

The meeting was conducted at Barb's home. Present were Meg Gaffney, Matt Galvin, Sue London, Sister Mary Satala, Barb Stilwell, and John Sullivan.

Sue summarized the experience at the Kids Count Conference on 11/18/05 at the Indianapolis Convention Center where Conscience Project participants, Barb, Tamara, Matt and Meg alternated with Sue in ensuring our presence at an informational booth. Sue estimated about one dozen conferees stopped by during her watch in the morning. There were fewer inquiries from midday into the afternoon. The website was on display and Conscience Works cards with the appropriate URL address were available to interested parties. Tamara brought an example of a conscience box she had used with middle school and adolescent patients. Sue was happy to report that the Smart Board problems encountered at Kids Count had been remedied with the acquisition of a new board. Sue alerted us to the upcoming Medical Library Association (MLA) meeting, which this year will be held in Phoenix. Circulated among Conscience Project participants was a copy of issue #101/ Fall 2005 *Newsletter of the Midwest Chapter of the MLA* featuring Sue's discussion of her grant project. A meeting of the Indiana Library Federation in April would likely be a good venue for another Conscience Project exhibition. Turning to the website itself, Sue indicated she would need to check with colleagues on how a new opening page--in the form of a so-called 'splash page' with broad categories-- might be done. Sue had made arrangements for a cable modem to be set up to link Matt and Meg's home computer station with hers so that there could be easier transfer of completed essays, articles, presentations, resource materials as well as psycho-educational books and editorials envisioned for the site. Sue updated those present regarding IDEA and how archival material in the Ruth Lilly IU School of Medicine Library IDEA comes up on searches from Google Scholar and Medline Plus. Sue reminded us that she still needed biographies for the Editorial Board members, Meg, Matt and Barb, to be posted on the website, as a condition for her grant. Lastly she demonstrated her new pocket drive, which everyone agreed was 'way cool' and convenient.

John discussed the manuscript he had distributed to some Conscience Project participants to read ahead of the meeting. The subject was conscience and Islam. Interesting correspondences were discerned by readers in several areas. For example, comments were made on the Hierarchy of Values contained in Islamic teaching and the possible relationship of it to the dynamic process represented by the Value Matrix. John had adopted an organizational device to ensure that he not "lose his audience" as he tried to convey insights he had had dating back to a conference on psychology and Islam in Riyadh in 1979. He commented on the acceptance in Islam of "pristine revelation" as part of the evidence base, informing psychology and other branches of science. John noted how alien a concept this might appear to Westerners, even those involved in Islam. He related experiences he had had interviewing consecutive admissions to a psychiatric emergency unit as part of a cross-cultural study involving patients in the Sudan and in St. Louis. One of the questions posed was if the person had ever been to a faith-healer. A suggestion was made that John consider creating a monograph for **Conscience Works** organized around the responses he would make to the IU Conscience Autobiography for Professionals adding his commentary and explanations. Such a monograph was seen as possessing important potential in the contribution it would make to helping students and residents from Islamic backgrounds relate to conscience centered ethics and professionalism and to helping both Islamic and non-Islamic

students and residents appreciate commonalities as well as differences in moral growth within and approaches to the world of healthcare. John mentioned a book by Malik Badri entitled **Contemplation and Meditation** with which he would like Conscience Project participants to become familiar.

Sister Mary reported on her experiences in Shreveport, LA with the disaster victims displaced by two hurricanes. The word 'unconscionable' arose in her mind more than once as she learned from disaster victims of how they had been taken advantage by others to whom they were obliged to turn for help. Sister observed that the bayou peoples were stratified in various ways. She said that Asian-American persons with Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian backgrounds, particularly, were still looked down upon by others in the region. Many lived on the waterfront operating shrimp boats, which had been washed ashore in the storms. The information was conveyed to Sister that they had been told that the cost per vessel was \$60K for putting it back in the water. She called attention to the charges for use of FEMA trailers and unfair criticism of Vietnamese Americans for hoarding canned goods. She had e-mailed Brian Williams. Barb and Matt commented on similar reports (mentioned in Goenjian et al's article on conscience development and developmental psychopathological interference) that issued from Armenia after the 1988 earthquake about unconscionable pricing during the period of extreme privation in the disaster's aftermath. In the context of Sister's account, as a counterpoint to the 'category of the unconscionable' the phrase was also introduced: 'dimension of the sacred' in essence doing the loving thing as a person of conscience. The suggestion was made that Sister consider an essay or editorial for **Conscience Works** on the subject of the 'category of the unconscionable and the dimension of the sacred.'

Meg was grateful to receive comments from John and Sister Mary who reviewed the most recent draft version of the paper, "A Conscience Sensitive Approach to Ethics and Teaching Caring Attitudes," which Meg anticipated would be included in an edited volume comprising papers on Values, Ethics and Medical Science: The New Medical School Curriculum. She also circulated a flyer about "Diversity Week Activities at Indiana School of Medicine."

Barb mentioned a book that had impressed her, entitled **The Last Chance in Texas, The Redemption of Criminal Youth**. She also circulated copies of the latest, scored version of the SSCQ for Parents/Caretakers. She asked that Conscience Project participants see if parents with whom they had contact would complete and return the forms for her further evaluation.

The next meeting of the Conscience Project, courtesy of Sister Mary Satala, will be at St Vincent's Stress Center, 8401 Harcourt Drive, April 1, 2006 1000-noon. Intentions to attend or regrets can be conveyed to Matt at:

MRGalvin@stvincent.org

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Galvin,
3/4/06

