

University of Southampton

AGEING IN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES' CURRICULAR

Ann Webber



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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Master of Philosophy

AGEING IN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES' CURRICULA

by Ann Webber

During 1983 one relevant member of staff from 31 of the 33 theological colleges of the mainstream Christian denominations in England and Wales were interviewed in order to assess the extent to which students, proposing to enter the full time ministry of one of the mainstream Christian denominations received training in the pastoral care of retired people.

Subsequent to the college interviews postal questionnaires were sent to other relevant college lecturers and visiting tutors.

Postal questionnaires were also sent to the anglican directors of post ordination training to ascertain to what extent further training about work with elderly people was given during the three years following ordination. The situation in respect of the other denominations was ascertained through the denominational training bodies.

The results show that minimal attention was paid to the needs of elderly people during student training in the majority of colleges.

In all the areas of the curriculum - pastoral studies, ethics, spirituality and worship colleges were principally concerned with providing students with the tools which they could subsequently use in their ministry. For most students, teaching about ageing was most likely to occur in human growth and development courses, where the bias was towards the 'problems' of ageing retirement, illhealth and loss, with the positive aspects of ageing receiving scant attention.

Opportunities for student contact with active elderly people were minimal and students, if they had contact at all, were likely to relate to very frail people in long stay hospitals and residential homes.

However in a minority of colleges considerable effort was made to show students the potential for ministry to, and the rewards for them, from, relating to elderly people who frequently have a deep abiding faith and maturity, inspite of physical restrictions.

## PREFACE

The aims and reasons for the research are outlined in the Introduction and this is followed by a 5 part review of the literature relating to denominational perspectives on pastoral studies training; the role of the minister in relation to older people; attitudes to ageing and elderly people; religious attitudes in later life and theological perspectives on ageing. The research methods employed are outlined in chapter 3 and the very limited post-ordination training opportunities are discussed in chapter 4 as some colleges attached considerable importance to it.

The main body of the research is documented in chapters 5 to 11 and compares the teaching on ageing that students received with a summary of the key knowledge and skills that enable effective relationships to be formed with people over retirement age. Fundamental to the teaching is the attitudes of the directors of pastoral studies and visiting lecturers and these are recorded in chapter 12.

The final chapter discusses the main findings and identifies areas for further research.

I am grateful to many members of Southampton University staff for their help and encouragement as well as to the denominational headquarters' staff responsible for ministerial candidates, college directors of pastoral studies and visiting lecturers who all gave generously of their time and provided such thoughtful open answers to my endless questions. However there are 3 people to whom I am particularly indebted:

Mrs. Doreen Davies who typed the thesis,

Dr. Peter Coleman, with whom I had several thought provoking discussions and from whom I received detailed comments,

Dr. Agnes Miles, my research supervisor, who constantly offered constructive criticism and advice at our many meetings.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the preparation for work with retired people<sup>1</sup> which ministerial<sup>2</sup> students received whilst undergoing their specialised training at theological colleges and seminaries during the academic year 1982-3. It did not consider ministerial training schemes which were part-time or undenominational. This decision was made in order to keep the study to a manageable size. The denominations chosen were Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, United Reform Church (URC), Congregational and Salvation Army and 31 of the 33 colleges meeting the above criteria agreed to co-operate.

The study also investigated the extent of further specialised training which new ministers received during the early years following ordination<sup>3</sup> or commissioning.

#### II. REASONS FOR THE RESEARCH

I had four reasons for undertaking the research; a) the population shifts in recent years have led to a big increase in the number of people over 65; b) the possible greater significance of religion to older people because of proximity to death; c) the high status of ministers in society and their influence on elderly people, particularly those with a Christian commitment; d) the changing role of ministers vis. a vis. their congregations and the relevance of this to their ministry with older people. All these reasons made a study at this time desirable. However, I soon discovered, that as little systematic research into the Pastoral Studies<sup>4</sup> training has ever been undertaken, this study would of necessity be exploratory.

See Appendix VIII for glossary of terms numbered in the text.

a) The Implications of the Population Shift

During this century the total population of England and Wales has increased dramatically, and with the remarkable reduction in the death rate amongst younger people the age structure of society has changed completely. The effect this has had on the composition of a typical congregation can be seen in Fig. 1. In 1981 we reached the position that 15.27% of the population of England and Wales was over 65 whereas in 1951 it was 11.03% (computation of CSO 1984 Tables 2.3 p 9 and 2.7 p 17). This percentage is expected to continue to rise until 1986 when 18.6% of the population will be over 65 but after that there will be a fall, both in percentage terms and in the actual numbers, until the beginning of the next century when there is expected to be another increase. (see Table 1)

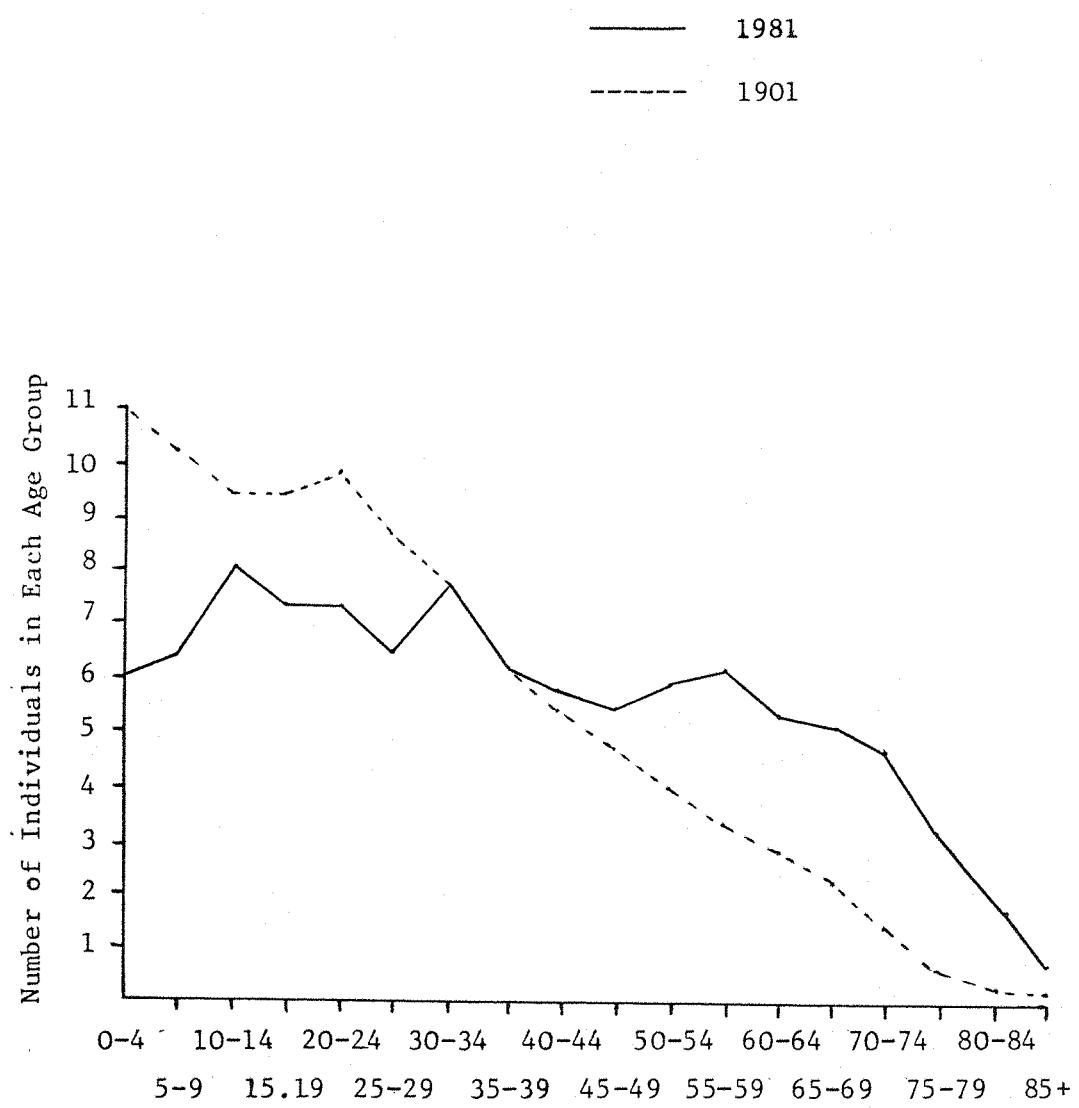
However, whilst the population over 65 has been increasing the population of those aged 45 - 64 has been decreasing in percentage terms since 1961 and is expected to continue to decrease until 1996. Traditionally it has been this age group, the sons and daughters of the over 65s, who have provided the major source of support to the older generation if and when they have become frail (Townsend 1963 pp 63-75). There are now, and will continue to be, less people aged 45 - 64, available to do so. This either means that the age group 20 - 44 will have to provide more support, or a greater sophistication in the planning and delivery of public services must be developed, or acceptance by society of deteriorating standards of care from neighbours and public services, or euthanasia when people become frail. I would argue that Christianity, as a major institution in this country, has a responsibility to influence debates on these subjects and that the minister is the key person within the local congregation to raise these ethical issues. He also has the responsibility to encourage the laity with whom he works to care for each other and particularly for those who are in distress (Acts of the Apostles chapter 6)

b) The Possible Significance of Religion to Older People

The dramatic reduction in deaths amongst the younger age groups has meant that people less frequently face the death of someone very close to them than was the case in earlier times. For example in

Fig. 1

Age distribution for a typical congregation of 100 individuals in the years 1901 and 1981



(Data derived from Table 2.3 of CSO 1984)

Table: 1      Numbers and Percentages of the Population of England and Wales belonging to various age groups  
between the years 1951 and 2021

	Aged under 20		Aged 20 - 44		Aged 45 - 64		Aged over 65	
	(000s)	%	(000s)	%	(000s)	%	(000s)	%
1951	12,396	28.33	15,974	36.50	10,563	24.14	4,825	11.03
1961	13,785	29.90	14,987	32.51	11,836	25.67	5,497	11.92
1971	14,890	30.54	15,514	31.82	11,849	24.31	6,495	13.32
1981	14,139	28.51	16,708	33.69	11,174	22.53	7,572	15.27
1986	13,245	26.62	17,779	35.73	9,478	19.05	9,257	18.60
1991	12,947	25.73	18,377	36.53	10,934	21.73	8,056	16.01
1996	13,420	26.34	17,906	35.15	11,564	22.70	8,054	15.56
2001	13,935	27.10	17,574	34.18	11,982	23.30	7,925	15.41
2011	13,802	26.54	16,674	32.06	13,357	25.68	8,178	15.72
2021	13,661	25.76	16,807	31.68	13,422	25.30	9,152	17.26

(Data drawn from CSO 1984 Tables 2.3 p. 9 and 2.7 p. 17)

1900-2 41.2% of people died before the age of 14 years (computation of data from Table 2.9 CSO 1984 p 33).

It is as we face the death of someone else or our own mortality that we are most likely to question whether there is another life after death and what will be its possible form. As a country in which the Christian religion is at least an unconscious influence on most people the Christian teaching about death and the after life will affect people's thinking.

There is also another factor in that tradition suggests that 'being sent to Sunday School' was an obligatory part of Sunday's activities for children of previous generations. If this was so the teaching given in those days will also be a factor which will influence older people in their view of death and life after death. The minister therefore requires an understanding of the influences that may have a bearing on older people's thinking and on their understanding of death in order to bring hope to them in this life.

c) The Status of the Minister in Society

The minister has historically been seen by society as a person of high status like the 'Lord of the Manor', the doctor, the lawyer and the teacher. (Ranson et al 1977) As the social structure of society has changed so has the influence of certain professions e.g. teaching has waned. The doctor, although maintaining his status has generally ceased to live in the same community as his patients. The local squire now rarely exists. This means that the minister is frequently the only professional living with the people to whom he ministers. (Although even this is less true in the countryside where a minister may have responsibility for a number of village churches. He will however continue to live in accommodation attached to one or other of the churches.) Elderly people will remember the days when the teacher, the doctor or the squire was consulted on serious matters and his advice taken as a matter of course. The minister, having continued to live and operate, until very recently, in the same autocratic way will frequently still be recognised by elderly people with a church affiliation as a person whose advice should be followed.

d) The Changing Role of the Minister

However, as Tiller (1983 pp 96-102) argues this situation has now changed with much greater lay involvement in the ministry of the Anglican church. Whilst lay involvement in church affairs was first enshrined in the Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act 1919 it was the Synodical Government Measure 1969 which gave involvement to the laity at all levels of church government. (This lay involvement has of course always operated to a far greater extent in the Free Churches.)

Another factor of significance in the changing role of the minister is the growth of the Charismatic Renewal movement within all the Christian denominations. From this movement has emerged lay people with gifts of teaching, pastoring, healing and preaching - all gifts which previously had appeared to exist only in the minister. As a result churches have recognised the growing need for the minister to act as an enabler to the laity.

This enabling role should lead to the minister identifying the ministries which older people have to offer the church and the community. He should also be encouraging people from other age groups to minister to elderly people. However, the success which he has in facilitating these processes will be influenced by his own attitudes to elderly people.

III. THE ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED FOR AN EFFECTIVE MINISTRY TO ELDERLY PEOPLE

From the foregoing paragraphs it will be obvious that the minister needs knowledge about the circumstances of elderly people and also skills to relate effectively to them and to those whom he encourages to work with them. The attitudes he holds towards old people and old age will be fundamental. If he believes old age is a time of inflexibility and decrepitude he will expect old people to be passive receivers of help; if he believes that old people have the capacity to develop emotionally, intellectually and spiritually he will respond differently.

All these issues therefore make an investigation into the syllabus of theological colleges and the attention which the colleges give to the specific challenges of old age particularly apposite at this time.

I hoped through this study to identify what help students were given with their own attitudes, which types of attitude were re-enforced and which modified, the extent and type of knowledge they were given and which skills were emphasised.

#### IV METHOD OF THE INVESTIGATION

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the extent and content of teaching about ageing and elderly people included in theological training. I developed an oral questionnaire for use with pastoral studies directors. This consisted of two parts 1) a questionnaire which I constructed from their syllabus outlines which I obtained from college principals and 2) an attitudinal questionnaire (called a quiz) developed by Palmore (1977) in the U.S.A. In respect of courses<sup>5</sup> and topics<sup>6</sup> for which the director had no direct teaching responsibility I developed a short postal questionnaire to be sent to the relevant teacher or tutor.

I ascertained from the denominational headquarters arrangements regarding post-ordination training. As a result I devised a postal questionnaire for use with Anglican directors of post-ordination training. The Salvation Army arrangements I ascertained during interviews at the college and the other denominations do not provide any systematic training of this nature (see chapter 4).

The results of the study cover the attitudes of the college pastoral studies directors themselves; chapters identifying where in individual areas of the syllabus<sup>7</sup> and curriculum<sup>8</sup> ageing and elderly people are considered; post-ordination training and a concluding chapter drawing out key issues in the findings.

The next chapter, however, gives information relating to current theological education, the general tasks of the minister, the training and role of the minister in relation to older people, the attitudes towards ageing and elderly people which are prevalent today, details of the limited knowledge we have about religious attitudes in later life and finally the next chapter documents the tentative attempts at outlining an appropriate theological perspective on old age.

CHAPTER 2LITERATURE REVIEWI INTRODUCTION

This study was concerned with the teaching about ageing and elderly people which took place in theological colleges in 1982-3. Ideally this study would have been developed from previous research into theological training and would have compared teaching on ageing with teaching on other age groups. Ideally, too, the teaching would have been analysed in relation to a detailed task analysis of the minister's job involving the attitudes, knowledge and skills that he needs. The research could then have refined these vis a vis work with elderly people. Thirdly the theological perspective and thinking about ageing would have provided the essential base from which all the other teaching about ageing would have flowed, including the attitudes to religion held by elderly people themselves. Sadly, as this literature review will show, little work has been undertaken by religious denominations into any of these fundamental subjects.

The Literature Review is therefore in five sections. Firstly I survey the role pastoral studies takes within college theological studies generally and the denominational perspectives on a minister's tasks. Secondly, the minister's specific roles in relation to elderly people and the training he needs to fulfil these specific roles. Thirdly, the attitudes towards elderly people which may influence the minister in the execution of these roles. Fourthly, the attitudes towards religion held by elderly people and finally I review the slender literature on theological perspectives which should undergird the minister's pastoral ministry to elderly people.

II MINISTERIAL TRAINING: DENOMINATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON PASTORAL STUDIES AND THE ROLE OF A MINISTER IN THE LOCAL CHURCHa) The 1970s

Students in all denominations are primarily trained to minister to the members of a local congregation and to serve the people within

the catchment area of a particular church. Their training in the theological disciplines (e.g. Bible, Doctrine) therefore needs to be matched with skills and knowledge of how individuals and groups behave so that they can help people grow spiritually.

Within the colleges training in pastoral work has grown substantially in the last 15 years. The only and most recent report by the Church of England's Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry (ACCM 1976) noted that colleges were paying increased attention to pastoral studies. As a result of surveying the position in 16 Anglican theological colleges concern was expressed in the report about the overloaded curriculum of some colleges due to the pressure to include new courses and topics into the syllabus, the inadequate information about areas of pastoral concern as perceived by students and the confusion about the relevance of fieldwork to other college teaching. The positive features that the report stressed were that a) much thought and effort, often supported by slender resources, was being given to pastoral studies, b) colleges were appointing full or part-time directors of pastoral studies, c) there were widespread and sometimes successful attempts at cross fertilisation between academic and practical studies.

In 1979 the Roman Catholic church produced a report (called the Cherwell Report) reviewing the whole training programme for student priests and because R.C. training is of 6 years duration those recommendations which were subsequently implemented in the seminaries will only affect men ordained from the mid-1980s. In my study I was therefore observing R.C. training which has yet to be proved in practice. However like the Anglicans the R.C.s noted that there had been increased pressure to include a number of new courses and topics into the syllabus often on an ad hoc basis.

Integral to the Cherwell report was a survey of the views of recently ordained priests about the relevance of their pre-ordination training to their current work. Respondents to a questionnaire were requested to evaluate statements according to certain measures. The questionnaire included one statement about the adequacy of their training to prepare them for their work with elderly people. The statement was as follows: "The training received in seminary helped you in dealing with the aged." In replying 6.85% of the students felt that the subject was more than adequately covered, 44.52% felt that it was adequately covered, 28.08% that it was less

than adequately covered, and 17.12% said that seminary training had not helped them at all, and 3.42% did not answer the question. Thus only approximately 50% of students were satisfied with their preparation for work with elderly people (p.32).

ACCM (1976) in their report used the result of a 1974 survey where one in three recently ordained priests were asked about their satisfaction with their training. A direct question was not asked about their satisfaction with training about elderly people but the ACCM report (1976) observes that there was a consistently lower level of satisfaction with training in pastoral studies than there was in other areas of the curriculum.

Both the ACCM and Cherwell Reports included references to the need for priests to continue to receive further special training in the 3 years following ordination. The 1974 ACCM survey reported in the ACCM Report (1976 p.26) found that students had been very dissatisfied with the post-ordination training arrangements and therefore proposed that it should be much more closely integrated with pre-ordination training and that the 3 years following ordination should be considered as integrated with the initial training. This scheme was not adopted. Neither were the post-ordination training proposals within the Cherwell Report (1979).

b) The Situation Today

No further reports have been formulated by the R.C. and Anglican churches. The recommendations of the 1976 ACCM report were not accepted in their recommended form and an internal ACCM committee subsequently drew up the current pastoral studies syllabus (Appendix I) reflecting many of the ideas contained in the original report. This became operational in 1980 and has not yet been evaluated in practice. This is also true of the Roman Catholic recommendations.

The R.C. church does not have any special post-ordination training although there are in-service training opportunities for all priests. The Anglican church has continued to have diocesan directors responsible for clergy in their first 3 years following their ordination. There are no specific requirements and each director interprets his task in his own way.

The Methodist Church regulates its training through a Ministries Department and Committee structure which is answerable to the Methodist Conference. However, the relevant committees are private and the minutes confidential.

The Baptist Church also has a Ministries Committee but the colleges are independent establishments and the Baptist Union (the governing body of the denomination) only seeks to intervene if a college's curriculum is substantially out of step with denominational needs.

The Salvation Army is wholly administered by the denomination and the college is an integral part of the denomination's structure. The syllabus reflects the pre-occupations of the denomination both in terms of its citadel work and its welfare work through its social service establishments.

The United Reform Church (URC) produced a report for the 1982 General Assembly which was adopted. The key paragraph is number 21 which proposed periods of mainly academic work punctuated by placements

"designed to introduce students to issues of contemporary life. The first placement should be of a secular nature and the second one be in a church. They should combine observation and work, analysis and reflection." (p.63)

Also included in the Assembly report were proposals for post-ordination training which were to become effective from mid-1983. (The academic year following that which I studied) It was also proposed that the first pastorate would normally be as an assistant to a senior minister to whom he would be accountable pastorally. As assistant minister he continues his studies under the direction of a local supervisor elected by the college or URC Board of Studies and at the end of 2 years he attends a refresher course arranged by the URC.

c) The Tasks of a Minister

There is continuing discussion, although not research, about the minister's role in a rapidly changing society. This comes at a time when the number of ordained ministers in the churches is

decreasing rapidly. (e.g. 15,488 full-time Anglican diocesan clergy in 1961 and in 1983 it was fewer than 10,800 (Tiller 1983 p.21)) The role of the minister will vary according to denominational emphases. The Cherwell Report (1979) summed up the R.C. view as follows:

'A priest is a minister of Christ - hence the paramount demand for closeness to Christ. He is sent by the Church - hence the demand to be one with the Church. He is sent to speak the Word of God which reaches a peak of intensity in the sacraments and above all in the Eucharist. He is sent to speak to people so that the range of his ministry will be determined by the needs of the people to whom he is sent. The vocation of a Christian is primary and the priest is present to serve and to enable the vocation of the people of God to be fulfilled. The ministry of the priest is therefore as wide as the Christian needs of the people.' (p.1)

The Tiller Report (1983), which looks at the future of the Anglican ministry quoted from a leaflet entitled 'Leaders in Tomorrow's Church:

'He will be a leader of the Church's worship and a man of prayer, whose oversight encourages others to discover and exercise their vocation and gifts.

He will be a planner and thinker, who communicates a vision of future goals and who seeks with others to achieve them.

He will be a pastor and spiritual director, who is skilled in understanding, counselling, supporting and reconciling both groups and individuals.

He will be a prophet, evangelist and teacher, who proclaims and witnesses to the Gospel, and who makes available today the riches of the church's tradition and experience.

He will be an administrator and co-ordinator, with responsibility for the Christian management and organisation of the local church's resources.' (p. 101)

The URC (1982) view is not dissimilar to those of the Baptist and Methodist denominations. The report suggests the following fundamental qualifications for a minister:

- i. 'a total commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a growing experience of the shared life of the Spirit so that the worship and service of God becomes the minister's central and controlling passion. We need radical dissenters from the false worship of our society, whose dissent does not drive them (timidly or defiantly) into a ghetto, but out into the world.' (URC 1982 p. 60)
- ii. A growing familiarity with the Bible and the ability to nourish others with that same word.

- iii. 'An informed and passionate involvement in the issues of contemporary society.....' (p.60)
- iv. It needs men and women of varied gifts and temperaments 'The gifts of animating and enabling groups and teams of colleagues and for evoking the skills of others and the readiness to take a subordinate place.....' (p. 61)
- v. Ministers must be skilled in the arts of interpersonal communication so that they are 'aware of the many different levels at which communication takes place, able to exercise and to help others to exercise the arts of preaching, of teaching adults and children, of listening and counselling, and having enough sensitivity to be able to encourage the use of music, drama, dance and visual symbol in worship and in the communication of the Gospel.' (p.61)
- vi. Ministers need to know that they must be learners all through life 'Because the whole church is called to ministry, the work of the ordained minister must always be directed to the enabling of all for ministry, and must be done in collaboration with elders and other members as well as with ministerial colleagues.' (p. 61)

(The references quoted above are taken from the Reports to the URC General Assembly 1982)

Whilst these 'job descriptions' reflect different denominational emphases there is not a substantial difference in the skills that need to be learnt. The differences become even less when the job description is narrowed down in terms of a minister's contact with elderly people in his congregation or living locally to the church. However, the attitudes which his denomination adopts towards the roles of the clergy and the roles of the laity will influence his role with elderly people.

### III. THE TRAINING AND THE ROLE OF THE MINISTER IN RELATION TO OLDER PEOPLE

Whilst all the facets of the job description are as relevant to a minister's work with older people as they are to a minister's work with people of other age groups certain areas are likely to acquire added importance. I would suggest that re-interpreting the job description recorded by Tiller the areas requiring particular emphasis are the distinctive skills of pastoring and leadership which includes the development of old people's skills and the use of the local church's resources for the benefit of older people.

Fundamental to the achievement of these tasks will be the attitude towards older people that he adopts and this will be discussed in a separate section of the Literature Review.

#### a) The Minister as Pastor

The pastoring of elderly people will contain many facets. It will include both older people approaching him in church or at his study for help with spiritual or other problems and visits by him to people in their own homes, both routinely and by special request. The general skills required of counselling will be as relevant with people of this age group as with all people. But for the minister to be of help he will need to understand something of the specific problems that confront people in old age. For example if he is to help someone through the period of adjustment following retirement then he needs to have an understanding of the feelings retirement engenders, the process of adjustment, and of ways that the person can find new opportunities for service. In visiting people who are housebound, perhaps with no likelihood of leaving their homes again, he needs to understand something of their isolation, their perspective on time and why they may react to a minister with an intensity which seems out of place. Sadly there is a dearth of literature on which the minister can draw. There is no research to identify exactly what older people need in different situations from a minister.

The main English book of guidance was written by Steer (1966) an Anglican minister within the Catholic tradition, and is now out of print. The book considers the restrictions and opportunities

of ageing (although this is primarily in terms of accepting the past and confessing one's errors to God) the spiritual opportunities, (particularly for prayer), and the ways in which a minister can encourage spiritual growth during old age. One weakness of

at it equates old age with decrepitude. However, if Steer's work is in its thoughtful guide to the general situations that ministers may encounter such as those who are not regular churchgoers; visiting people with problems getting on with others; visiting people with; sacramental visits and visiting the dying. Simply written and provides a broad practical working hints.

Minister also needs to be aware of how to meet the challenges of old age; the need to reminisce; how to cope through the suffering and physical limitations that are faced; how to respond to the stress on caring relatives and the particular features of illness in old age.

One task of old age is reminiscence (Butler 1963,

For the Christian this should take place within the context of repentance, and indeed reminiscence may be the way in which the minister encourages others to turn to the church of their youth in seeking forgiveness and peace. Steer (1966 p. 27-30) recognises the importance of the sacrament of confession and the use of the sacraments of penance and absolution. I could not identify any reference to the sacrament of penance within the context of a life review for helping people to come to terms with their past. The minister's own religious view cope with repentance and the sacrament of confession. Steer (1966 p. 27-30) recognises the importance of the sacrament of confession and the use of the sacraments of penance and absolution. I could not identify any reference to the sacrament of penance within the context of a life review for helping people to come to terms with their past.

The Christian by the very nature of his calling can seek to love God more deeply and to serve his will face growing physical restriction in old age. These restrictions, the suffering, can be the point of new growth and maturity, or it can be the point of despair and hopelessness which leads to the loss of faith (Curran 1981 p.74-80). The loss of faith was noted by Clough (1981) when observing an old people's home. One illustration he gave was

'She (Mrs. Smith) was a lively member of the local church, baked more cakes for the coffee morning than anyone else and had a positive picture of her past. Within the residential home her life had changed - physically, since bouts of arthritis left her crippled and in severe pain on occasions; spiritually, since she could no longer believe in a God who had allowed so much to happen to her; socially for she had cut off her links with her church and past friends....' (p. 18)

Steer gives some practical pointers by the use of biblical illustrations on how to cope with this and similar situations which can help the inexperienced minister (p. 52-53).

It is not only the elderly suffering person who needs spiritual support but relatives may need encouragement to cope with 'coming to terms' with illness and the constant strain of caring. An insight into the role a minister can play in helping a family accept the deteriorating health of relatives and admission to residential care is available in the moving case study provided by Ewing (1981 p. 193-207). The minister was extremely skilled and it would take some years of experience for a church minister to reach the same level of skill in pastoring both the elderly parents and their son but nevertheless it shows ministers and students the potential of their ministry. The needs of relatives is also dealt with more briefly by Steer.

The minister will from time to time be in contact with an elderly person who is mentally ill. On this subject I have only been able to locate one article by Bashford (1968), written for ministers, which appeared in a general pastoral counselling book edited by Mitten (1968). Although called 'The Care of the Aged' the article only outlines the main mental disorders of old age; it does not talk about the minister's specific contribution, nor does it give him any guidance on the best ways to communicate with people who have irreversible mental diseases.

The paucity of relevant literature reviewed here is very disturbing but reflects both the marginalisation of elderly people by the church, the assumption that the minister requires no special skills in working with elderly people and that the problems of old age are related to frailty.

The paucity of literature also reflects the marginalisation of religion in our society because scanning the contents and index pages of some 70 books on ageing either published or freely circulating in this country I could find few references to the place of religion in the life of elderly people or to the minister's pastoral role. One reference is in a book on geriatric medicine by Anderson and Williams (1983). In the chapter on Care of the Dying they say

'Many people are immensely comforted by a visit from their minister. This is easier in hospital if the padre is already a familiar figure on the wards. The minister should be given the necessary information from the ward sister or doctor. His visit may give great spiritual assistance to the dying patient and he may add greatly to the comfort of such people by listening carefully to any wish or desire expressed. The minister may be an invaluable link with the relatives and act as a helper in time of misunderstanding or doubt.' (p. 303)

Another reference is in the Open University Course P650 where stress is laid on the need for old people with a faith, who are admitted to residential care, to continue to be visited and supported by their minister and church (Webber 1982a p. 71-72). The third reference is in research by Bowling and Cartwright (1982) where the comfort of a minister's visit during bereavement was noted (p. 224-5).

Gaine (1978), having identified some of the dilemmas of a modern minister's job and discussed some issues relating to the ageing process, quotes W.S. Reid (who in an unpublished thesis) identified a four fold task for the church in helping elderly people adjust to life in later years. It is

- 1) to help them face impending death and overcome anxieties and fears
- 2) to give them a meaning and purpose for later life
- 3) to assist them to accept the inevitable losses of old age, and also
- 4) to help them in the discovery of compensatory values.' (p.235)

Gaine continues to quote Reid who suggests that because of the broadness of the four definitions which I have quoted the minister must have some principles of selectivity as well as priorities for direction in his work with elderly people. He believes that the minister should have particular concern for the lonely, the recently bereaved, those recently discharged from hospital, the

physically or mentally impaired, those who tend to isolate themselves, those in crisis e.g. recently retired, those who have recently moved home and have restricted finances, those with chronic illness, housing difficulties or interpersonal tensions. The more routine visiting should be undertaken by other members of the church (p.238-239).

Gaine (1978) at another point in the chapter (p.234-5) makes the important point that the minister sees and knows people over a longer period of time and therefore is in a position to share knowledge with workers in other disciplines. To do this he needs an understanding of the health and welfare services. Gaine (1978) also identifies him as ideally requiring, during training, counselling contact with elderly people (p.236).

It was beyond the scope of this study to examine the literature in depth, but those isolated identified examples from some 70 books give little guidance on how health and social service professionals see the role of the minister in relation to elderly people. Indeed it could be true that health and social service professionals see ministers as irrelevant. But even if professionals become more aware of the minister's potential pastoring role there is evidence at the outset of this study that ministers and students have access to little directly relevant material. In the absence of appropriate material directors of pastoral studies will need to use secular material designed for other professional groups and to modify it according to the needs of the theological students.

b) The Minister as Leader

The pamphlet by Tiller (1983 p. 101) quoted in section I of this Literature Review identified the leadership of the minister as including the ability to encourage others to exercise their vocation and gifts (p. 101). In relation to older people this will have two facets i) encouraging elderly people to identify and use the gifts God has given them and ii) encouraging members of the congregation with a gift for relating to older people to use and develop it. Gaine (1978) sees the two facets particularly in terms of the community development theory in that the minister will encourage people to do things for themselves even when the minister knows that he could do things more quickly and effectively

himself. (p.233-4). More traditionally Gaine also sees the minister appointing 'untrained auxiliaries' to take on routine visiting .(p.236) This too, is an area which Steer (1966) believes should involve the laity. (p.77-78)

The references to old people using their gifts are sparse. Steer sees it primarily in terms of the time they have to pray although he makes no mention of the support such people may need or the difficulties which they may encounter which are vividly described by Blythe. (p.293-307) A pamphlet produced by Age Concern (1980) suggests activities for elderly people within the local church. The mundane nature of the list is depressing and does not acknowledge the skills that many people will bring into old age from their work and previous experience.

A key activity of the minister is the delivering of sermons or homilies at church services. It will be here that his own attitudes to old age will be expressed publicly either overtly or covertly. Through sermons he will influence the attitudes and perceptions towards ageing held by the members of his congregation, both old and young. This in turn will have a profound effect on the level and quality of life of elderly people within the church's sphere of influence. The ability to come to terms with ones own ageing is a pre-requisite for successful social work with elderly people (BASW 1977 p.11) Gaine (1978 p.228) also refers to this in his article and although he does not elaborate it seems to me that directors of pastoral studies need to have come to terms with their own ageing if they are to reflect a balanced view in their teaching.

The minister, like his congregation is influenced by society's attitudes and because attitudes are fundamental to the quality of the service we render to each other it requires consideration in its own right.

#### IV. ATTITUDES TO AGEING AND ELDERLY PEOPLE

In contemporary society ageing is often equated with ill-health and decrepitude and secular literature on ageing persistently draws attention to this erroneous and damaging attitude (e.g. Tournier 1972 p.36ff.; Hendricks and Hendricks 1977 p. 14-16; Gearing and

Slater 1979 p.54-63; Anderson and Williams 1983 p.1). Freeth (1982 p.9-13) gives several examples. She notes that in childhood we are exposed to stereotypes of elderly people - usually women - as either cuddly, smiling grannies with shawls sitting in rocking chairs knitting, or as wicked stepmothers or witches with evil intent. The media influences us as adults. Walter Gabriel or Joe Grundy are rarely, if ever, met in real life. Finally Freeth quotes a newspaper headline 'Elderly Woman Killed for £100'. Closer inspection reveals that the heading refers to a 20 stone sub-postmistress aged 63!

Another common myth is that families looked after their elderly relatives in the past and neglect them today (Laslett and Wall 1972). This is being reinforced - implicitly rather than explicitly - through the Prime Minister Thatcher's continual emphasis on the family's responsibility for its own members.

It is true that elderly people do experience more problems. Their incomes are substantially lower than for the population generally, (DHSS 1978 p.22); they are more likely to live in sub-standard housing (Robson 1980 p.13); are more likely to suffer ill-health and to need hospital admission (DHSS 1978 p.36); are more likely to live in single person households (Hunt 1978 p.93). However this does not mean that elderly people with problems should be translated into the problem of old people or the problem of old age.

Another popular myth is that old people can't change their habits or attitudes. The fact that retired people may take Open University degrees, face an entirely new life style on their retirement, cope with the traumas of strokes, coronaries or slow incapacity from arthritis is forgotten. Reminiscence is erroneously interpreted as living in the past.

Even illness is equated with old age itself. The results of self-adjustment scales used by Abrams (1978 p.46-53), Lidz (1976 p. 517-18), Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p. 143-146) never reach the general public because they are neither newsworthy nor sensational but they show the high levels of adjustment that elderly people achieve in spite of adversity and in spite of the image that old people should not continue to be actively involved in society.

This view - probably the most important influential one on stereotyping and attitude formation in ministers - is generally known as the disengagement theory and can be inferred from various literature down the centuries. Detailed research based on the theory was carried out by Cummings and Henry (1961). They hypothesised that old age is a phase of life when society and the individual prepares in advance for the inevitable disengagement that comes with death. This means that old age is a period of withdrawal from the expectations and obligations which maintain individuals in equilibrium with society during their active life. This philosophy already being challenged in the 1960s was not substantiated by the research of Hunt (1978) and Abrams (1978 and 1980) which demonstrated that people continued active participation in all aspects of living well into old age. Ill-health is the indicator for withdrawal from activity - not through a person's choice - but through reduced energy.

The writings of Steer (1966) reflect the attitudes of his era in assuming that old age equals ill-health. The reflectiveness which comes with age is translated into the opportunity for prayer and intercession (p.32, p.93-94). An objective of my study was to see which images including the religious dimension of ageing would be imparted to students during training. It was therefore also important to survey the literature relating to elderly people's own attitudes to religion.

#### V. RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES IN LATER LIFE

Ministers could be helped in approaching elderly people by knowing something of their attitudes to religion. However research is limited and results unclear. Payne (1982 p. 343) identified Starbuck.

'as reporting in 1911 that religious faith and belief in God grow in importance as the years advance.'

Much later research by Glock and Stark (1966) questioned this assumption. However neither Starbuck nor more recent studies have resolved the problem of determining whether changes in religious behaviour are due to increasing age or whether the behavioural differences relate to differences in social behaviour found in different eras.

In Britain age related research into religious affiliation of elderly people living in the community has been recorded in six

studies during the 1970s and 1980s, Reid (1976), Reid et al (1978), Coleman (1978), Abrams (1978) and Wenger (1984) and very briefly by Hunt (1978 p.126).

For the purposes of this study I shall be focussing primarily on Coleman's, Wenger's and Abrams' data as my study was concerned with theological education in England and Wales.

Abrams in the 1970s undertook a longitudinal study of people over the age of 65. He found that some 12.4% (1978 p. 16) said they 'belonged to a church group' (which was slightly lower than the percentage recorded by Hunt (1978 p. 126)). He also identified a very small but significant group of people who joined a church in later life (1980 p. 31). An unpublished and now lost further analysis of this group of people showed that bereavement had been a significant influence on their new interest in organised religion. Abrams, Coleman and Wenger all obtained very different results on the subject of church membership and attendance. Whereas in Abrams' study some 12.4% said they 'belonged to a church group', in Coleman's study some 63.4% considered themselves church members with 32.4% reporting that they 'sometimes go to a place of worship'. In Wenger's study of elderly people living in rural areas of Wales she reports that 80% of respondents 'claimed membership of a church, non-conformist chapel or other religious group, and more than 75% attended at least sometimes'. (p. 103)

I suggest two possible reasons for the discrepancies between the various studies. The number of respondents varied (Abrams 1,646 respondents, Coleman 347 respondents, Wenger approximately 700 respondents). The meaning of the words 'member', 'membership' and 'belonging' and 'sometimes' can all mean different things to different people. Therefore even slight variations in the words used, the intonation of the interviewer and the position of the question in the interview schedule will affect responses. Even so all this cannot explain such wide variations and indicates the need for more detailed research as the reasons for the variations can only be a matter of conjecture.

Coleman and Abrams also analysed the respondents' church membership in terms of social class using the OPCS classification of occupations. There was a significant difference in the percentage of people who acknowledged affiliation between groups AB, DE and Group C in the

Abrams' study, but the percentage did not vary to any extent in Coleman's study. See Table 2

Table 2: Percentage of People over 65 by Social Class who were Members of Church Organisations

	<u>Abrams</u>	<u>Coleman</u>
Social Class AB	15.5%	60.67%
Social Class C	23.5%	64.62%
Social Class DE	12.5%	63.64%

Note: The Abrams information is computed from Tables 18 (p26) and 23 (p31) Abrams (1980)

Coleman, unlike Abrams and Wenger, asked people for their denominational allegiance and the responses were as follows: Anglican 62.61%, Roman Catholic 7.83%, other Christian denominations 21.3% and other religions 6.09%. His analysis also showed that whereas 63% considered themselves members of a church only 32.75% actually attended at least sometimes. Given the large percentage of affiliations to the Anglican church the shortfall between affiliation and attendance must largely relate to that denomination. It also indicates that some elderly people would be open to encouragement to attend church if the church took the initiative. Another interesting question in Coleman's study was "does religion mean much to you at the moment?" The results shown in Table 3 indicate that for a significant number of people in Coleman's study religion does become more important as they age.

Table 3: Responses to Coleman's question:  
"Does Religion mean much to you at the Moment?"

Yes, more than when I was younger	26.0%
Yes, as much as when I was younger	39.8%
Yes, but not as much as when I was younger	4.7%
No, but it has never meant much to me	20.2%
No, less than when I was younger	9.0%

The table also shows a small percentage of people for whom religion means less than it did when they were younger. However, none of

Coleman's respondents was living in residential care and although no research, that I could identify, has explored which type of person might reject religion in old age Clough (1981) writing about an old people's home for 36 people says

'Several stated that they had been church members all their lives but had given up a belief in God because of their bitterness at what had happened to them.' (p.137)

Ill-health, or entering an old people's home may well precipitate a crisis of faith in the same way as it challenges a person to adjust other aspects of their life style (Webber and Gearing 1979 p.31). At these points a minister may be a particular source of encouragement but we have no literature on the minister's role or on how he should respond theologically to a crisis of faith in these circumstances.

In order to respond he ideally needs to be able to draw on theological principles which are rooted in a theology of ageing, or alternatively he should be able to draw on general theological principles which have incorporated the needs of elderly people (e.g. justice, love, work, leisure). In short he needs a theological perspective to ageing.

#### VI. THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AGEING

It is the minister's responsibility to interpret secular knowledge and attitudes in terms of theological principals and to impart them to those for whom he has pastoral responsibility. I would argue that Christianity's emphasis on the value and uniqueness of each individual person means that a minister should challenge assumptions about the worthlessness of old people (e.g. because of non-productiveness in industry). However, that is not to say that he should not recognise the common features and experiences of groups of people. He will need to question stereotyping to ensure that it is not destructive but he must also recognise the positive value of stereotyping which can utilise common skills and mitigate the worst features of common needs and problems. Ideally theological perspectives on ageing pay attention to both the individual and the common aspects of ageing.

However, there is a paucity of Christian literature to which a minister can refer. I have been able to identify only four significant works on this subject. Hiltner (1975), Clements (1981), Opera Pia International (1982), Le Fevre et al (1981). Each of these writers has acted as an editor so that individual ideas are disjointed and to a large extent superficially treated. All but one contributor is primarily concerned with the psychological and philosophical dimensions to ageing. These writers also seek to interpret spiritual dimensions - suffering, death, personality development in old age, wisdom and love into a theology of ageing rather than asking: Where do ageing and old people fit into the theological principles which undergird these spiritual dimensions?

The one writer who does work from this base Heinecken (1981) also hypothesizes that love and justice result in old people being treated as equal citizens, and where this does not happen the Church 'must join together with all persons of goodwill to advocate justice for the elderly by means of just laws justly enforced.' (p.88) The concept of social justice is, of course, wholly biblical, the Levitical laws and the treatment of widows in the early church (see I. Timothy) are but two examples. The theological facets of ageing the other writers are concerned with are discussed under the following headings; development of the personality in old age, suffering and death, wisdom and love.

a) Development of the Personality in Old Age

In the books under discussion, as in psychology, different authors, express different views on whether old age is a time of continued growth and involvement in society or whether it is a time of decline and disengagement. The author who most persuasively argues for the former is Pruyser (1975 p. 102-117). After painting a very gloomy picture based on disengagement theories he then asks the reader to consider why elderly people 'seem to take their losses rather well and do not succumb prematurely to the stresses of ageing.' (p.111) He suggests that they gradually discover wholesome adult dependencies, they re-define their own status, find freedom to embrace an ever

wider circle of humanity, relax their defences, live in the present more fully (instead of always looking to the future), make wholesome identification with the idealism of youth and find a new openness and honesty in revealing their innermost thoughts.

He also argues persuasively that the picture of life as two valleys with a peak between is wrong and that life is more linear with losses and gains at every stage (p.103). Coupled to the valley/hill/valley idea is the image of life as a cycle or a wheel (Norman and Gaffney 1976). The idea of the downward path in old age received encouragement through the very influential work of Cummings and Henry (1961) through which the 'disengagement theory' which I critically discussed earlier (see Literature Review, Section IV) became established.

The Roman Catholic writers in *Opera Pia International* (1982) all draw analogies of old age from the contemplative stream of spirituality and are biased towards the disengagement view. However Pereira (1982) in reviewing Christian views of ageing down the centuries points out that writers tend to be polarised between the disengagement and activity positions. This tension is also reflected in the papers by Tracey (1975 p. 120-126), Pruyser (1975 p. 117) and Curran (1981 p. 74), who seek to identify a balance between them.

The writers who stress disengagement in old age also then predictably stress the importance of accepting a person just because they are a person rather than for what they have to offer. In spirituality this is reflected in the tension between 'Being and Doing' which in terms of Old Testament writing is discussed by Knierim (1981 p. 21-35).

I have not been able to identify any similar literature on the New Testament. However there are a few general references to ageing which I have been able to identify. Three are Luke 2 verses 36-38, I Timothy 5 verses 9-10 and Titus 2 verses 4-5 and these indicate that old people were seen as having positive roles in a church. This attitude appears to have continued during the development of the early church according to Laporte (1981 p. 37-49).

b) Suffering and Death

No theological perspective on ageing can ignore the loss and the suffering which occurs in old age, and the writers struggle to make sense of this dimension to our humanity. The writers in *Opera Pia*'s book, because they are Roman Catholic see the bearing of suffering as lessening the effects of purgatory. *Pruyser* (1975 p 107) also deals with suffering but sees positive outcomes in this life.

Death is linked to suffering by the various authors and they reflect the inevitable tension between the finitude of the body and the resurrection of the spirit. However, they do not seek to develop this theological perspective in their papers.

c) Wisdom

If one accepts that older people should not 'retire into their shells' what might theology consider that they have to offer in an industrialised society where yesterday's knowledge is obsolete today? *Tracy* (1975 p. 126), *Pruyser* (1975 p. 116), *Ulanov* (1981 p. 117), *Tiso* (1982 p. 249-254), *Borelli* (1982, p. 191), *Teasdale* (1982 p.243) all highlight wisdom. The Bible, too, associates wisdom with old age (for example The Patriarchs, Job, Proverbs). Younger generations are impoverished when the wisdom of old people is not available or is dismissed as irrelevant. In the realm of spirituality wisdom never becomes dated. However *Tiso* (1982 p.249-254) like the writer of Proverbs before him, recognises 'that there is no fool like an old fool'.

d) Love

The greatest gift that old people have to offer is love. That God is love is a fundamental belief of the Christian and the very nature of love as of God is the capacity to both give and to receive. If love is at the heart of the universe then throughout life there must be the opportunity to give and to receive. By observation and experience we know the impoverishment of our individuality and self-worth when these are unequal. Giving and receiving - love - must be at the heart of any theology of ageing.

Although it is referred to in passing by several authors *Pruyser*(1975 p. 112), *Cymbalista* and *Leclercq* (1982 p. 164), *Teasdale* (1982 p. 232 and 241) it is only *Heinecken* (1981) who draws

it into his theological propositions. Yet, if Pruyser (1975 p. 110 - 111) is right, (and gerontological research by Albrecht (1953, Hunt (1978) and Abrams (1978 and 1980) and many others bear out the next point) older people when they have understood how to integrate the past with the present, accept both their dependence on and their independence of others, accept the finitude of early life, prove the reality of many of the christian mysteries - solitude from loneliness, hope from despair, vision from disillusionment, freedom from bondage, simplicity from complexity, liberation from submission - can show and teach us love - the central theology of the christian faith.

#### VII. SUMMARY

The student, training to be a minister, needs to be able to put secular knowledge about ageing into a theological context, to define his inalienable tasks after ordination and to gain some insight into the skills required. The specific literature at his disposal is limited. This study will therefore particularly aim to identify the extent to which skills developed for use with all age groups are transferred into skills for use in work with elderly people and how much society's negative stereotyping is reinforced or mitigated through theological training.

My questionnaire therefore was designed to cover all relevant areas of teaching and to evaluate the teacher's own perceptions of ageing. Separate investigation of post-ordination training was required and a postal questionnaire for this purpose was devised. The devising of these questionnaires forms the basis of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3DEVELOPMENT OF QUESTIONNAIRESI. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I outline how and why I designed the various questionnaires that I used in this study.

Five were required. One to identify in depth the areas of teaching on ageing, which I would use during a personal interview at the colleges (Appendix II). Two postal questionnaires for teachers providing specific courses within the syllabus or curriculum (Appendices III and IV). An attitudinal questionnaire called Palmore's Quiz) from which I hoped to assess the extent of positive and negative attitudes to ageing held by the respondents (Appendix VI). Finally a questionnaire regarding post-ordination training in the Anglican Church where ministers should have follow-up training during the three years after ordination (Appendix V).

II. THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTORS OF PASTORAL STUDIES

When I first planned this study I was not acquainted with the curriculum<sup>8</sup> for ministerial training. As a first step I therefore wished to familiarise myself with their programmes. It was important to me to identify not only which courses<sup>5</sup> and topics<sup>6</sup> were undertaken but also their structure and organisation. This was necessary so that I could construct a questionnaire that reflected as closely as possible the pastoral studies directors' main pre-occupations as well as their terminology. I therefore wrote to each of the 33 colleges (listed in Appendix VII) which met my criteria for inclusion in the study (see Introduction) asking for a copy of their pastoral studies syllabus.

At the same time I obtained a copy from ACCM (Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry) of the outline syllabus from which Anglican colleges (other than the Church Army College) construct their courses.

All correspondents responded, some with very detailed information, although many Anglican colleges provided only the same information

provided by ACCM. (A copy of this is reproduced in Appendix I).

When all the information was available it was possible to identify common themes. The majority of colleges had courses in human growth and development, worship, sermon preparation, education, evangelism<sup>15</sup> counselling as well as student placements with churches and in secular establishments e.g. hospitals, prisons. Teaching on death, dying and bereavement, spirituality, mental health and mental illness and social issues were also popular with colleges. Essays and projects whilst rarely noted in prospectuses and syllabi were known to be required at least by students in Anglican colleges who are examined by ACCM assessors. Examinations were also indicated occasionally.

The more important result of obtaining college prospectuses was that I could often identify individual college terminology. This helped me to be sensitive during the visits to the meaning of the words that directors used.

However, I recognised that during the interviews with the pastoral studies directors I would need to adapt the questionnaire to their specific syllabus structure and later extract the results to co-incide with the headings I chose. Two areas of questioning did not appear in the correspondence from colleges but nevertheless questions on them could reveal discussion of elderly people.

One concerned demographic data. As was discussed in the Introduction we are experiencing a change in population structure and I wished to see if this was discussed with students.

The second question concerned sick visiting. Although not appearing on the college literature, I expected it to appear at some point in every student's training. I had made this assumption because there are services in both the Anglican Book of Common Prayer and the R.C. Missal for the Anointing of the Sick and instruction about the ordering of Holy Communion with people who are sick. The second reason was that I expected churches, irrespective of denomination, to be concerned with the needs of their members when they become sick. Inevitably ill-health is more likely to occur in old age and therefore I expected that discussion of old people's needs would arise in those sessions. The third reason for my

assumption was that the only English book about the pastoral care of the elderly people (Steer 1966) was mainly concerned with frail housebound elderly people. In the event my assumption proved incorrect with 15 colleges providing no specific teaching about sick visiting other than what may be provided through secular placements in hospitals; teaching was also very limited in many other colleges.

My purpose in designing a questionnaire which as closely as possible reflected college teaching arrangements was to facilitate easy recall of all the references to elderly people that might occur. I felt it was important not only to identify when topics relating to ageing or elderly people were specifically programmed but also when elderly people might be used as illustrations of theoretical issues which were under discussion e.g. mental illness, role of laity in the local church.

The other factors which I wished to identify during the interview were the methods of teaching so that I could identify both knowledge and skills teaching; the length of individual courses, in order that I could endeavour to evaluate the proportion of teaching time spent on elderly people within a course; the extent and breadth of required reading; essay requirements; the extent of contacts with elderly people during placements in both secular and church settings.

The questionnaire (see Appendix II) is lengthy. I knew that only a selection of the courses or topics would be relevant in any one college so I devised a method of identifying these courses early in the interview (see Appendix II page 184) with the intention of returning later to relevant areas in more depth. This approach during the actual interview needed to be used flexibly e.g. when teaching on visiting the sick and homebound was limited to two hours interviewees tended automatically to outline references to elderly people at that time.

All the directors of pastoral studies in denominational theological colleges in England and Wales were included in the study so I had to choose a slightly different group with which to test the questionnaire. The nearest parallel was lecturers in charge of post-graduate or under-graduate courses in pastoral studies in college or university theological departments. Five agreed to

co-operate. In this context it was not possible to test the section relating to spirituality, evangelism, preaching etc. The questions in that section are not dissimilar to those asked in other sections so I anticipated that it would be possible to compare problems elsewhere with that particular section. It was not modified after the pilot stage and it did not present any problems later on. Neither was I able to test the section on church placements but as the section on secular placements could be tested I did not envisage that as a problem. That assumption proved to be correct.

I had assumed, as a result of the way my agency as well as training officers generally make contracts with external course tutors that directors of pastoral studies would have intimate knowledge of the programmes undertaken on their behalf. However theological colleges follow the traditional university model and therefore sometimes had no knowledge of the content of a course. Postal questionnaires were therefore required to supplement my interviews.

One major problem emerged as a result of the pilot study. The oral questionnaire was not suitable for use as a postal questionnaire because a) it was designed to be used flexibly, b) it was too long and c) too complex. As a result the postal questionnaires were devised in the light of experience and information gained during the main interviews.

At the pilot stage, college essay work was a constituent part of each course and therefore the question in my questionnaire was relevant. It transpired at the theological colleges that essays were not organised in that way. Apart from the fact that no essays were required at some colleges essays, were generally set by the college directors and covered broad theoretical issues. (See Chapter 5 Section IVd for details of essay arrangements and Chapter 5 Section IVd iv for discussion about references to elderly people).

One defect in the original questionnaire did not emerge until I commenced the theological college interviews. It was the absence of a section about ethics. I had overlooked the fact that this subject is not a part of non-theological college pastoral studies syllabi. Fortunately it was raised at my first theological college

interview and incorporated thereafter. In almost all cases ethics teaching required a postal questionnaire as it was not normally an area under the responsibility of pastoral studies' directors. The pilot questionnaires lasted between one and three hours and a similar variation in time occurred in the main interviews.

### III. POSTAL QUESTIONNAIRES RELATING TO COURSE TEACHING

As a result of the interviews two types of postal questionnaire were identified as necessary. There were a number of occasions when the director thought references to elderly people were unlikely but felt that this fact should be verified. e.g. ethics where elderly people might be used as an illustration particularly in discussion of euthanasia. There were, in contrast, situations where another lecturer should be making a significant input on ageing and where a longer questionnaire was relevant. e.g. in human growth and development where between  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour and 2 hours might be allocated to ageing. I ascertained that essay work including references to elderly people was unlikely to occur in either situation unless known and co-ordinated by the pastoral studies director. The questionnaires in Appendix III and Appendix IV were prepared and based on the key questions in the oral questionnaire. As with the post-ordination training postal questionnaire a high response rate was important because the numbers of respondents was small, so it was made as simple and as short as possible. (Moser (1958 p. 212-2) stresses the need to only ask essential questions if refusals are to be avoided.) In the event a 67% response rate was achieved.

I tested the postal questionnaires with 12 training officers responsible for tutoring courses on human growth and development, mental health, counselling or the family. No problems were experienced then and none were recorded when it was received from people involved in the study.

### IV. PALMORE'S QUIZ

#### a) Choosing a suitable Instrument

All students, whatever their setting, are likely to be influenced by the attitudes portrayed by their teachers or lecturers. One of the aims of a teacher will be to transmit attitudes which are, as far as possible, based on accurate knowledge. I wished, therefore, to

test attitudes and knowledge about ageing with pastoral studies directors. Any testing of attitudes is notoriously difficult and I had neither the skills nor the time to develop my own instrument. There were also further factors to consider. Pilot interviews on the teaching syllabus took between one and three hours and it was important not to use a further questionnaire which would be time consuming, and which might not have appeared directly relevant to the directors' teaching. I was not convinced that leaving a questionnaire for later completion and return would result in a high response, and given the small number of interviewees a high response rate was crucial. Another consideration was that receiving a written questionnaire to complete in front of someone else is off-putting.

By 1983 only one English questionnaire, for use with people under retirement age, had been developed (Training Department Age Concern England 1980). It consists of multi-choice questions, is not designed to measure the attitudes of the respondents to elderly people and is difficult to use orally (e.g. it is difficult to respond to the following question without seeing the choices available. 'What percentage of elderly people receive assistance from the home help service? 6%. 25%. 75%.)

The American material is far more extensive but very difficult to obtain. However, one research instrument, The Facts on Ageing Quiz developed by Palmore (1977). It was reviewed by McTavish (1982 p.533-621) at the same time as he reviewed 17 other research instruments about people's perceptions of elderly people. He considered these 18 instruments as the 'more explicit and quantitative measures that are likely to be considered useful in gerontological research' (p.533). The other instruments which he reviewed were all too long and complicated for my purposes and most of the responses were not amenable to validation against independently corroborated evidence. In McTavish's summary of research instruments (1982) he made no specific negative comments about Palmore's Quiz.

The advantages of Palmore's Quiz for my purposes were 1) it was a simple true/false design; 2) it was quick to administer; 3) it could be used both orally and in writing; 4) it was designed to measure knowledge of objective facts; 5) it was also developed as a tool for the indirect measurement of bias (both pro and anti)

about ageing; 6) for most of the answers equivalent English data was available; 7) Palmore documented its use with undergraduates, graduates and faculty members. Directors of pastoral studies are the equivalent of faculty members. The Palmore Quiz was therefore chosen (Appendix V). In the event even some of his subjective questions presented problems and irritations to respondents; had many of the other instruments been used there would have been even greater problems as McTavish (1982) considered the instruments to be heavily dependent on the 'shared meaning of most of the words.' (p. 536)

b) The Pilot Interview of Palmore's Quiz

Palmore's Quiz had not been chosen when I administered the pilot interviews on the teaching syllabus because I was still searching for other suitable instruments. However after selecting the quiz I did not want to revisit the pilot interviewees because of the amount of travelling involved. Instead I used a sample of 20 Age Concern staff who were non-graduates, graduates with a higher degree or people with extensive teaching experience as the quiz was designed for use with any group of people, not only people in higher education with whom it was originally developed, but also religious, socio-economic, racial, age related and regional groups.

Problems were experienced with the question 'The majority of old people are working or would like to have some kind of work to do (including housework and volunteer work) and was withdrawn after testing. Respondents found the word 'housework' confusing and as I wanted to use the question for both the oral and postal contacts it would not be possible to explain the question further. Another problem arose with 3 interviewees who refused to answer questions to which they did not feel they knew the answer; they were not prepared to guess. The category 'Don't know' therefore had to be introduced. The final problem that emerged was with question 23 and this was resolved by a further subsidiary question to people answering 'false'. Question: Will it be better or worse? However this subsidiary question was not asked in the postal questionnaire because of the possibility of bias in the initial answer. It was also clear by the time of the postal questionnaire that the answers could not be based on any firm evidence.

I deliberately did not seek equivalent English data until I was completing the interviews so that information would be as up to date as possible. Care was taken though, when collecting the answers to ensure that all the same answers would have been available to the interviewees. It was at this stage that the major problem with question 22 emerged. The question was: The majority of elderly people are seldom irritated or angry? All the respondents to the pilot responded incorrectly, as did all but one of the interviewees and 24 or the 28 respondents to the postal questionnaire. I, too, answered it incorrectly! During the research interviews four people commented on what did 'majority' and 'seldom' mean? I was also aware that they were having difficulty in knowing to what they were saying true or false. There is no equivalent English research to back up Palmore's answer. It would seem that the response to this question should be treated with caution and I have excluded it from the analysis of the answers.

Whilst people co-operated with the completion of the questionnaire the irritation about the meaning of 'majority' and 'seldom' also occurred in individual cases with the other questions.

c) Scoring

Two methods of scoring were used. The one, used to mark the object facts was simply right or wrong. The second scoring related to the pro and anti bias towards ageing which the answers provided. The positive (pro-aged) score was the percentage of errors on questions 2, 4, 6 and 14 and the truth of question 12. The negative bias score was the percentage of errors on questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18 and 21. Question 22 was excluded for the reasons cited earlier and question 23 was excluded because people who felt that things would be better for elderly people in the year 2000 can hardly be described as having a negative view of ageing. (Palmore had seen a false answer as implying that people would be worse off. Some of my respondents saw them as better off.) A net anti-aged or net pro-aged score was computed by subtracting the percentage anti-aged score from the percentage of pro-aged scores.

V. QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE DIRECTORS OF POST-ORDINATION TRAININGa) Development of Questionnaire

I had identified through preliminary interviews with the ministerial committees of the denominations what, if any, arrangements were made for further training after ordination. From these interviews it emerged that the Churches of England and Wales have appointed one minister in each diocese (or diocesan area) to be responsible for post-ordination training. At the outset of my study there was no knowledge about the extent of this further training or whether it might be concerned with the needs of elderly people. However, I was subsequently to discover that information on post-ordination training was to be important in the overall evaluation of theological education in relation to ageing. Initially, though, the content of post-ordination training could influence the structure of my questioning of Anglican pastoral studies directors and therefore a survey was required. Although this questionnaire is the last to be documented in this chapter it was in fact the first to be devised and was sent out at the same time as I wrote to colleges for the details of their syllabi (copy of questionnaire in Appendix V).

Because of the reasons given in the last paragraph a high response rate to the questionnaire was essential so the questionnaire was therefore designed with two assumptions in mind. 1) Clergy are constantly swamped by correspondence so that if a reply was to be obtained a short general questionnaire was required. 2) Training in the pastoral care of retired people was unlikely and a brief reply would provide enough proof. The response rate was 94.23%. 68% of respondents did nothing, 26% mentioned casual references during other subject courses, 4% said it constituted one session in a course, 2% (i.e. one diocese) that they organised a course. The assumptions I made appear reasonable in the circumstances. (a fuller analysis of the responses is discussed in Chapter 4 Section VI).

b) Problems with the Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire could not be tested for two reasons. 1) I intended to include all the post-ordination training directors in the survey and 2) there was no equivalent group of people that could test the questionnaire for me. Two problems emerged but, because the results showed that little attention was paid to the pastoral care of retired people, it did not significantly affect the responses.

The word 'course' was used indicating a discreet activity. This did not allow for the possibility that part of a course might be concerned with retired people. However, as will be seen in the next chapter, 13 respondents mentioned casual passing references to retired people. This suggests that any more significant activity would have been recorded irrespective of the word 'course'.

The words 'pastoral care' were interpreted in terms of 'one to one' work with retired people. This could have excluded training for work with groups of retired people. However, as these same directors also referred to courses about work and unemployment, I believe that references to training for work with groups of retired people would have been made, had they occurred.

VI. POSTSCRIPT

The questionnaires were developed in the following order.

- 1) Post-ordination training
- 2) The directors' interview schedule about pastoral studies teaching
- 3) Palmore's Quiz
- 4) the two postal questionnaires to course tutors.

The results from the various questionnaires will be documented in the following way. Chapter 4 The post-ordination training arrangements in all the denominations. Chapter 5 - 11 The pastoral studies teaching as analysed from both the oral and the postal questionnaires. Chapter 12 The analysis of the results of Palmore's Quiz. Chapter 13 Discussion of the results. The next chapter will consider post-ordination training.

## CHAPTER 4

### POST-ORDINATION TRAINING

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The most obvious place to document and analyse post-ordination training would be after the analysis of the college teaching. However when I commenced this study I had no knowledge about the content of training either at college or post college level. If there was extensive further training it would both influence the content of my questions to the colleges and also indicate that deeper investigation of the post-ordination training was required. At the extreme it could have indicated the need for indepth interviews with post-ordination directors and postal questionnaires to college pastoral studies directors. In practice I found even less relevant post-ordination training than I had anticipated. However, once I started interviewing in the colleges, as will be stated frequently later in the study, the Anglican interviewees defended their lack of teaching about ageing on the basis that it was more appropriately handled at the post-ordination stage. I considered it important, therefore, that the facts relating to the extent of post-ordination training about ageing and elderly people were recorded at this stage of the documentation.

The data in relation to the different denominations were ascertained through contact with the relevant denominational headquarters. From these contacts it emerged that until Summer 1983 formal post-ordination support and training was only systematically organised in the Anglican Church and the Salvation Army. This chapter will therefore commence with a brief resume of the arrangements made by the Baptist, Methodist, Congregational, United Reformed and Roman Catholic denominations and will then review in more detail the arrangements in the Anglican and Salvation Army denominations.

## II. BAPTIST, CONGREGATIONAL AND METHODIST DENOMINATIONS

The number of ministers within each of these denominations is considerably smaller than for the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches (Whitaker's Almanac 1984). There are, also, few churches large enough to employ more than one minister. This means that students on completion of their college training expect to accept full responsibility for a church. All these denominations endeavour to ensure that new ministers receive support from either another more experienced minister in the area or from the elected senior minister for an area. As this person will have responsibility for a church, as well as other area responsibilities, the support which he can give must often be limited.

Whilst ministers meet together in area groups from time to time and may consider various issues and needs, courses specifically designed for new ministers are not likely to be arranged. This means that students' formal training for the ministry ends with the completion of the college course.

## III. UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Until the summer of 1983 the only requirement in respect of post-ordination training was that ministers would "undertake a post-ordination course, arranged and supervised by the colleges in consultation with the Moderator of the Province." (1972 General Assembly Resolution quoted in URC General Assembly 1982: Reports to Assembly page 68). The resolution was never implemented. The 1982 Assembly approved a new system. The minister's first pastorate is normally to be as an assistant to a senior minister. Where necessary a strong church will be paired with a smaller one and the senior minister have overall responsibility for both churches whilst the new minister will have pastoral care of the smaller church. Another alternative is for the inexperienced minister to become assistant ministers in a large church or team ministry. They will be under the pastoral responsibility of senior ministers who will plan their ministerial programme over a period of two years. They will also be expected to undertake further study (no definition of meaning given) under the direction of a 'local supervisor of studies'. At the end of two years they will undertake a centrally planned refresher course (URC 1982 p.67-69).

It is obviously too early to incorporate any evaluation of its relevance to my area of study. Neither were any references made to the proposals by the URC directors that I interviewed during 1983.

IV. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Roman Catholic Church generally deploys its clergy in church teams. This means that a newly ordained minister will be assigned to a church to work under the direction of the parish priest (i.e. the senior minister). He will therefore receive regular support and guidance. However he is unlikely to attend any courses for new ministers. This means that like the denominations previously discussed his formal training ends with the completion of the college course.

V. SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army Officers are generally assigned to individual citadels but continue to undertake college correspondence courses in biblical studies, produce a project each year for five years and attend a four day residential course in each of those years. Different projects are arranged for each of the five years. In 1984 the theme was social skills. In that year they selected 2, 3 or 4 subjects from a total of 10. Three subjects related to retired people but there was no obligation to select one of them. However, if they did select any of them they were expected to base their work on contact with a wide range of people and to evaluate how that experience affected their own attitudes, knowledge and skills. Other subject areas e.g. mental illness, drug abuse, back sliders, could include reference to elderly people but no reference to which, if any, age groups should be selected were given in the guidance notes attached to the suggested projects. There is no means of knowing the number of students who may have included the relevant subjects, or referred to old people in their project.

The residential course in November 1984 contained sessions about memory loss in old age at the request of students attending the 1983 course. The college were not able to confirm whether or not retired people have been considered during previous residential courses, but the subject did not arise during the previous five years.

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c) Analysis of Answers to Question 1

Only one diocese arranged a specific course. This was arranged in three sessions of two hours on separate days and covered the process of ageing, a visit of observation to a geriatric ward and a discussion of 'Care of the Aged' (Bashford 1968).

This course was arranged in the autumn of 1980 and a further course would not have been required until 1983. It then needed re-organising as most new ministers from 1983 onwards can have expected to visit a geriatric ward, and virtually all of them will have received at least some teaching on ageing in their human growth and development course as will be shown later in this study. The final session of the course was based on a depressing article written by Bashford (1968). Although it is entitled 'Care of the Aged' it is concerned exclusively with mental illness in old age and infers that illness is widespread, contains facts which have been disproved in recent years and constantly refers to elderly people as 'old folk'. I hope that the first session on the process of ageing was more positive otherwise any minister's prejudices will have been reinforced.

Fourteen respondents to the questionnaire qualified their answers by identifying ways in which elderly people are referred to in other courses. These are documented in Table 5.

Table 5: Analysis of Respondents providing Qualified Answers to the Provision of Courses on Ageing for Curates

Programmed as one unit on general pastoral care or counselling courses	1
Mentioned during pastoral care or counselling courses	6
Mentioned during courses on death, dying and bereavement	4*
Arises casually during courses or meetings	2
Talk from local authority social worker about services to elderly people	1

\* The diocese responsible for the course about elderly people also considers them again in the context of bereavement.

It is of note that retired people were referred to in four courses on death, dying and bereavement. As approximately 70% of all deaths in any one year are in respect of people over 65 it was natural that there should be concern for people in this age group within such a course. However the respondents noting this connection inferred that it was only a casual one and no specific references to the effects of this phenomena in old age were discussed. However the linking of thoughts about ageing, dying, death and bereavement however casually may be indicative of the view that

'the very concepts of aged and old have become damning, because they merge the distinctions (made in most of the traditional world) between healthy longevity and that helpless, near-moribund state that often just precedes death.' (Anderson 1979 p.23)

The 15 respondents who indicated that retired people were 'referred to' (respondents' word) or formally considered during courses were also analysed in terms of their geographical distribution. Two dioceses, including the one diocese which provided a three part course, were in the York Province. Both the northern dioceses were centred on a Metropolitan County local authority area, but as well as the large cathedral town, each included both small market towns and rural villages. One diocese was Welsh. In the Canterbury Province, one was an area of the London diocese, and all the others were predominately rural dioceses. The 15 respondents were also analysed to see if concern about retired people coincided with areas of England and Wales with a larger than average percentage of people over 65 in the general population. Precise comparisons were difficult to make as areas for the 1981 Census returns and diocesan boundaries are only coterminous at parish level but using local authority district council Census data the percentages of over 65s in the 15 dioceses ranged from 14.5% to 18%. The percentage of over 65s in the general population of England is 16.2% (Census 1981).

The inclusion of references to retired people during post-ordination training therefore appears to be random.

d) Analysis of Replies to Question 2

Two directors said that the general supervision needs of new ministers were discussed with their vicars but that no specific attention was paid to the supervision of a new minister's pastoral care of retired people.

Five directors felt that the vicars were quite competent to supervise the curate's work with retired people. This assumes that a) vicars, by virtue of their post are naturally good supervisors b) automatically work well with retired people and c) do not hold an inaccurate negative stereotype of ageing and old age. Three of the directors went so far as to say that new ministers and vicars require no training because clergy spend a disproportionate amount of their time on retired people and are therefore 'doing pastoral care all the time'. I would suggest that the opposite is true. As was noted in the chapter on methodology 'pastoral' was interpreted by respondents as meaning one to one work with individuals with problems. In that case training should enable a curate to define which elderly people he needs to visit; how often he should go; what other people can help him in the task; what elderly people themselves have to offer and the training should also include help in the transfer of some general skills into the specific skills needed for work with retired people. Taking pastoral in the context defined by the ACCM syllabus, training should also enable them to work more effectively with elderly people in the wide range of situations that arise within a local church.

One respondent in replying that no training was needed also said that his son-in-law had 8 old people's homes in his parish. The difficulties of ministering to elderly people in that setting are documented in Chapter 11 Sections IV and V. To summarise: Curates in parishes that provide services in old people's homes need skills in relating to both staff and residents, an understanding of the dynamics of the home, and an appreciation of their own role in that setting. (The complexity of relationships and the dynamics of institutions are identified in works for example by Goffman (1961) and Clough (1981). No respondent indicated that curates received training for this work.

Two respondents felt that the pastoral needs of retired people were the responsibility of the Diocesan Boards of Social Responsibility. (They are concerned with the social service type activities of the whole church and in questioning the quality and extent of society's response to human need. They also sometimes arrange local training courses on pastoral subjects depending on the number of people that they employ.) Therefore the implementation and discussion of elderly people's pastoral needs by the local church will depend on the interests of the vicar. It can therefore be argued that curates not receiving training in the pastoral needs of retired people, who do not work with vicars with an interest in this subject, and who themselves do not have a natural interest in this area of work are unlikely to take advantage of, or be involved in, any activities generated by the Social Responsibility Boards in this area of pastoral concern.

The two directors who discussed the supervision needs of students both worked for dioceses in the Canterbury Province. The percentage of people aged 65 and over in the general population of the dioceses concerned was near the national average (Census 1981).

#### VII. Summary

There is a dearth of post-ordination training in respect of ageing and elderly people. This means that it can be generally assumed that colleges will provide all the training that potential ministers will receive.

So then an analysis of college teaching will form the major part of this study. The next chapter though will provide background information on the organisation and standard of college pastoral studies teaching and will consider what attitudes to ageing are explicitly passed to students by directors and other tutors.

## CHAPTER 5

### COLLEGE INTERVIEWS      INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Although the interviews with the directors of pastoral studies were designed to identify when and where references and teaching about elderly people occurred I needed to ascertain data, about the length of the college training, academic standards and the methods of assessment of students' work.

This chapter is therefore in 4 parts. The first section gives the reader some background information on the length of college training and the organisation of pastoral studies teaching. The second section explains how I identified potential colleges and respondents. The third section considers pastoral studies generally, including methods of assessment, essay and examination requirements. It also documents the extent of students' written assignments on ageing during their pastoral studies course. The fourth section records details of bibliographies and books about, or referring to, ageing used with the syllabuses.

#### II. BRIEF BACKGROUND SUMMARY OF THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE TRAINING

##### a) Length of College Training

The length of time spent as a registered college student varied according to the denomination and in many cases according to the student. The work required also varied according to the past experience and education of the student. For example in some denominations the possession of a theology degree means exemption from parts of the theological studies. The maximum length of training in college in the various denomination is listed in Table 6, which is shown on the next page:

Table 6: Length of Theological College Training

Anglican <sup>1</sup>	3 years	Salvation Army	21 months
Methodist <sup>1</sup>	3 years	Roman Catholic	6 years
Baptist <sup>2</sup>	4 years	U.R.C. and Congregational <sup>3</sup>	4 years

## Notes:

1. However the normal length for a student over 30 is 2 years.
2. Baptist students not undertaking a degree usually complete the course in 3 years.
3. 3 years for those with a degree or diploma
4. The training period for the other denominations is only reduced in exceptional circumstances.

Other training schemes, which are not the subject of this study are available in some denominations. This includes, for the Baptist and the U.R.C. both part-time and correspondence courses, and for the Anglicans special part-time diocesan schemes.

b) Pastoral Studies Syllabus

Pastoral Studies is a generic title covering a number of different subject areas e.g. psychology, sociology, adult education, group work, counselling, health and social service placements and theological reflection on other disciplines.

In all colleges pastoral studies is obligatory for all students although occasionally a student may be exempted from a particular course e.g. a qualified teacher may not take a course in child education. However, these exemptions appear extremely rare. Students who are at college for less than the maximum time will therefore fix all the pastoral studies syllabus into the shorter period. ACCM however require less essays and only one secular placement when the student is over 30.

Whilst I considered detailed questions on the total time allocated to pastoral studies peripheral to my subject I gained the impression that the time spent in formal college teaching does not vary substantially except in two instances. 1) The longer a student is at college the longer the time he spends in placements and 2) The Roman Catholic colleges consider pastoral studies in far greater depth. It should be noted that their students generally spend twice as long at college as do students of other denominations of a similar age.

c) The People that I Selected for Interview

I chose to interview the person in charge of the pastoral studies syllabus. The majority of the 31 people I interviewed had the title of director. Other titles included tutor, co-ordinator of practical placements and lecturer but throughout this study I use the term director to denote the person that I interviewed. I decided that where no one person was responsible for the majority of the pastoral studies teaching contained in my interview schedule I would interview the person responsible for practical placements. I made this choice because placements in agencies and churches are a time consuming part of a lecturer's work and generally take up more of the student's time than any other individual teaching area. In 4 colleges I interviewed the placements organiser and in each case there was no person in overall charge of the pastoral studies teaching.

III. INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

For simplicity I shall generally use the title college to include all the training establishments included in this survey. Thirty three colleges were selected (see Appendix VII). They provide training for students who will become, provided they achieve a satisfactory standard, ministers or full-time church workers in a local church of one of the main Christian denominations, Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, United Reform Church (URC). In respect of the Roman Catholic church I took advice from the denomination as some priests are trained in Irish Seminaries, some go to the English College in Rome, and those who belong to religious orders are trained within their orders. As a result of the advice I received the three provincial seminaries were included, Ushaw in County Durham, Oscott in the West Midlands and St. John's, Wonersh near Guildford. The seminary maintained by the Franciscan Orders was also included as many of their priests serve in parishes. The results of the interview at the Franciscan Study Centre showed that their training was broadly similar to other theological colleges.

The Anglican colleges include the Church Army college who train men and women to be evangelists in parish settings and to work in social service settings. The interviews focussed on their

preparation for work in the parish setting. The Salvation Army, likewise, prepare students for work in social service settings and for responsibility of a local citadel. My interview focussed on the training for citadel work.

One college, Queen's College, Birmingham is interdenominational. However, the majority of students at any one time are Church of England and for assessment and syllabus purposes the ACCM regulations are used. As all interviewees were assured of confidentiality, for statistical purposes Queen's College will be included in the Anglican group of colleges.

The United Reform Church (URC) and Congregational students train at the same colleges, take the same curriculum and will be referred to in this study as URC as that group predominated.

Two colleges felt unable to co-operate. One Baptist College had had a very difficult year with staff illness and the Principal felt that staff should not be further burdened. He told me on the telephone, however, that the only references to old people were those included in a federation course which was also undertaken jointly with the other theological colleges in the area. The course was about human growth and development. The other college where an interview was impossible was a very small URC and Congregational college. The Principal, inspite of pressure, felt a visit would be fruitless as no attention was given during their course to old people.

The analysis of colleges involved in the study according to denomination is recorded in Table 7.

Table 7: Colleges invited to be involved in this study and their responses

	<u>Interviewed</u>	<u>Refused</u>
Churches of England and Wales	16	0
Methodist	3	0
Baptist	4	1
URC and Congregational	3	1
Roman Catholic	4	0
Salvation Army	1	0

One director does not appear as a respondent in the following sections a) the section relating to the clarification of the terminology in teaching about elderly people and b) Palmore's Quiz. The reason for this is that the director was part of a joint teaching team in a group of colleges (i.e. one of the federations); he did not supervise any students in secular placements who had contact with elderly people. Although he organised the students' church placements, students were supervised by the minister of the church where the student was placed. That meant that the students learnt about elderly people during their training from one of the other directors I interviewed, or from external course tutors whose teaching was organised by another director, or in their church placements.

At many points during the analysis of the interviews it was not possible to reflect denominational differences. The reason was that at Cambridge, Cardiff, Manchester and Oxford individual courses within the pastoral studies syllabus were taken collectively by all students from the different colleges. These joint courses will be referred as federation courses. It was also necessary to avoid identification of the Salvation Army college.

#### IV. BACKGROUND DATA ABOUT THE PASTORAL STUDIES SYLLABUS

Although the interview was concerned specifically with teaching about retired people, I wanted to clarify the general educational standards and methods of assessment. This area seemed a natural introduction to the interviews.

##### a) Titles Used for Pastoral Studies Teaching

Theological colleges like theological faculties include teaching on a number of specialist syllabi. Most of these are well established e.g. Old Testament, New Testament, Church History and Ethics. Pastoral studies as was referred to in the Literature Review is a relatively new syllabus and includes a diversity of courses and topics. The title pastoral studies was not consistently used but I have used it because it was the most common title. The other common title was pastoral theology. Two colleges used the term pastoralia, primarily because they wished

Table 8Title of Syllabus by Denomination

	Total	C. of E.	Methodist	Baptist	URC	Roman Catholic		Salvation Army	
						—	—	—	—
Pastoral Theology	11	5	1	2	0	3	0	0	0
Pastoral Studies	15	9	1	2	3	0	0	0	0
Pastoralia	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Separate Subjects	4	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1

to differentiate between college teaching and the University pastoral studies teaching with which students were involved. Four colleges did not have a general title covering my brief but had separate titles for the different courses which were taught by different individuals.

Three directors commented that they had changed the title of their job, and the teaching, from pastoral theology to pastoral studies because there are so few theological links. This reflects both the lack of literature available and the lack of detailed theological study on pastoral studies issues at an advanced level. Another factor influencing Anglican colleges in their selection of a title was ACCM's choice of the words pastoral studies in their regulations.

I suggest that the lack of unanimity of title reflects the fact that syllabi are still evolving. Pressure is constantly being exerted to fit more and more in and this will be discussed again in Chapter 13. The syllabi in use in 1982-3 probably reflected the success of particular lobbies rather than a rational response to a detailed task analysis of a minister's actual job.

b) External Assessors

None of the Non-Conformist or Roman Catholic colleges had external examiners or assessors in the area of pastoral studies, except in so far as students followed university or CNAA courses. All except two Anglican colleges followed ACCM regulations. ACCM requires the appointment of a local assessor for secular and parish placements. ACCM appoints a central assessor for the extended essays. The person appointed for 1982/3 was Mr. Graham Howes, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. (The Church Army and the Church of Wales college do not have external assessors).

c) The Academic Standard

Althouth the non-Anglican colleges did not have external assessors they all had students undertaking University or CNAA degree, diploma or certificate courses in Theology and were able to compare the standard of the pastoral studies syllabus with the standard set for the rest of the students' work. The directors' assessment of course standards is set out in Table 9.

Table: 9

## Academic Standard for Pastoral Studies Work

	Total	C of E	Methodist	Baptist	URC	Roman Catholic	Salvation Army
Pass Degree	16	12	1	1	1	1	0
Honours Degree	4	3	0	1	0	0	0
Post-Graduate	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Non-assessable	5	0	1	2	2	0	0
Continuous Personal Assessment	5	0	1	0	0	3	1

ACCM require people under 30 to take examinations in all areas of the curriculum except pastoral studies (although people over 30 may choose the essay scheme). The regulations for pastoral studies are different. All students are required to submit an extended essay and to satisfactorily complete secular and parish placements. Five of the Anglican pastoral studies directors commented without prompting that their area of teaching was considered of lesser importance by colleagues as there are no examinations.

The 5 directors who considered all their teaching as non-assessable did not require any essays, nor did they assess the student's college performance; 3 did not expect the students to undertake any reading because of the pressure they were under in other areas of the college curriculum.

Six directors had a variety of ways of operating continuous individual assessment; 1 Roman Catholic college, continuous assessment; 1 Roman Catholic college, continuous class assessment and examination; 1 Methodist college, continuous class assessment, personal journal, seminar work and projects; 1 Methodist college essays; 1 Baptist college, 5 essays + dissertation; the Salvation Army college, termly examinations and reports (this was done for all the student's work).

The issue which distinguished this group from other respondents was that directors were looking for individual improvement and not working on a pass/fail criteria.

d) Pastoral Studies Essays and Examinations

i) Anglicans

The Anglicans have specific requirements laid down by ACCM (see Appendix I) and these vary according to whether the student is under or over 30. People under 30 must complete 3 placement reports, each of 1,000 words, a 2,000 - 4,000 word assignment on a special topic which is assessed externally and 3 internally marked essays (the number of words is unspecified but interpreted by directors as similar to that required for other parts of the curriculum). Variations in this arrangement

at an individual college only occurred where students as well as gaining a General Ministerial Examination (GME) pass were seeking other qualifications. This affected only a small minority of students at any particular college.

ii) Roman Catholics

Three R.C. seminaries required no written work whilst the fourth set three-hour examinations to pass degree standard in sociology, counselling, liturgy spiritual formation and life, although a major emphasis was put on continuous assessment.

iii) The Other Colleges

Five colleges with non-assessable courses required no written work. The remaining 8 colleges (including the 2 Anglican previously referred to) require documentation. Two colleges required students to undertake an extended essay of 5000 - 7000 words, 3 x 3 hour examinations and to submit the text of a sermon. Another college required 1 x 3 hour examination, 10,000 word thesis and 5 essays of 3,000 - 5,000 words. The fourth required 2 essays of 3,000 - 5,000 words and a 5,000 word assignment on a special topic. In a further 2 colleges completely different arrangements applied. One had 6 x 2 hour internally marked examinations plus 3 essays of 1,500 - 2,000 words each term over 2 years, and the sixth college, who use the university for much of their teaching, left the individual student to decide whether or not they undertook the university essay work. The seventh college required 4 essays of 5,000 words and the eighth college one 7,000 word project which was also presented as a class seminar. There was also a link between essay and assignment lengths. The shorter the essay length the shorter the assignment length.

Table 10 Essay and Assignment Lengths

Normal essay lengths at 19 colleges were below 2,000 words

"	"	"	"	1	"	"	about 3,000	"
"	"	"	"	4	"	"	between 3,000 - 5,000 words	
Assignment	"	"	"	13	"	"	"	2,000 - 4,000 "
"	"	"	"	2	"	"	about 5,000 words	
"	"	"	"	4	"	"	between 5,000 - 7,000 words	
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	about 7,000 words	
"	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	10,000 "

Interviews revealed that essays were generally related to theoretical issues and not orientated towards application to individual or small group situations.

Examinations of various lengths were held at 6 colleges. Sometimes they were linked to assessable essay work sometimes not. As most colleges had examinations or longer and numerically larger essay assignments in other parts of the college curriculum pastoral studies may well have been seen as of lesser importance than the other disciplines. Unsought comments to this effect were made by 7 directors.

iv) Essays relating to Old Age

Directors found it difficult to recall whether or not students had referred to elderly people in their essay work. This was not surprising because essays and assignments were promptly returned to students after marking and directors were generally evaluating whether students had produced work of the required standard and had a general grasp of their subject. They were less concerned with detailed content.

There was a discrepancy between the Anglican college directors estimation of a total of 10 or 12 GME assignments and the external GME examiner's estimate of 20 to 30 assignments on ageing during the academic year 1982/3.

Where directors did remember essays about ageing, they said that they tended to generally reflect the teaching points given in college. However specific essay topics on ageing were required at 11 colleges (of which 9 colleges were in 2 federations). There were therefore only 4 essay titles in all. The essay titles were:

'It is impossible to live through the evening of life with the programmes appropriate to the morning since what had great importance then will have little now and the truth of the morning will be the error of the evening.'

This is, I understand, a quotation from one of Jung's works and was set in connection with the human growth and development course which was based primarily on the development theories of Freud and Jung.

This essay was mandatory for all students as was another 'Old age has been described simply as a time of regret. Can it be anything else.' This was a federation essay and all but one director reported that the points made were predominately negative. The one dissenting director was more acutely aware of older people and at many points in the students' training raised issues relating to ageing. This college was also responsible for a local church with a high proportion of elderly people and therefore students had more contact with elderly people than at other colleges.

The third major essay title was 'What aims, attitudes and spiritual problems might I have as a pastor caring for the elderly?' This was one essay from a choice of six.

Directors felt that it was chosen less frequently than some others and students generally concentrated on issues raised by authors of books on their reading lists.

At another college the essay, which was one of a choice of ten was; 'How can the local church support the elderly in the community?' The director remarked that students with a practical orientation tended to choose this subject and concentrated on the facilities and services that were needed by frail people. As will be seen later in this study the stress during courses was on frailty rather than ageing per se.

It so happened that at one college I arrived on the day that assignments were returned from the GME examiner. Three students had chosen elderly people. Their subjects were similar, broad ranging and generally presented a negative picture of old age.

e) Bibliographies

Unfortunately not all colleges were able to provide reading lists for all subjects and at other colleges a bibliography spanning several subjects was issued. This was particularly true of specialist subjects like ageing when it might provide information for a variety of courses. For example Steer (1966) is quoted a number of times in this study. His work covers psychological ageing, common social problems of old age, sick visiting, sacraments and the involvement of the laity in visiting elderly people.

The other complicating factor in assessing the value of bibliographies was that there was no means of knowing whether students at many of the colleges even read the books. In many cases there was no need for them to do so unless they tackled an essay subject involving consideration of elderly people.

However, even taking those factors into account the number of recommended books containing references to ageing or wholly concerned with ageing were small.

i) Books about Ageing

Altogether over 800 different books covering pastoral studies, ethics, spirituality, worship and sermons were listed. When I had excluded those which could not even remotely contain references to elderly people I had a list of some 600 books. Only 16 books were wholly concerned with ageing and these were used in a total of 15 colleges. The maximum recommended at any one college was seven and in this case the college required an essay on ageing.

The books most frequently referred to were Bromley (1966 and 1974) eleven times and Steer (1966) eight times. This is in itself disturbing because both contain a lot of out of date information and present an unnecessarily negative picture of ageing. Since 1974 substantial amounts of research have been undertaken and this has encouraged different attitudes to old age to emerge. Two examples must suffice. 1) Disengagement. Bromley (1966) states

'one of the more obvious features of maturity and old age is a systematic reduction in the amount of social interaction.' (page 68)

Abrams (1978) found that elderly people who were most well adjusted were those who continued to be integrated into society. Secondly, intelligence, Bromley spends some 70 pages discussing the evidence for intellectual decline through the use of various research data that people's intelligence declines with age. As will be shown in Chapter 7 Section IV this has proved to be an exaggerated conclusion reached because of the use of inappropriate methodology.

Steer, too, although accurate at the time it was written now includes a lot of disproved assumptions and inaccurate data. For example there is a whole chapter on statutory and voluntary service provision which is out of date in respect of the terminology used (e.g. Medical Officer of Health ceased to exist in 1974 page 74; National Assistance became Supplementary Benefit in 1966). As will be shown later in the study, teaching about health and welfare services was very limited and students will be confused by the advice given by Steer on these matters.

Inevitably similar remarks can be made about other books published in the early 1970s and which are used by colleges (e.g. Chown 1972, Bergman 1972, Hyams 1972, Hiltner 1975). Two other books of a rather different kind were used - Tournier (1972) at five colleges and Nouwen and Gaffney (1976) at two colleges. Tournier writes from the psycho-dynamic perspective but modifies it because Tournier himself is elderly and has discovered both for himself and for his patients that life in old age has exciting possibilities. Nouwen and Gaffney use as their symbol a wheel. 'Ageing is the turning of the wheel, the gradual fulfilment of the life cycle...' (dustcover). They also say,

'care for the ageing means a persistent refusal to attach any kind of ultimate significance to grades, degrees, positions, promotions or rewards and the courageous effort to keep men and women in contact with their inner self, where they can experience their own solitude and silence as potential recipients of light.' (p.137)

The value of both Tournier and Nouwen et al is that their approach is significantly different to other literature on ageing. Nouwen and Gaffney's work is essentially a combination of Jungian psychology and Christian mysticism and Tournier although rarely referring to religion writes with an awareness of the dimension of the 'spirit'.

More recent books used included Blythe (1979) at five colleges Kastenbaum (1979) at two colleges. Blythe could usefully be used much more extensively as the work is the result of Blythe's interviews with a lot of elderly people from a variety of backgrounds. Kastenbaum, in my opinion, is probably the most stimulating general book written about old age. He never seeks to minimise the losses and suffering of old age but balances it by pointing out the opportunities and successes that come with age.

However it would be wrong for me to conclude that students could only gain information on ageing from books written solely about this age group. With extensive reading lists it was possible that they would learn through references in other general text books. This is considered in the next section.

ii) References to Ageing in General Textbooks

Many colleges sought to provide purely theoretical material to students and therefore I was interested to identify the extent to which students learnt about aspects of ageing when studying other subjects. I identified some 600 possible (although many very unlikely) books. It proved impossible to check some 270 of them as they did not appear in the library catalogues of Southampton or London Universities, London School of Economics or King's College London. As the likelihood of references were fairly remote and none were used in more than one college or federation I did not feel justified in ordering them through the inter-library loan system. In respect of the remaining books I was finally able to identify 49 references to ageing. Twenty seven of these were in books concerned with ethics and in every instance the references to elderly people were concerned with euthanasia. In most cases it was not more than a paragraph equating the dilemmas of terminating the life of a badly handicapped new born baby with the dilemma of whether to prolong the life of an elderly person with very severe mental deterioration. Two books did consider the issue in more detail. Ramsey (1978) considered the dilemma of the use of limited intensive care resources, questioned whether society has a right to distinguish between medical and environmental neglect and dealt in detail with the current legal position. McQuarrie (1967) summarises the different cultural approaches to old people. For example in primitive societies they are sometimes killed or terminate their own lives; in Hebrew society old people are treated with respect; in agricultural communities they are offered an appropriate role. He also itemises what he considers

elderly people especially need and assumes that although at 65 people will need little support there will be a gradual increase thereafter in the amount of support they need. None of the books dealt with ethical issues relating to retirement, grandparent roles, quality of 'normal' life, or rights and responsibilities of people in old age. Sadly the assumption that students would gain from their ethics reading is that old age equals decrepitude.

The reading lists for human growth and development were dominated by child psychology with a strong bias towards Freudian theories of development. As will be discussed in the next chapter text books providing life span development models (and available in English) are few and mainly American in origin. Yet the way human growth and development teaching was organised in the majority of colleges one was lead to assume that an integrated perspective was possible

The book most used to elucidate the psycho-dynamic life span development hypothesis was Erikson (1965) at nine colleges. I have been unable to identify any research material that has sought to prove or disprove his hypothesis. However 14 American books which appeared on college reading lists on psychology use his model to provide a life span development approach. Many of the writers tried to broaden his concept (or referred to alternative models) but again they did not provide any independent research data to validate their hypotheses (e.g. Lidz 1976, Zimbardo 1979, Hilgard 1979).

These American books generally consider psychology in its widest context including the various models of human behaviour and their assumptions, learning and cognition, biological foundations, motivation, personal and clinical psychology and social psychology. The attitudes in the books reflect the current views at the date the book was written or revised.

In these books elderly people are also considered in the sections relating to cognition and learning and biological foundations.

However a selection of one or more of these books appeared only on three college reading lists.

Books about counselling and the family formed a significant part of reading lists but only two made any reference to elderly people, even in the context of grandparenthood, which may of course have commenced long before old age is reached. One book on marital pathology (Dominian 1979) used at one college took the third phase of marriage as spanning the period aged 50 to death. It highlights accumulated unresolved problems from earlier in marriage, conflict over caring for aged parents, sex and impotency.

There were few books on mental health and illness except for those, which were prolific on psycho-dynamic and non-directive counselling. These of course provided extensive references to neurotic and other disturbed behaviour. However apart from references to depression (and this included the odd reference to elderly people in two books) - and its treatment by counselling methods - references to commonly defined mental illnesses rarely appeared. No books about mental illness in old age appeared on reading lists, (although mention of mental illness did appear in the books exclusively concerned with old age). One book which appeared on four college reading lists devoted one chapter to mental illness in old age. (Bashford 1968). Detailed research undertaken since that date has drastically modified the views expressed therein. The other serious issue regarding its use is that the title 'The Care of the Aged' infers, and the reader can easily be encouraged to assume, that mental illness is the expectation of old age. No other chapters in the book even refer to old age. Another book on suicide (Stengel 1964) used at one college has a passing reference to suicide in old age but nothing more.

Sociologically related subjects were much less commonly found on reading lists but I identified two books with references to social needs in old age. One was used at two colleges, and the other at only one. Both inevitably focussed on the problems - poor housing, finance, health and social services.

#### V. SUMMARY

Thirty-one out of 33 colleges agreed to co-operate in the study. The name given to the practical application of theology in colleges

was in 15 cases pastoral studies, 11 cases pastoral theology, 1 case pastoralia. In the remaining 4 colleges there was no identifying generic title.

Anglican colleges followed the ACCM requirements on external assessment whilst all the other denominations had internal assessment of pastoral studies.

Twenty-one colleges assessed their pastoral studies teaching as a Pass degree standard or above. Five of the other 10 colleges ran totally non-assessable courses and the remaining 5 colleges worked on the principle of continuous individual assessment.

Essays and assignments varied in length but the majority did not exceed 4,000 words. Examinations, of varying lengths, were held at 6 colleges. Very few references to elderly people appeared on reading lists. Sixteen books on ageing appeared on 15 college lists. A further 46 references were found in general text books.

CHAPTER 6RESPONDENTS VIEWS OF OLD AGE1. INTERVIEWS WITH THE DIRECTORSa) Introduction

Responses in this section are based on information from 30 directors.

It was important to clarify at the commencement of the interview the words that directors used in regard to older people; the age or the event that they had in mind and the characteristics they held to be relevant with this age group as this would influence the content, extent and assumptions they made in their teaching. Four direct questions were asked and then checked for any variations. (See Appendix II) After that people were asked to abbreviate the descriptions of three people of different ages and with different characteristics.

Most directors found the questions very difficult to answer. I believe there were four reasons for this. In a church setting 1) neither age nor 2) socially determined events like retirement, have a direct relevance. People can continue to do the same things. They may have time to do more but this can equally be true of people whose children have left home, and of older unemployed people. 3) The chronological age of the person may be unknown. The people I interviewed appeared unlikely to retire within the next few years and any way retirement age for people employed by churches varies and is not related to the state retirement age. 4) There is also a right stress on individuality and individual ageing. For these reasons the answers to the questions which asked for abbreviated descriptions assumed major importance as a determinant of the directors' views on ageing and we will return to this a little later.

b) The directors views on the commencement of old age

After thought eleven directors decided that for teaching purposes they probably considered old age to start at 65 and a further seven felt that the age was 60. Only one person differentiated between men and women and he took the statutory retirement ages of 65 and 60. One person considered the age as 55 because 'that is when the losses begin' and another as those people aged 45+ because of the growing

number of unemployed people over this age who will not work again. One director suggested 30 as that was older than the oldest student. The other director considered the age as 70 because he said 'that is often when things begin to change - bereavement, ill-health etc.' Seven directors were unable to specify an age even after thought. This included 4 directors who saw lack of full-time work in late adulthood as the onset of old age, and 2 directors who said that old age receded with their advancing age! A director who was also a sociologist encapsulated what I feel many directors were trying to express. He said,

'whilst there is economic ageing which the state defines, there is also psychological ageing, sociological ageing and biological ageing. All occur at different ages for each individual and at different ages for different individuals. All are aspects of the total picture and none defines the meaning of personhood for old or young.'

c) Words used to describe people over 60 and 65

As far as possible during the interview I wanted to adopt the term for 'retired people' with which respondents were most familiar - hence the reason for asking the directors which words they used. In the event many could not identify any particular words. This was confirmed as the interview progresses and I noticed that they tended to use a number of different words - elderly person, the elderly, older people, the aged being the most common. However, individual directors also said that they used the following - geriatrics, senior citizens, VIPs, old dears, retired, OAP. Four of the 5 directors who distinguished between different age groups in retirement used the following:- younger aged for the 65+ and older aged for 80+; younger oldies and older oldies; young housebound, old housebound, old for 60+ and elderly for 75+. However 'the elderly' was mentioned as an option by 7 directors, 'old people' by 3 directors and 'the aged' by 2 directors. In all 18 different words suggested.

d) Characteristics of ageing as perceived by the directors

So it is against the background of the first 2 questions that I now consider the directors' views on the characteristics of old age that they put across in their teaching.

Not all respondents were willing and able to talk about their views, nine were reluctant to categorise and the tenth felt that though he would not categorise elderly people the students would do so because they would be more conscious of their presence in the congregation. Of those who answered the question twelve saw old age - at what ever age it commenced - as consisting of wholly negative characteristics. The list makes bleak reading:

'debilitation';  
 'no-one to look after them and they can't look after themselves';  
 'they were dependent';  
 'it is loss and coping with loss in life. I know everyone does but I'm thinking of people who have to cope with suffering and the finiteness of life that younger people don't have to face';  
 'they are lonely and depressed';  
 'the can't achieve by 'doing"';  
 'it is all handicaps - if they are not handicapped they are not old';  
 'deafness';  
 'they have slowed down physically and mentally. They are more dependent';  
 'it is not so much physical age as lack of capacity for life. We have some people here who are old at 21.'

Eight directors saw old age both positively and negatively,

'it is accepting your limitations and the things that you would like to have achieved and won't, and then growing to a new freedom';  
 'in old age there are both difficulties and opportunities e.g. lack of mobility, adjustment to change, health, eyes and ears deteriorate, but there are increased leisure opportunities, it is easier to relate to children because there are no responsibilities. There is experience and spiritual depth. Ministry to the aged is tapping their ministry, not just ministering to them';  
 '....they have the ministry of prayer even if they aren't active..... Old women are in touch with the young and therefore a lot is learned between the generations.'

One director, with a course entitled Doctrine and Ministry commenced the first session by asking students to draw a thumbnail sketch of a person who they found difficult to handle.

'Some choose someone of 60, some choose someone of 90 so we start from there. In an ageing society people are living longer and there is the enormous burden of ageing. It seems difficult for young people to grasp that there is a whole generation in ageing'.

It is interesting that of the 8 directors who recognised both positive and negative aspects of ageing 7 frequently referred to elderly people during the teaching on a variety of courses and topics.

e) Words used to describe people aged 50 - 65

The question about the terms used in teaching to describe people 50 - 65 was asked because I wanted to compare the terminology that was used in relation to different age groups. (These questions were not asked of directors giving the ages of 30 and 45 as the onset of old age). In the event 'middle age' (my term) was seen as continuing until the onset of old age. Eighteen used the terms middle aged or late middle aged. Six directors had no words and 5 gave no teaching about this age group. The director who organised his teaching by considered people in 10 year age bands said he had no terminology. Another referred to this age group as 'people of my sort of an age' and another used the term mid-life.

f) The Thumbnail Sketches

In an attempt to clarify both the terms used in respect of old age and to identify the inferences behind them, I produced thumbnail sketches of three people and asked directors how, in class, they would abbreviate them. They were given in the following order and the descriptions were 1) a 75 year old man confined to a wheelchair after a stroke; 2) An 80 year old woman who is the efficient secretary to the Women's Fellowship. (The title of the Women's Group was varied according to the denomination e.g. Mother's Union, Guild of Mary). 3) A 68 year old wife of the Church Minister (or housekeeper with R.C. directors). In these questions I was endeavouring to check out both the validity of earlier answers and also identify which words and therefore the images behind the words about old age which came most readily to the directors' minds. Thirteen directors said that they would give each person a name and pick out the different things they wished to emphasise as they discussed the case study. The other 17 respondents revealed striking contrasts in their answers to the different questions.

In reply to the abbreviation of a 75 year old man confined to a wheelchair after a stroke 14 of the 17 directors who did not use a name said they would either not abbreviate or would say something similar to an 'elderly handicapped man'. Only 3 felt they would not refer either to his age or the fact that he was elderly. One chose to say 'your member', another 'handicapped man', and the third interestingly abbreviated it to a 'housebound widower'

although neither facts had been included in the original statement!

The answers to question 2 were equally interesting. The 80 year old efficient secretary of the Women's Fellowship was abbreviated in 13 instances to words like 'a lively old girl'; 'remarkably sprightly old lady'; 'active 80 year old'; 'remarkable octogenarian'; 'very active elderly person'; 'bright lively 80 year old'. Nine of these 13 directors had previously said that they did not categorise people! One other director said that he might call her active and alert or he might call her unwilling to let go.

Two of the remaining 3 directors were more factual but both drew attention to her age whilst the remaining director gave her a name.

In response to sketch number 3 - a 68 year old wife of the church minister - all the directors except one would just call her the vicar's /minister's/pastor's wife according to their denominational terminology. The exception was the Salvation Army director who responded with Salvation Army Officer as all officers' wives are also officers in their own right. Not a single director gave a reply that would give any indication of age even though 17 or the 19 respondents not using a name gave an age below 68 as the onset of old age!

The responses to these last 3 questions and their lack of consistency with the earlier answers show the lack of consistency in views on ageing to which we are all prone. With hindsight it would have been interesting to explore this area in more depth as it may well have shown up more evidence of stereotyping.

g) Summary of the second section of the interview

Table 11: Age of onset of old age as perceived by the directors of pastoral studies

19 directors at aged 60 and above

4 " " lack of full-time work in late adulthood

1 " " aged 45 because of increasing likelihood of redundancy after this age

1 " " aged 30 as all the students were below this age

1 " " aged 55

1 " " aged 70

Apart from the directors recorded in Table 11, 3 directors were unable to give an age as the onset of old age but related it to loss or handicap. Whilst recognising an age for the onset of old age 5 directors categorised in one way or another according to age groups, e.g. 1 director took the whole of life in 10 year bands.

There was no unanimity in the words used to describe people over 65. 18 different words were suggested with 'the elderly' being suggested by 7 directors, 'older people' by 3 directors, and 'the aged' by 2 directors.

Many directors stressed the individuality of the ageing process and 10 felt completely unable to suggest specific characteristics. A further 12 directors saw ageing as a wholly negative process. Eight directors identified both positive and negative features. The answers of individual directors to these two questions were not consistent with the answers given to the abbreviated descriptions. The 13 directors who gave a name to the person in the case study had responded in a whole variety of ways to the previous questions. Neither did the remaining 17 directors provide answers consistent with any previous category of response.

## II. POSTAL RESPONDENTS

### a) Introduction

The directors of pastoral studies arranged for some individual subjects to be taught by visiting specialist lecturers and where they referred to elderly people I wished to know, not only what was taught, but also the views on ageing that respondents were likely to impart to students. Elderly people were also sometimes referred to in other college syllabi e.g. ethics, worship, and postal questionnaires were sent to those college lecturers. Forty-eight questionnaires (see Appendices III and IV ) were sent and even after two further reminders only 35 replies were received. Five of these 35 respondents did not refer to ageing or elderly people in their courses so their forms have been excluded from the analysis. A further person refused to complete the questionnaire so the documentation refers to the replies received from 29 people.

Replies were not received from 5 people teaching human growth and development at 7 colleges, 3 people teaching sociologically related subjects, 3 people teaching counselling and 2 people teaching ethics. In respect of 5 of these non-respondents the directors indicated that they should have been considering elderly people as a specific part of their teaching. This is therefore a serious gap in the documentation as students at 7 of the colleges concerned received little or no other teaching on ageing during their training.

In Section b) of this section I analyse the answers to 3 questions which were the same as those asked of pastoral studies directors. 1) the age or event which postal respondents identified as the commencement of old age; 2) whether or not they differentiated between men and women and 3) the characteristics they had in mind when teaching about old people.

b) Postal respondents' views on the commencement of old age

Twelve of the 29 respondents said that old age commenced at 65 and a further 6 said that it commenced with retirement. One person said that it commenced at 60 and 2 people quoting Jung said that it commenced at 45, another said 55 and someone said 75. Five people felt that becoming old was a very individual experience and that it was not age related. Five people also qualified their initial reply; two saying that they also linked old age with bereavement and the other 3, who had seen retirement as the onset of old age, as the beginning of infirmity and dependency. None differentiated between men and women although one person pointed out that their statutory retirement ages are different. Five respondents drew attention to the different implications of retirement, widowhood and the longer life expectation for women.

c) Characteristics of ageing as perceived by postal respondents

As with the directors' responses to this question so the postal respondents reflected a predominately negative view. Eleven of the respondents used words like loneliness, need of care, degeneration and dependency, losses, forgetfulness, isolation and all but one of these respondents saw the onset of old age as 65 or retirement! A further 3 began referring to the negative aspects but then went on to point out that elderly people still have much

to offer and should be a valued part of society, a theme also referred to by 2 other respondents who stressed in their teaching that the majority of the negative aspects of old age are imposed by society who over stress work, who force old people to live on low incomes and who make it difficult for them to be fully integrated into society. However, 3 people responded with more 'open ended' phrases, for example 'handling dependency with dignity', the challenge of physical and sensory changes, patterns of interaction, sharing gifts and 'learned' skills. Ten said that they had no particular characteristics in mind when teaching about elderly people. In each of these cases the respondent only referred to elderly people briefly in their teaching and were only using them as illustrations for general principles.

d) Comments about postal respondents' perceptions of ageing

The responses to these 3 questions are disturbing. A minority of respondents saw the positive possibilities of old age but the majority saw old age as equalling loss and frailty. Whilst respondents acknowledged that old people should be valued they frequently seemed to feel that they had to say it rather than that they were convinced that this was so, and knew how to reflect it in their teaching. This means that unconsciously students absorbed a negative view of ageing even if an explicitly positive view of ageing was encouraged. In 12 instances involving 17 colleges they received explicitly negative teaching about old age. The postal respondents indicated that in only 3 instances involving 6 colleges would the general experiences of old age be approached in teaching as challenges. Yet as surveys of old people have shown (e.g. Abrams 1978 and 1980 and Hunt 1978) bereavement, retirement, reduced income, physical frailty and the other experiences of old age are accepted as challenges and the vast majority of elderly people do adjust successfully and retain well integrated personalities throughout their lives.

III. THE NEXT SIX CHAPTERS

Table 12 on page 73 shows the distribution of references to ageing made at different colleges. Readers may find it helpful to refer to this as they read the various chapters. Colleges, as has previously been noted do not necessarily order their syllabi in

Table: 12

Teaching about Ageing Undertaken in Different Courses in the Theological College Curriculum

College	1*	2*	3	4*	5*	6*	7*	8*	9	10	11 <sup>1</sup>	12	13	14	15	16	17*	18	19	20 <sup>4</sup>	21	22 <sup>1</sup>	23	24	25*	26	27	28	29	30*	31	32 <sup>2</sup>	33 <sup>3</sup>
Human Growth & Development	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Social Aspects & Ethics	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Worship (inc. Sermons)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Evangelism											x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Spirituality	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
O.P. with gifts	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Adult Education	x	x									x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Mental Health & Illness	x			x			x			x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Sick Visiting	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
Counselling	x															x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Death, Dying & Bereavement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				

Notes and Comments on Table 11

\* These colleges gave quantitatively more time and attention to ageing than other colleges

1 These colleges each mounted a special 1 hour x 10 session course on ageing for all students

2 This college refused an interview but students were involved in a federation Human Growth and Development course

3 This college refused an interview

4 This college had totally integrated pastoral studies

The table does not quantify time spent on ageing because subjects were allocated to different courses at different colleges. Some colleges also paid greater attention to integrated teaching than did others.

the same way as I have categorised their responses. This has meant that I have been unable to quantify accurately the time spent on ageing at every college. In the circumstances it seemed better not to try to estimate the amount. This explains why certain colleges which appear to refer to ageing under several heading have not been asterisked whereas other colleges providing a narrow range of information have been. The asterisked colleges, however, gave significantly greater depth and time to their limited input. The division between those colleges who are asterisked and those who are not is based partly on my subjective impressions and partly on director's estimates of the time they spent on individual references to elderly people. However there was a significant gap between the two groups in terms of time allocations and I had no difficulty in allocating individual colleges to an appropriate group. Throughout the next four chapters some 90% of the documentation and comment has been obtained from the colleges which have been asterisked.

The next five chapters will review the explicit teaching that students receive about ageing. They record the main teaching areas of psychological development, the social aspects of ageing and spirituality in old age. After that there is chapter reviewing the specific needs of frail, sick or dying elderly people. Finally, there is a chapter reviewing the placements organised for students.

## CHAPTER 7

### PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN OLD AGE

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Gerontology in bridging the disciplines of psychology and sociology has not tried to delineate the boundaries between the two disciplines except when undertaking specific pieces of research. As a result many books, particularly those written for the general reader or as an introductory text for professional students weave their different perspectives together. On the other hand far less work has been undertaken by British psychologists in understanding and documenting old age within the context of individual life span development. Sociologists, too, although having more interest in old age rarely analyse data relating to elderly people. It was left to Age Concern to extract, from the general body of research, data which they published over five years in their series 'Profiles of the Elderly'. (Abrams 1977, Owen 1977, Kellaher 1977, Robson 1978, Robson 1980, Ward 1981) The lack of integration between psychology and gerontology made it difficult for people to provide coherent detailed teaching about human growth and development across the life span.

Another factor which created problems for some ministerial students was the ACCM syllabus (see Appendix I) which lists old age under human growth and development but says including 'social aspects'. This chapter must therefore be considered carefully alongside the next chapter on the social aspects of ageing.

However, as far as possible, in this chapter I consider the teaching that is given on the individual's response to opportunities and problems e.g. how an individual may be expected to react to retirement. In the next chapter I shall look at ageing from society's viewpoint e.g. how society views retired people and how this impinges on the individual's view of himself.

#### II. STRUCTURE OF HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT TEACHING

The documentation in this section was based on 32 colleges and includes the college referred to in Chapter 5 Section III where an interview was refused.

Two colleges did not have any teaching on human growth and development and a further two colleges concentrated solely on childhood development.

One R.C. college provided no subject teaching in pastoral studies (except for an advanced counselling course using Egan's methods in the 5th year) but instead integrated all teaching with secular placements. He said,

'We get the names from all sorts of people. The people are not necessarily housebound but they all need help of some kind - generally because they are lonely.'

The aim is to challenge the students to relate to people who are not their family or friends. (Note most of the students are only 18) We want them to feel what it is like to walk up the path; how to enter the world of the elderly because most of the people won't be R.C. The students reflect on how to get people to talk, how to identify needs, (but we are very careful not to let them do things for people - they must help people do things for themselves if people even want their needs met - sometimes they don't).

Fairly early on, when it seems right my brother-in-law who is a social worker with the deaf comes and gives a lecture about law, finance, social services etc. We also get someone from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to speak.

When they are visiting we encourage them to watch how the tea is made. How they walk. If they go to hospital, how they feel about going there. Do the people repeat themselves? If so, how?

At some point bereavement comes up. We look at it not only in terms of death, but of retirement, redundancy, divorce etc. etc. The different stages.

If a student has a stalemate with a person then very occasionally we do a role play to try and work out a solution.

They also do meals-on-wheels, put on parties at college, others go out to Christmas parties. They go to funerals with people. Of course they go to the funerals of the person they are visiting when they die.

We emphasise confidentiality. Students must not talk about people outside the discussion sessions nor must they talk about things that happen in discussion sessions outside their group.

We don't do pastoral theology by subject. We take people where they are and work from that. Over 6 years I am sure that we cover most things like human growth and development, education, bereavement, families both in terms of psychology and sociology, the kinds of service the state provides etc. but it comes up naturally because it is linked to what the students are doing in their half-day placements each week. Even things like counselling, listening, looking, sharing cups of tea come up naturally. I make sure they do.'

This form of teaching whilst being the most natural is also the most demanding because the pastoral studies director himself must have not only a wide range of knowledge but also the skill to turn that knowledge into suitable learning media, and that in turn must be based on his own ability to carry out the skills in practice. The director involved must be exceptional as he integrated all the sociology and psychology related subjects across the whole age spectrum and across all the students' various types of placement, with individuals, in schools, youth clubs, hospital, prison and parish groups.

One further college had no formal human growth and development teaching but covered the psychology of old age in a course about ministry, health and healing.

The remaining 27 colleges were involved in providing explicit teaching on human growth and development across the age range although the subject could be subsumed under a more general heading e.g. pastoral counselling. In all but one case it was undertaken by a visiting tutor. In 18 of the colleges (apart from minor references) all teaching about ageing and elderly people was contained within that one course. The length of time that they allocated (including the social aspects of ageing referred to earlier) varied from half an hour to three hours. I estimate that their average was just over one hour.

At the remaining 13 colleges (excluding the college for which I had incomplete data as an interview was refused) ageing from the viewpoint of the individual was considered not only in the human growth and development course but also at other points in pastoral studies teaching, e.g. the practical implications of the minister providing help. In these cases it became difficult to estimate the total time spent on individual aspects of ageing. This in itself is interesting in that it reflected attempts by directors to integrate what was basically a fragmented syllabus. Their methods varied.

One R.C. college arranged individual tutorials with students to enable them to relate human growth and development theory to the individuals and homes they were visiting as part of their practical experience.

Three colleges had courses which sought to provide a practical theological framework to the human sciences courses and in these attention was paid to old people. Each used a different method and each had different aims. Their various comments to me were,

'We do one session on middle age when we look at losses and gains and we do the same thing again in ageing. They find that the list does not vary much. They look at the positive aspects (in order to counterbalance the hospital course). They recognise the tensions between the positives and the negatives. They look at what it feels like. They recognise that at 80 I am still the same person with both young and old ideas. What you are depends on what you were, what you have become. I encourage them to draw on their own experience e.g. lively but in a wheelchair; dead although active. The effects of senility and therefore what constitutes me. They have discovered from their hospital experience that some people are agile whilst others are 'non persons' and therefore where is God with those who are senile?....

We put up what we think are the gains and losses in old age. We draw on Bromley (1974) and Blythe (1981). The facts from -----'s session are drawn on. They divide into groups of eight (who stay the same throughout the course) and without a tutor. We are anxious that it should be theologically based. Some find it very difficult and will only provide a maintenance ministry. We are needing people who are flexible. People who ask 'What is God about?'. It is very difficult for the fundamentalist. There is a tension between theology, spirituality and the world. Students think they know what it is about. They want the how. We keep on saying to them 'Don't make the leap'. If the theology is wrong then the how will be wrong. Are we to provide what the consumer wants? How does that compare with what the church believes and what the Bible says?'

and

'We look at birth, teens, stages of life - dying. But it is not academic. It is about what it means to accompany a person through those stages and therefore it involves them in going and sitting in a baby clinic, and old people's club. When they come back we deal with the questions which come up.....

The balance is to affirm the elderly, but it needs drawing out of the students. They have to gather a resource file of all kinds - particularly of agencies so that they can see themselves in terms of a broader caring network. The aim is to deepen awareness. Growing old has potential and there can be development of skills.'

and

'I try to get them to empathise. Which of the pictures of old age do they like and which don't they like? They look at old age in age bands. They sort out what are the characteristics of these different ages and what are the special issues e.g. physical impairment, spirituality etc. and their potential. We work out what part the Gospel plays and how it is heard and what is most appropriate.'

We consider the reactions of the minister and the church to old people and what are their roles. As there are a plurality of models we help them to think what they are. For example: 99% of funerals are taken by the minister but they are fools if they think pastoral care stops there. I am perpetually emphasising that it is ministry with not for people.'

Two colleges had in addition to the human growth and development course ten hours further teaching entirely devoted to elderly people. Within these courses more detailed consideration was given to the psychology of ageing although the main emphasis was on the practical aspects of caring for elderly people in parishes and as such many of the directors' comments will arise in later chapters.

What is particularly interesting is that 5 colleges who augmented human growth and development course teaching belonged to groups of colleges providing pastoral studies teaching on a federal basis. The pattern of supplementation is shown in Table 13. Except at one college I didn't unfortunately ask which topics were supplemented so I did not enquire how individual colleges had arrived at their decisions. However, I certainly identified some directors as being less happy than others with federation courses.

Table 13: Supplementary Human Growth and Development Teaching in the Four Federations

	% of colleges supplementing h.g. & d. courses	% of colleges not supplementing h.g. & d. courses
Federation 1	50%	50%
Federation 2	25%	75%
Federation 3	0%	100%
Federation 4	75%	25%

Note: h.g. & d. is human growth and development.

The director from whom I did gain supplementary material allocated a further three-hour teaching period. He divided the time between the 'young old' and the 'old old'. Case studies from Blythe (1981) were used and the aim was to counter the federation course's negative orientation and to explode the myths about sexual loss, apathy and disengagement. Students considered the personal qualities of wisdom, love, understanding and how old people frequently had an ability to listen.

### III. LIFE SPAN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH IN COLLEGE TEACHING

Developmental psychologists have generally concentrated on the psychological development of young people and different psychologists have concentrated on middle age or old age.

An exception was Erikson who sought to develop a life span developmental model and proposed Ego Integrity v. Despair as the new major developmental task of old age (1965 p 259-261). However, generally biological, psychological and social science literature in the English language does not contain a systematic conception of the life cycle and its components. (Levinson 1978 p.5). The split in the psychology focus may have influenced tutors in designating retirement as the onset of old age. What is said is that 15 tutors wrote 'the problem of retirement'. Only one wrote 'the opportunities of retirement'. No-one referred to it even in a neutral way, for example using words like adjustment, stress, challenge. The negative bias may reflect the fact that most people teaching human growth and development had a background in clinical psychology, social case work or psychotherapy and therefore were 'problem' and psycho-dynamically orientated rather than concerned with normality. Another possible reason was tutors unconscious acceptance of the supremacy of work over leisure and their image of retirement as one of loss - loss of work, loss of family, loss of spouse, loss of friends.

To identify retirement primarily in terms of loss results in an individual interpreting their new life as being of less value than their previous one. To deny that there are losses connected with retirement would be foolish - most people have to manage on a reduced income (Jordan 1978 p. 170); there is the loss of intimate

daily contact with work mates; there is the loss of activities imposed by others for 8 or 10 hours per day, 5 days per week. If the person has put all their personal values into work there can be a loss of self esteem. Many people will see their retirement as a loss of status because society frequently measures a person by the status of the job they have (e.g. many surveys evaluate data according to the occupational group of the respondents). But losses may be outstripped by the gains. The drudgery of a job is exchanged for the freedom to choose what time to get up, how to spend the day, with whom to spend it.

Retirement demands that a person adjust to change, change of role, change of status, to draw on inner resources of self-motivation and freedom, to have the ability to face unfulfilled achievements (if any) and to face unpleasant or distressing thoughts and feelings (Sofer 1970 quoted by Slater 1979 p. 87 who identified work as providing the means by which people ward off thoughts or feelings which are distressing).

The extent to which an individual can succeed in meeting the challenge of retirement determines the level of their maturity in old age. The proof of people's ability to meet the enormous psychological adjustment is confirmed by the high self-adjustment scores documented, for example in Abram's survey (1978 p.44-53).

What was not clear from my respondents (all but one of whom had been communicated with by post) was the extent to which they saw early life experiences affecting people's adjustment to retirement and the life events of old age. Theoretically, given the Freudian and Jungian bias of many of the respondents apparent from their course outlines, they should have continued to use this model. In practice, there were few life span development books on the reading lists from the colleges (except in one instance) and the almost total lack of reference to a biographical approach to elderly people leads me to feel that the tutors looked at old age outside the context of earlier life experience. (As for that matter do most gerontologists). This feeling was reinforced by finding only one respondent who referred to the importance of reminiscence in old age. However four respondents obviously resented my questionnaires and interpreted it (wrongly) as my

seeking to consider old people as a group. They rightly stressed the need to recognise that each person reaches old age with a unique blend of personal attributes and characteristics moulded by a unique experience of life.

One respondent said,

'Please do not detach teaching about elderly people from the development of the person. Age is such a highly individual experience. I realise that all those social policies are important - and broad medical knowledge - but contented elderly people in parishes seem to be independent of most 'policies' and procedures. Ministers should understand that the miserable unhappy elderly person, for instance, is rarely so, just because of age but it is simply that when they were younger these features were less noticeable. Social efforts matter but the minister's liking for (or if impossible respect for) that older person has a marvellous effect and contributes to the interest of the ministry.'

Significantly he was the only respondent providing a reading list whose main texts were based on the theory of life span development. Sadly though the previous comments have to be set against his reply to another question,

'Students who have a pleasant experience of grandparents talk throughout the course about historical views of e.g. child-rearing, marriage etc. Older people in parish work seem less interesting to them at this neophytic stage of ministry.'

Had he ensured that all students, (and particularly those with a previously negative experience of elderly people) discovered the excitement of knowing normal older people then work with them would not have seemed less interesting. Students would also have been enabled to realise how valuable their encouragement could be to someone, who although well integrated, was experiencing the need to adjust to a changed situation such as living alone after 40 or 50 years of marriage and for whom loneliness is inevitable during the period of adjustment (e.g. Mrs. Marshall in Tunstall 1966 p.34).

#### IV. TEACHING ON LEARNING IN OLD AGE

Although there was no evidence of the teaching of cognitive approaches to human growth and development in the outlines which I obtained from the theological colleges there was usually, although not invariably, mention of an education course. In some cases there were specific indications that the course was concerned with the way children learn either in school or in the church. In

other instances the title was more vague. Given that ministers are involved in teaching adults not only through sermons but in more informal ways through Bible study groups or church fellowships of various kinds, it seems reasonable that students should receive an understanding of how adults learn. In the event 8 directors pointed out that as they were teaching adults no formal course was required as students would learn through their own college experience. However, one director said,

'Somewhere in their 40's their arteries begin to harden and they are not able to accept new ideas. The 30's are best, the 20's less so. In the 50's they are much more rigid without realising it. I do think that people beyond 40 find it difficult to shift their standpoint although they think that they are open. It is true of the staff group, but as we all hold different views, we have 5 closed minds for the students to choose from.'

Although investigating the teaching about adult learning (i.e. those aged c. 35-65) was outside my brief it would appear that the assumption that students learn about adult learning methods through their own experience may be overly simplistic.

Theological students generally either have recent experience of higher education which is predominately didactic or have spent time preparing for their theological studies. The pastoral studies syllabus itself appears to be predominately lecture based plus some group discussion. Research documented by Labouvie-Vief and Blanchard-Fields (1982 p 183 - 209) shows that as people get older they are increasingly influenced by their own experience rather than by a dependence on logic. Therefore the theological didactic model when transferred into the parish could be counter-productive to a minister's work.

When we consider education for people over 65 research is proving that previously held assumptions that memory, intelligence and ability to learn decline with age is wrong. (Midwinter 1982 p.54-60) Until people learn (or are taught) otherwise they are likely to see traditional learning as learning by rote. This may have particular relevance where still, or until very recently, much religious learning in evangelical circles was based on the accurate recitation of biblical texts. On the other hand the learning abilities of older people could be harnessed more easily if

ministers held a positive attitude to their potential abilities as one of the greatest handicaps to learning in old age is 'the disuse of the mental apparatus.' (Midwinter 1982 p. 58).

It was against this background that I was interested in assessing what the colleges taught about how people learn in old age.

10 colleges (including the 8 referred to earlier in this chapter) provided no training in adult learning other than what might have been given obliquely during sermon classes. A further 16 colleges provided some input varying from 1 session of 1 hour in 3 cases to 60 hours in one other case. The average number of hours for these 16 colleges was  $15\frac{3}{4}$  hours. One of the federation's colleges (included in this group of 16 colleges) arranged a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  day course with the title of adult education. The external tutors had provided no leadership, no theoretical input and no structure (apart from starting and finishing sessions promptly) Their objective, as articulated by one director, was,

'that if we learn how behaviour changes through experiencing the life of a group it will give insights into how others change and how we can bring about change.'

Another director however reported,

'It was like non-directive counselling. There was resistance because they know the tricks and they didn't like them being done on them. There was total resistance to those who analyse motives rather than answer questions.'

The following year the course was didactic.....

Students at 5 colleges did receive teaching about learning in old age. This included a federal group of 3 colleges. There were, therefore, only 3 directors giving an input on learning and ageing to students. Not surprisingly 2 of these 3 directors were qualified educationalists. Two of the three directors said they drew heavily on Havinghurst's work (1953) although they drew equal attention to the fact that people learn in different ways and also that different things are better taught in different ways. Each director spent time helping students to grasp that 'just talking' doesn't constitute teaching which they said is what students think. The third director, whilst not focusing directly on the learning needs of elderly people asked students to devise a course for adults which was also suitable for those who are housebound. However, he said that it was rarely done well. This is perhaps not surprising because,

irrespective of age, sick people are much less efficient mentally than healthy people and elderly people do experience more frequent episodes of illness (Midwinter 1982 p. 60-2). Trying to devise a course suitable for a wide range of adult ability is very difficult.

V. TEACHING ON MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL ILLNESS IN OLD AGE

From syllabi outlines it appeared that most teaching about mental illness (as well as mental health and handicap) took place, if at all, in human growth and development or counselling courses. Mental health at all ages is difficult to define (Bergman 1979 p.109) but particularly so in old age. Indeed so difficult is it that Bergman avoids discussing normality and concentrates totally on ill-health in his chapter entitled 'Mental Health' in the second level Open University (1979) undergraduate course An Ageing Population!

Empirical research about mental health in old age is limited and sometimes contradictory (e.g. the disengagement and activity theories of ageing) so it is difficult to identify normality from abnormality. However it can be argued that mental health in old age is dependent on a person coming to terms with the past; being able to adjust to changing circumstances; and perhaps accepting some limitations because of ill-health or social circumstances. (Kastenbaum 1979) The fact that the majority of elderly people do make the transitions successfully was confirmed by Harris et al in the USA (1975) and Abrams (1978 and 1980) in England. When transitions are not successfully accomplished and the person is unable to maintain successful defense mechanisms against inappropriate behaviour, mental illness, particularly pathological depression, may result. Whilst the symptoms of depression may be similar to those presented by people of other age groups they can also be different (Bergman 1979 p. 122). Lack of social contact is more likely to occur in old age and lead to depression; other possible symptoms include confusion as a result of which the depression is mistaken for dementia; incontinence because the lethargy usually associated with depression results in some people ceasing to bother to go to the toilet; depressed elderly people don't bother to answer or

answer deliberately incorrectly questions they consider inane (e.g. who is the monarch?) (Lodge p.10)

In all 27 colleges included some teaching on mental illness and abnormality but only 6 of these (including the college with integrated learning) included any teaching about mental illness in old age.

i) Teaching about Mental Illness in Old Age

One college had 2 sessions, each of one hour, on mental illness - one on the care of the schizophrenic and the other on the care of depressed people. In this latter session the director 'interviewed' a retired doctor who himself had a lot of depression because he was approaching death. Sometimes, but not in the year I was studying the students had a role play of a very old man who was depressed talking to a minister about death. The director ensured that this role play was only done when some students had had hospice placements and were therefore able to help other students understand how people feel and what can be done to help. It is important to note that this college did not have a module about dying and death.

Psychiatrists ran counselling or mental illness courses at 2 colleges and were thought to use case studies of elderly people. Unfortunately these psychiatrists, as a matter of policy, never complete questionnaires because they are too time consuming. It is a pity because they may well have provided much useful data.

The remaining two colleges arranged 1 by 1½ hour sessions on mental illness in old age. At the Anglican college it was linked with secular hospital placements and covered the main types of mental illness in old age and the treatments available. However, the director felt that if students ceased to have placements in a mental hospital then this introductory lecture would be abandoned.

A non-conformist director gave me a handout of the areas relating to mental illness in old age which was used by another

staff member in conjunction with his lecture. The sweeping generalisations are inaccurate and yet again reinforced the negative image of old age.

'...The main difference is that the brain deteriorates, i.e. the active nerve cells (the elements by which we perceive and learn new skills) are not renewed. It is as though they are 'programmed' to last for so long, and after that they deteriorate.

The elderly find it difficult to learn anything new, to adapt to new routines and new people, or to make adjustments. Memory fails, and the set formula for daily life which the elderly adopt is a way of minimising loss of memory. The elderly are vulnerable to change, becoming less and less flexible. Since life becomes more restricted and less mobile, a set formula works well. Tolerance to all forms of stress diminishes, and there is more preoccupation with illness, minor symptoms and the functions of the body.....'

The information in the handout is incorrect as research shows that each person has in excess of 10 billion brain cells and only 2.5% of our reserves have been lost by the age of 70. This in spite of the fact that we are born with our full complement of brain cells and that they start dying from the day we are born. (Zimbardo 1979 p.288). It is thought to be true that cells can die more quickly if they are deprived of oxygen or other essential elements through illness. The memory, intelligence and learning abilities of elderly people as previously discussed do not automatically decline with age (Midwinter 1982 p. 49 - 63). Although no research has been carried out there is no evidence to suggest that older people do take longer than young people to adjust to bereavement. Adjustment at all ages is related to the quality of the previous relationship and to individual personality factors (Parkes 1975 p. 159, Bowling and Cartwright 1982 p. 165). In fact, although the number was small, Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p. 165) found that those who had most difficulty in adjusting were female, comparatively young, in poor health and had mobility problems. There has been no research on other issues like adapting to new routines but there is no reason to suppose that if elderly people can cope with bereavement that they can't cope as satisfactorily as other age groups with other forms of change.

It is true that older people having discovered strategies for coping with life that work well for them are less likely to want to develop yet more new ones (Brearley 1975 p. 15). However, to imply they have only one formula can not be true as it contradicts their good performance on self-adjustment scales (Havinghurst and Albrecht 1952 p. 285 - 289, Abrams 1978). Tolerance to stress in normal old people does not diminish (Bromley 1966 p. 125) and whilst I know of no research my 20 years of social work experience does not bear out the statement regarding preoccupation with illness. Indeed it would appear that the writer of this paragraph has stereotyped elderly people in terms of old age equalling decrepitude. For instance it is true that people of all ages have a lower stress threshold when they are ill or handicapped and likewise forgetfulness occurs particularly when we are exhausted.

The quoted paragraph appearing in relation to mental illness is particularly damaging as symptoms of memory loss are the indicators of many physical illnesses in old age e.g. pneumonia, constipation, urinary infections, drug allergies (Lodge 1981 p. 5-6). Lack of awareness of the physical causes of memory loss and confusion may lead to an unquestioned acceptance that the person is 'senile' and 'You have got to expect to be like this when you are getting on a bit.' (Bergman 1979 p.110). It is true that elderly people are more likely than younger people to die within 6 months of admission to hospital, or after a death of a spouse, but this is related to poor physical health and not to old age alone.

On the other hand the handout included a useful precis of the main psychiatric illnesses of old age together with details of their symptoms. Attached to the handout, which related to the course on mental illness, was a reading list of 30 books - not one related to old age inspite of their being many excellent books available.

It is sad that one of the only 2 colleges giving a significant input on mental illness in old age should have presented a negatively inaccurate image.

Mental illness may affect up to 22.5% of elderly people (Bergman 1978 p. 282) and the minister is in a key position to recognise personality changes and could with the minimum of knowledge do much to enable elderly people obtain appropriate help. Given that the word senility is used frequently and indiscriminately by both the general public and the professional (Bergman 1979 p. 110) the minister is in a key position to dispel the fears of elderly people and to correct false notions amongst his congregation. However, as only four colleges from a total of 31 had any input on mental health in old age students will generally have left college either with no knowledge or probably more importantly assuming that the symptoms of a particular mental illness are the same whatever a person's age.

VI. OTHER FACTORS DISCUSSED DURING OR OMITTED FROM TEACHING ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN OLD AGE

Loss due to ill-health was mentioned by 4 respondents and 6 human growth and development lecturers saw old people as forgetful, housebound or depressed. (A further respondent said old people were more inclined to feel insecure and to have fears for the future. The self-adjustment scores quoted in the previous paragraph contradict that statement. However, the respondent taught both about old age and death in the same lecture hour so he may have been thinking about insecurity and fear in relation to the acceptance of death. (A subject discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 Section III)

However, the same 6 respondents having listed the negative aspects of ageing then listed positive features - elderly people's potential for wisdom and insight; their ability to remember the past and to conserve the good from it; the experiences which emerge when old people are allowed to speak for themselves; the opportunity in old age to discover new aspects of personality and new gifts; the opportunity for growth to continue until death. Additionally and perhaps most importantly that old age may span a quarter of a century and in that time every single person expects to experience many changes. For this reason one college (already previously referred to in this chapter) arranged for teaching to consider human growth and development in 10 year age bands until the age of 90.

It is a matter of concern to me that at all but one college teaching human growth and development, death, dying and bereavement immediately followed teaching about ageing - often in the same lecture. Whilst in order to work happily with older people one must come to terms with one's own old age and death (BASW 1977 p. 11), living in old age is a very different matter to living with the knowledge that death is near. The differences between the two are enormous but the false idea that old age equals decrepitude is well documented (Anderson 1979 p. 24). To reinforce the idea by the juxtaposition of the two is unfortunate.

There is also another factor. Teaching human growth and development through the age cycle culminating in death will coincide for about 70% of students with the ending of their relationship with a particular tutor (in all but one college visiting tutors were responsible for this course). Ending relationships is often painful and never free of feeling and this will have coloured some students' perceptions of teaching given in the final lecture. Given that students' views of old age will frequently be negative the timing of teaching about old age was crucial.

BASW (1977 p. 9) delineated a number of psychological factors that social workers need to bear in mind in their work with elderly people. I suggest that they are as relevant to ministers. Those not previously mentioned are 1) mental deterioration is not inevitable, 2) personality does not change in old age although traits may become exaggerated; 3) elderly people tend to conform to societal stereotypes; 4) intellectual impairment and memory loss tend to be over stressed; 5) intellectual impairment where it does occur does not necessarily lead to loss of emotional satisfaction; 6) unresolved marital problems are aggravated by increasing infirmity; 7) satisfactory sexual experiences are not the 'perogative of the young only'. As far as I could identify from the questionnaires, and in the light of my interviews with directors, only on one or two occasions were any of these psychological factors discussed with students although a few students may have gained some knowledge from the text books which formed part of the background reading lists that were produced by some colleges (and already discussed in Chapter 5 Section IVe).

Freeman (1979 p. 79 - 120) also identifies psychological factors which are important in the psychological life and development of older people. Some have been discussed earlier in this chapter and the need to be involved and to contribute to the welfare of others will be discussed in Chapter 9 Section VI. Others though are referred to nowhere else in college syllabi. They include attitudes to ageing by elderly people themselves, self-images, and the need for mental stimulation.

These are not all necessarily different to the psychological needs and functions of people in other age groups but their resolution will differ according to age, internal resources and the opportunities provided by society to find fulfilment. However, I could identify no teaching of these areas to ministerial students.

What skills and knowledge then did students gain from their human growth and development course and what attitudes were imparted to them?

#### VII. ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS GAINED BY STUDENTS

Through the teaching about human growth and development, learning and mental illness in old age the students at all but 8 colleges received more knowledge about ageing than they did at any other point in their training. However, it was narrow in concept and concentrated primarily on negative features. Tutors seemed to have difficulty in portraying positive images and attributes to old age possibly because a truly life span developmental approach to old age has not yet been developed in Britain. It is also true that sociological, biological and environmental factors have generally been identified through gerontological research which has made little attempt to link its work with theories of psychological development in earlier life with which courses were generally preoccupied.

At six colleges theory was linked with practice by the use of case studies from Blythe (1981), or from students own experience of grandparents and other aged relatives, or from students' relationships with elderly people whom they met during their training.

At all the other colleges the teaching was presented by means of lecture and discussion. In a later chapter it will be shown that 82.58% of directors and 91.31% of postal respondents gave an incorrect reply to the statement in Palmore's quiz that older people take longer to learn something new (Chapter 12 Section II). In so far as there was any mention of learning in old age erroneous attitudes and knowledge were likely to have been imparted. There was little evidence of students learning any skills in respect of working with older people.

Thus the main teaching that the majority of students received about ageing and old people was solely knowledge based. At eight Anglican colleges this was quite deliberate as the directors believed that skills are the responsibility of the post-ordination part of ministerial training.

The attitudes to ageing and old people that students gained seemed to be predominately negative but it is necessary to remember that to some extent the teaching about social aspects of ageing frequently integrated with human growth and development may balance this view.

The next chapter will therefore consider the social aspects of ageing through considering elderly people within the family and in society.

## CHAPTER 8

### SOCIAL ASPECTS OF AGEING

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Whilst every person reaches old age with an unique life behind them their lives continue to be influenced, as they have been in the past, by social and environmental factors. Stereotyped attitudes by society can enhance or diminish a person's self-perception and attitudes towards other people. Demographic trends affect the whole structure of society and elderly people are not immune from their influence. The extent and quality of health and social services affects the quality of life. Issues like euthanasia, poverty, retirement etc. have ethical implications for elderly people. The size, mobility and fragmentation of families influence family life.

All these factors are important and students need to consider them if they are to keep a right perspective towards the individual elderly people with whom they minister. This chapter will therefore consider these factors in turn.

#### II. STEREOTYPING OF OLD AGE IN COLLEGE TEACHING

In Chapter 5 Section I were recorded the details of my discussions with the directors about their own views of old age and it will be recalled that 13 directors said in response to the thumbnail sketches that they would call the people by name (Section If). During my interview 21 directors explicitly stressed that in teaching they concentrated on ensuring that students saw people as individuals whatever their age. This was also spontaneously recorded by five postal respondents. However, when the main aim is to impart knowledge it is impossible not to generalise. That the directors and respondents did not generalise in relation to old age is true - because issues either of collective or individual aspects of ageing only received passing attention at many colleges .

This in itself can either be interpreted negatively or positively. Negatively in that old people are so marginalised by church and society that they are ignored or positively in that they cannot be differentiated in a church gathering from people of other ages. This latter view could account for the difficulty directors had in linking a particular age with the onset of old age.

However, the Literature Review (Section IV) indicated the concern many people had about the negative stereotyping of elderly people and whilst, if directors really did implicitly change student attitudes (although the evidence arising from this study is dubious) there was also the need for explicit consideration of the issue during college training.

One director described his method of teaching as follows:

'We begin term 3 by looking at how they themselves face death, including their feelings as well as the practical procedures.

I then help them to understand that facing the loss of life is a way of facing death. (I use Kubler-Ross' book but I stress the loss of life. I also make them very aware of the book's generalisations.)

Then I try to get them to test in a seminar the proof, or not, of being similar. It is very important to encourage sensitively.

Then we stand back and generalise about how adults change. We paint pictures of the different decades from 20+ and put the crises within this and go on beyond retirement.

I try to get them to empathise. Which of the pictures do they like/not like. We sort out what are the characteristics of these ages (i.e. after retirement) and what are the special issues. e.g. physical impairment, spirituality etc. and their potentials. Then we work out what part the gospel plays and how it is heard and what is most appropriate.

We consider the reactions of the minister and the church to old people and what are their roles. As there are a plurality of models we help them to think what they are, e.g. 99% of funerals will be done by the minister but they are fools if they think pastoral care stops there. I am perpetually emphasising that it is ministry with not for people.'

Another, the only director who tackled stereotyping explicitly said,

'In some cultures the old are the wise. In the West when you are old you are worthless. It is part of the disposable society; they are put away. Again it is

akin to goblins, and witches. They are connected to darkness because they are nearer to death and therefore must be shut off. Our job is to try to break down the walls. Worthfulness for worthlessness.'

At two colleges stereotyping was initially challenged by a quiz. In each case the directors during their interviews with me commented on the impact felt by students when they found they provided so many wrong answers. After the quiz key facts were considered in more detail and this included demographic facts which are considered next.

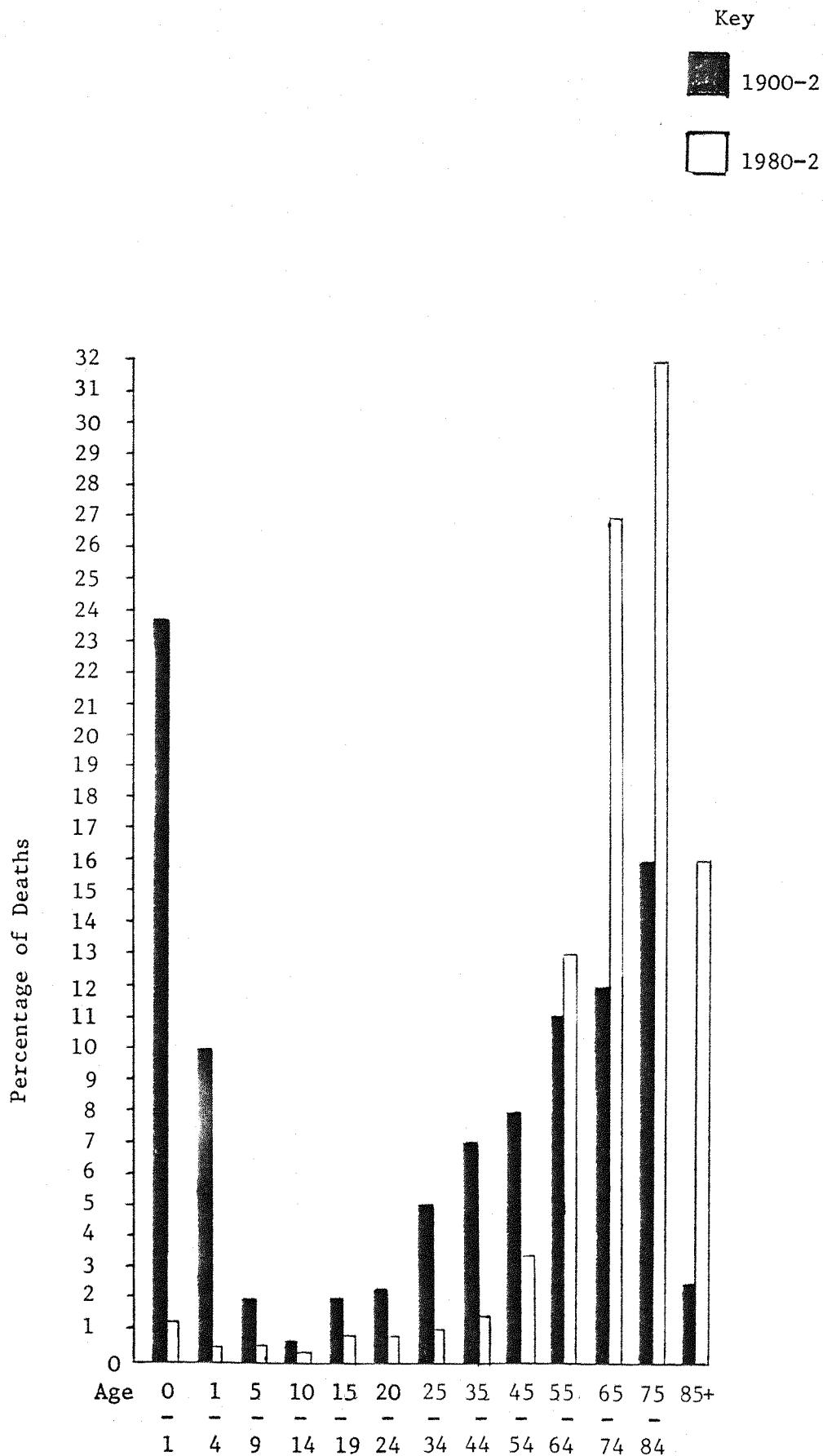
### III. POPULATION TRENDS - WHAT IS TAUGHT?

Perhaps the most radical revolution which is facing the world this century is the changing age structure. In Britain as was noted in the Introduction to this study, there has been a major shift in the proportions of people in various age groups over the last 80 years. The numbers of people over 75 are expected to increase during the rest of this century with the major increase occurring in the over 85 age group, which it is anticipated will increase from 1.06% of the population in 1981 to 1.84% in 2001. An increase of over 57% in 20 years (CSO 1984 Tables 2.3 and 2.7)

The other major change is reflected in the death rates. The average percentage of deaths in the under 15 age group in the years 1900-02 was 39.60%, whereas the average percentage for 1980-82 was 1.74%. On the other hand the average percentage of deaths in the over 65 age group in 1900-02 was 34.45% and in 1980-82 was 77.41%. (Computation of Table 2.19 Central Statistical Office 1984 p.33) see Fig. 2

There are three other demographic changes of significance to this study. 1) There is a substantial increase in the number of single person households, as more children leave home before marriage and there is an increase in the number of widows and widowers in the higher age groups (Harris p. 218).

Fig.2 Distribution of deaths by age group in 1900-2 compared to distribution of deaths by age group in 1980-2 (England and Wales)



(Data computed from Table 2.19 CSO 1984 p.33)

2) Divorce, is increasing and the 1981 Census shows that in 1981 there were 137,900 divorced people aged 65 and over which is some 1.82% of the population over 65. (CSO 1984 p.15).

Table 14: Marital condition of people aged 65 and over in 1981

Single	10.10%
Married	51.71%
Widowed	36.36%
Divorced	1.82%

(Data computed from CSO 1984 table 2.6 p.15)

3) The decreasing birthrate throughout this century has resulted in 30% of people over 65 either never having had any children or having children who have died. (Abrams 1978 p 4).

Ten colleges included demographic data in their teaching. Seven of these colleges drew attention to demographic changes, (although 4 of these inferred that the percentage of old people is going to continue to rise and they didn't take account of the peak being reached in 1986 see Table 1). The other three colleges focussed exclusively on the changing patterns of family life. Social Trends was their primary source of information.

#### IV. TEACHING ABOUT HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The large percentage of elderly people without children means that if or when they become frail they are likely to require help which in other circumstances a family would give. The percentage needing help at any one time is small as the vast majority of people over 65 live in the community needing only the same level of help from neighbours and friends as the rest of us need.

However, for all elderly people early appropriate help can often prevent unnecessary frailty and therefore a knowledge of the health and social services, together with a brief introduction to the major illnesses of old age, could enable a minister to help the older members of his congregation appropriately. It is unfortunate that many old people do not appreciate the distinction between disease and ageing (Wilcock et al 1982 p. 112). Indeed this lack of appreciation is general enough throughout the

population for Wilcock et al (1982) to recommend that this distinction should be emphasised, 'in talks to social workers or home helps or priests in training' (p.113).

The confusion between disease and ageing arises because people believe that deteriorating health is inevitable in old age and that disease cannot be treated. This is of course, far from the truth. For example, breathlessness - a common feature - can always be improved by exercise, or if necessary special exercises. Deafness can frequently be improved by use of a hearing aid.

Only two colleges provided teaching on physical and mental illness in old age and two further colleges arranged an one by 1½ hour session on mental illness in old age as was documented in the last chapter. Even more surprising than the lack of teaching on health in old age was the comparative lack of teaching about housing needs, health and social services. One might expect that as these services are relevant to people of all ages at least an outline knowledge of them would be given to all students. However, an argument against this in the Anglican colleges was that knowledge about services is more relevant to the student after ordination and therefore reasonably belong to that part of his training.

Hospital placements are discussed in detail in Chapter 11 Section I and it may be that students involved in those, gained knowledge of the various hospital services and the professions operating within them. It is unlikely though, that they were given knowledge about community health and the social services. The identification of the existence and location of community health and social services was required from the students of two colleges during their church placements. A further 12 colleges did give students some knowledge about health and social services as recommended by Gaine (1978 p. 235). (At one further college a small number of students had a placement in a social services area office). Unfortunately I could not estimate the teaching time with any precision because colleges said it varied from year to year, but on average about 1 - 1½ hour seemed to be allowed for this topic. At six of the colleges, it was part of either a sociology or a pastoral psychology course and in those cases the total teaching time for the whole course was an average of 19½ hours.

Given the lack of attention to the health and social services in 19 colleges it was unlikely that those students would know when they became ministers, how to refer people to the appropriate services, or how to provide a sensitive pastoral ministry to those professionals working within the church's catchment area.

V. SOCIAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES - WHICH ISSUES WERE CHOSEN?

Demographic changes also have implications for the teaching of social and ethical issues. Poverty, leisure, loneliness, euthanasia, whilst affecting people of all ages also have specific implications in old age. Retirement, now it affects substantially larger numbers of people, cannot be ignored. The way issues were raised varied from college to college. Sometimes they were part of the ethics course, sometimes moral philosophy and sometimes courses with a more sociological bias.

a) Euthanasia

Within ethics courses elderly people were used as illustrations in the discussion of euthanasia. This was recorded briefly in 5 postal questionnaires. It is not possible to know the amount of detail or what facets of old age were used as illustrations although the obvious underlying assumption apparent in all the responses but articulated succinctly by one respondent was that, 'The value of human life is derived from God and not from any affirmation of man.'

The arguments in relation to euthanasia and terminal physical illness do not vary according to the age of the person but issues do arise in respect of the withholding of life-support machines with for example elderly people who have a heart attack (Trowell, 1973 p. 57-60). It also becomes an issue in the giving, or withholding of drugs for treatment of a physical illness when the person has for example senile dementia. Professionals are often faced with these situations, yet there was little evidence that they were raised with any frequency in the euthanasia lectures which were included in the ethics teaching for students at 26 of the 31 colleges. However as I noted in the section on bibliographies elderly people were often, although very much in passing, referred to in books discussing euthanasia.

It maybe that the issue of euthanasia arose in teaching on death, dying and bereavement and also in any discussion that arose from the practical placements where normally one or two students had a hospice placement. It may also have arisen in the hospital placements. However, if that was so it was not brought back into college teaching and shared with the whole student group.

b) Poverty

Poverty and elderly people was recorded as an issue by one ethics teacher and in 5 other colleges it was included in courses considering social factors. The focus was on the substantial cut in income experienced by most people on retirement, the added effect on being a woman and widowed and the effects reduced income have on life style.

This subject was one of the few examples where subject teaching integrated knowledge about elderly people and their circumstances with knowledge about poverty in other age groups. Students were as a result able to see the general problems and also the problems specific to different age groups and circumstances. Factors relating to elderly people which were covered were, 1) the structure and benefits available through the state social security system; 2) that dramatic increases in weekly income after retirement are remote (except by realising assets); 3) less money results in less involvement in leisure activities; 4) public transport is used less often; 5) the effect of the provision of bus passes based on financial means; 6) the increased spending on heating with the increased likelihood of illness. However, I could not identify any discussion on how previous experiences of poverty may affect elderly people's current willingness to claim state means-tested benefits. For example, many people, like Mrs. Smith in Elder (1977 p.62-7), needed to claim Out Relief in the mass unemployment era of the 1930s. This may make them feel humiliated by their need to claim supplementary or housing benefit today. Neither could I identify any consideration of how lack of money might affect the presentation by ministers of the financial needs of churches. An appreciation of how elderly people may feel at their own capacity to contribute to the needs of their own church or to church appeals, was an issue which worried a substantial number of elderly people in a survey carried out in America (Gray and Moberg 1977 p. 126-28).

c) Retirement

Surprisingly I was able to identify only one person teaching for a group of four colleges who made any reference to the social implications of retirement (but note the individual's feelings about retirement were on occasion included in human growth and development teaching). With at least 15 colleges considering work and leisure within their courses, I would have expected the issue of 'non-work' as a result of retirement to have been included alongside unemployment. However, the reason may be that none of the books on the reading lists in my possession considered leisure in the context of retirement.

d) Loneliness and Isolation

Not surprisingly loneliness featured high in the responses I received and in all students at 9 colleges had some teaching about loneliness. As was noted in the directors' responses to the characteristics of ageing (Chapter 6 Section Id), in the analysis of the responses to the same question in the postal questionnaire (Chapter 6 Section IIc) and as will be noted in the responses to the statement in Palmore's quiz (Table 16 page 160) there was a general expectation that the majority of old people are lonely. This is in fact not true although there is such a degree of loneliness amongst old people that it is rightly a cause for concern (Abrams 1978 p. 38-43). Two directors of pastoral studies drew attention to loneliness during their teaching, but it was difficult to differentiate in the postal responses which respondents dealt with the individual responses to loneliness and those who dealt with the sociological implication. However, Tunstall's book 'Old and Alone' (1966) was referred to by 3 respondents lecturing on sociology or ethics. Reference to this book is important because it is the major work on loneliness in old age and delineates the various characteristics of 'being alone' which had up, until that book's publication, been (and sadly too often still continues to be) embraced in the one assumption - loneliness. Tunstall identified four forms of 'aloneness' - isolation, loneliness, anomie and living alone (p. 17-20). It is interesting that Abrams (1978 p.40) found considerable loneliness amongst those who lived with others. However, Abrams also found that as many as 30% of those living alone were lonely according to the measures he used. Hunt (1978 p. 130) found in her study that 12.9% said that they were lonely.

One of the statements that Abrams (1978 p.38) used is interesting in itself. It is, 'I no longer do anything that is of real use to other people'. He found that 30% of those over 75 and living alone felt that this was the case - a higher response than to any of the other 6 questions. In the 65 - 74 group it was 15% but in this case responses to several other questions gained a higher response (p. 39 and 40).

#### VI. TEACHING ON THE OLD PERSON AND THE FAMILY

Although family relationships do not exclude the rise of loneliness it is undoubtedly true that not only is the family the major unit in society, but it also provides the major support system to individuals. The responsibilities of husband to wife and wife to husband are still paramount in our society. But the lengthened life expectation has altered the structure of family life fundamentally. Marriages are now much longer. Married couples may spend less time in child-rearing than they spend together as a two person family. Three and four generation families are not considered exceptional even though, until this century it was a relatively rare occurrence as life expectancy was so short.

These features have a profound effect on married life and their implications continue to be the subject of sociological discussion, (e.g. Harris 1983 p. 216-222 ; Fletcher 1966 p. 211 ff ). The increasing length of marriage is thought by Farmer(1979 p.183) to be one reason for the increase in divorce rates as 30% of divorces involve marriages of more than 15 years standing. When life expectancy was shorter at least some of these marriages would have been ended by the death of one of the partners.

The other change that will occur, if divorce rates continue to rise, is a multiplicity of relationships within the extended family network and this may change the role of grandparents. We know little about the extent of the contact between grandparents and grandchildren especially if the children live with the 'in-law'. Neither do we know much about grandparental relationships with the grandchildren that come into the family circle through the partner of a re-marriage (Stephenson 1980 p. 19).

What effect does divorce have on the amount of care provided to frail relatives? At present there is no evidence that families provide less support to aged relatives than they did in the past (Fletcher 1966 p. 162, Laslett 1977 p. 176-181, Johnson 1979 p. 133-139). However, with the decrease in the number of people aged 45-64; the smaller size of families; the lengthening of life because of greater medical knowledge (although quality of life is not always increased); the strains on families are bound to increase. Neither should it be forgotten that 30% of people over 65 have no living children (Abrams 1978 p.4) and are therefore dependent either on relatives of a similar age to themselves, on neighbours and friends, or on public services.

Traditionally families are thought to consist of husband, wife and 2 children, but an increasing number of family units will be of either one or two people and a large proportion of these will be of people over 65.

Colleges generally considered family issues in some depth. The contexts included teaching on marriage preparation, human growth and development and sociology of the family. This was not surprising, given that the family is a basic unit of society. Thirteen colleges included teaching about grandparents roles, effects of nuclear and extended families on elderly people, family mobility and the isolation of old people. The unfortunate part was that colleges contradicted each other in their views rather than presenting both contrasting views to their students. For example one director told me,

'I get students to recognise the contribution every generation makes to the other. I give examples of how well grandparents get on with their grandchildren.'

Whilst in contrast another said,

'We discuss the rows in a family because grandparents side with the grandchild against the parents - because the grandparent can't let the parents do their own thing.'

The importance of grandparents was mentioned in 5 courses and 3 directors also stressed the role of older people in the congregation befriending young people, and how every generation needs every other one. Contrasted with that were 2 directors who pointed out that

grandparents are less likely to see grandchildren because of the break-up of families by divorce or because families do not live as close to each other as they did in past ages. One director felt that the stress on the nuclear family excludes old people from family life and that results in depressive illness in the old people.

Students at one college had a role play of a minister visiting a family consisting of grandparent, parents and teenage children. 'Who do you talk to? The children? The parents? Grandparent? Or how do you talk to them altogether?' This director also arranged a role play of a minister involved with an elderly person and their family when the family felt that the old person couldn't live alone any more. He said,

'I get them to think about the issues. Why can't she live alone? Does she want to? Why are families afraid of the risks? Are the risks real or are they over-reacting?

They always start talking about their own families. They realise how difficult it is to be objective. I try to get them to think about the alternatives.'

Four directors commented on how students brought case illustrations about family life from their parish placements so that they saw how theory relates to practice. I also gained the impression that it was in the teaching about the family that more use was made of the students own experience and church placements than in any other part of the course.

At 6 colleges references to elderly people and family life were included in ethics and moral philosophy courses. In each case elderly people were used solely as illustrative material. The major point being made was the stress, in the western consumer orientated society, on the nuclear family of parents and children and how this leads to the undervaluing and marginalisation of one or two person households. No respondents said that they referred to elderly people in teaching about marriage and divorce.

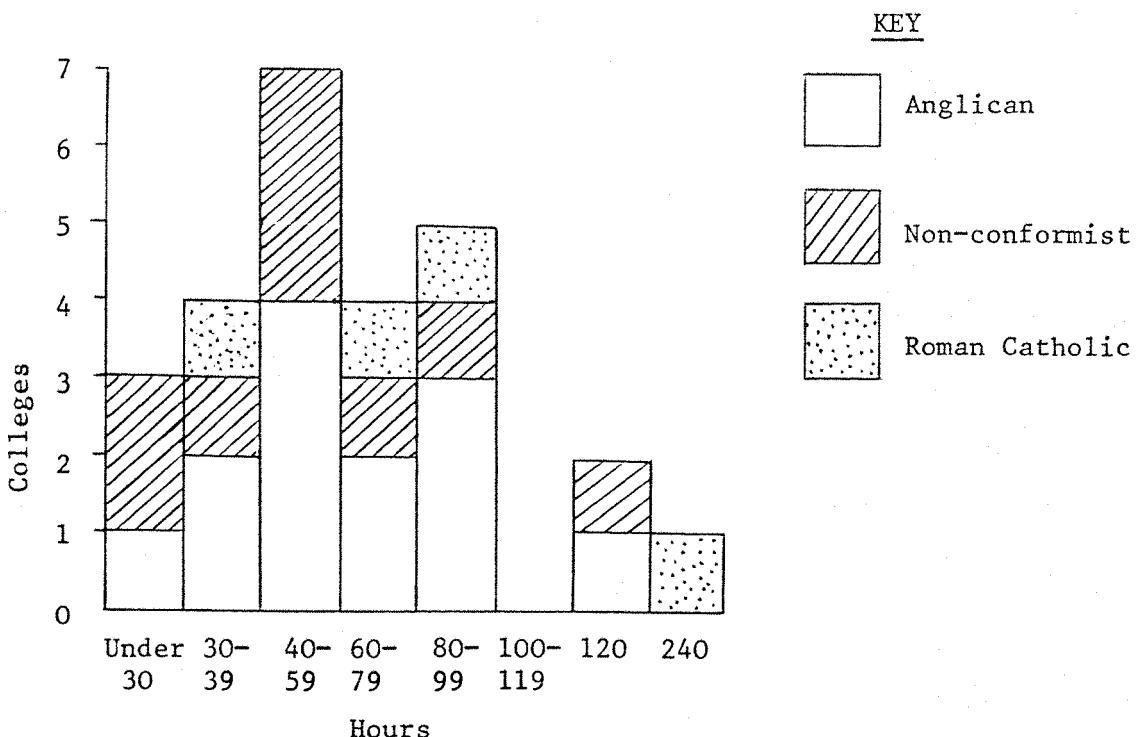
The foregoing paragraphs show how elderly people were barely considered, and when they were, only the occasional point was made in any one particular course.

## VII. THE LENGTH OF TEACHING TIME

Whilst the different colleges recorded above referred to different aspects of ageing there were 4 colleges who included nothing related to elderly people under this chapter heading and a further 3 colleges who included only fleeting reference to elderly people when considering euthanasia. Thus lecturers at 8 out of 31 colleges gave no significant consideration to the social and ethical aspects of old age.

However, at the remaining colleges teaching on the themes included in this chapter were included albeit only to a very limited extent. At only 4 colleges did the time allocated total more than one hour. This must be compared with the teaching time allocations on ethics and social issues etc. which varied from 18 hours to 240 hours

Figure 3: Total teaching hours spent on ethical and sociological issues by denomination



(Note: excluded are the 4 colleges for which data was incomplete)

After excluding the 4 colleges for which I had incomplete data (non-response to postal questionnaire) and the five colleges who provided no ethical or other teaching on the areas under discussion the average number of hours available was almost 56½ hours. Even when the 3 colleges with 120 hours or more teaching are also excluded colleges still had an average of 43 hours teaching time.

The syllabi of both ethics and social issue based courses included substantial amounts of theoretical teaching which was absolutely essential. Lecturers aimed primarily to provide the tools which students could use in analysing a whole range of situations once they are ordained. The illustrative material was to enable students to relate theory to specific issues. However, in ethics teaching particularly, issues like euthanasia, justice, war, marriage and divorce, sexual relationships, work and poverty were developed but the ethical and sociological implications of the population shift received generally cursory attention, and then only in 10 colleges. The fundamental questions relating to elderly people, particularly in the context of Christian ethics, and outlined in my Introduction on p.2 received no attention whatever.

#### VIII. ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IMPARTED TO STUDENTS

Twelve colleges included teaching about the role elderly people in families and this should have made students aware of the positive aspects of ageing, but this was offset in some cases by the portrayal of negative attitudes. It was particularly unfortunate that the negative and positive illustrations were not given at the same colleges - then students might have had a better balance in attitudes.

There was no evidence that the 'problems' of poverty, retirement, loneliness and isolation were put into context. However, students at most colleges had the opportunity of at least a marginal increase in their knowledge.

However, irrespective of the value attributed to psychological and sociological knowledge for the ministerial student the primary professional role which needs development during training is that connected with religion and spirituality. Therefore the next chapter will document the extent of the student's preparation for meeting the religious and spiritual needs of elderly people.

## CHAPTER 9

### SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF AGEING

#### I. INTRODUCTION

I would argue that one of the minister's primary responsibilities is to enable people through public and private worship to grow in the knowledge and love of God. The student's training should reflect this priority. In this chapter therefore I shall document the preparation (and lack of it) that students receive for their future ministry to older people. I will consider 1) teaching about corporate worship and liturgy (excluding funerals (Chapter 10, Section IIId), healing and anointing (Chapter 10 Section IIb). 2) Sermons. 3) Evangelism (by which I mean all teaching about bringing people into a relationship with God or into church membership). 4) Individual spiritual growth. 5) The gifts elderly people have to offer the church.

#### II. TEACHING ON WORSHIP

##### a) Teaching Students Received

Sensitivity to an individual's previous experience of church and liturgical services as well as to Bible translations was generally ignored in colleges. The present generation of elderly people have seen the disappearance of the Latin Mass; modern forms of Morning and Evening Prayer and Holy Communion; general anointing of the sick with oil in place of Extreme Unction when a person was near to death; the general substitution of 'You' for 'Thou' both in formal and extemporary prayer and the encouragement of a much greater informality in relationships with God. Few older christians in any denomination have escaped the radical changes.

During my interviews twelve directors made 6 specific points in all about changes in worship. The change in the use and administration of Anointing and Sick Communion (4 people; see Chapter 10, Section IIb). The differences in church matters before and since Varican II. (On this issue students at all

4 Roman Catholic Seminaries were encouraged to talk to elderly people about the changes, to understand their feelings and the difficulty that many may have had in accepting, not only the radical liturgical changes but also, the changes in belief.) The use of various Bible translations (1 person).

'old people although they may not want to participate actively, they must nonetheless feel included in the worship.'

5 of the 12 directors had specific comments to make about elderly people and communion. a) The need for sensitivity to those who can no longer kneel to receive the sacrament (two people); b) reassurance to people that it is not undignified to stand; c) the appropriateness of the minister taking communion to someone in their pew, yet allowing people to share the feelings this may engender (2 people).

As can be deduced from the paucity of comments the needs of elderly people receive scant attention within courses although the formal teaching time on worship and liturgy at the colleges ranged from nothing (3 colleges) to 92 hours with an average of  $25\frac{1}{4}$  hours so that lack of teaching time need not have been an issue.

Against the few references to elderly people in response to direct questioning must be set the fact that 15 directors spontaneously commented that attention was given to making worship appropriate for children and families. This was an area with which the study is not concerned but it reflects a possible bias that may overtly or covertly exist in much pastoral studies teaching.

b) Women's Meetings

Only one director emphasised the minister's relationship with the Women's Fellowship. I have documented it separately because it is not liturgical in the same sense as the word was interpreted in the previous paragraphs. I was surprised that no-one else spoke of a minister's relationship to women's groups. Most denominations make some special provision for women and, with the increase in the number of working women, meetings for women during the day are likely to be focussed on the older members of the congregation. This one director said,

'The thing that I try to get across to them is about their attitudes to women's meetings - they are one of the most creative places of care, of boundaries between church and non-church, they are the prime agents of evangelism and of skills of how to turn into growing old. Start talking at women's meetings and take them seriously.'

'(What kind of things do you say to them about women's meetings?)'  
 'Recognise that there is a place for teaching about the basics and for others it is a threshold of a whole new phase of christian living which can be explored with them. Students must stop ridiculing it and affirm networks and deepen the life of devotion. Recognise that physical frailty doesn't mean that they are ineffective - don't allow that idea to get around - there is letter writing, the rhythm of prayer.'

c) Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills imparted to Students

Students were involved in leading college chapel services and non-conformist students in leading worship during church placements. In colleges formal courses in liturgy or worship were programmed into the curriculum and generally consisted of lectures followed by discussion. In twelve colleges students had brief opportunities to discuss the worship needs of elderly people. They thus received limited knowledge and may have had their attitudes modified through increased understanding, but there was little evidence of any development of skills in how to offer an appropriate worship experience to women's meetings. However, in some colleges, positive experiences may have been modified by the students' unhappy experiences of taking services in old people's homes (see chapter 11 Section V).

III. SERMON TEACHING

a) Teaching the Students Received

All colleges, except one, had sermon classes. Teaching time varied in length from a total of 12 hours to a total of 420 hours within the college. (These totals excluded individual student preparation time and the time given to the delivery of sermons to church congregations.) This wide variation reflected the variety of methods used. At five colleges all the preaching was given to other students. In some colleges students spent every Sunday in a local church and would preach there anything from once or twice a term to every fourth Sunday in the year. Other students had summer placements in charge of a church where they were expected to preach every Sunday. Those in a student pastorate were, of course, preaching regularly.

Although most evaluation of church sermons was done by college staff, two colleges actively involved members of the congregation in the assessment of a student's performance. In these situations the directors felt that any irrelevant or inappropriate remarks on the circumstances of elderly people in the congregation would be pointed out.

But however sermon practice was organised the sermon needs of elderly people were only recalled by seven directors. In four of these instances the only comment was about audability - 'You have to speak up otherwise the old won't hear.' The other three directors made important comments upon which all ministerial students could usefully reflect:

'You must use appropriate examples in a congregation which is predominately elderly.'

Talking to a group of old ladies about converting the world is inappropriate.

Gain their attention in an appropriate way. Know about each of their backgrounds. With the elderly you can go further back with examples and illustrations. Don't speak down and don't side with people's biases, e.g. young people are radical and old people staid in their ways.

Students must positively prevent the image that young clergy are not interested in them.

With old people beware of too superficial an approach to the modern world. Old people appreciate certain liturgical patterns. There is the need to be clear and to very sensitively introduce change. With biblical criticism there is the dilemma of saying whether something is really true e.g. Did the miracles really happen in the way the Gospels say? Usually it is better to focus on the central meaning. Remember how and what old people were taught in Sunday school in the 1920s.'

c) Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills Imparted to Students

In all except 5 colleges students had both sermon classes in college and practical experience of giving sermons to congregations. This experience was often extensive, so all students had ample opportunity to develop their skills. The extent to which their attitudes to congregations were modified is likely to vary according to the perceptions of pastoral studies directors and the honesty of the receiving congregations. I could find little evidence that positive attitudes towards elderly people, or the development of skills in delivering appropriate sermons was encouraged.

IV. TEACHING ON EVANGELISM

The word evangelism is my personal arbitrary choice to cover a number of different words with similar meanings used at different colleges - mission, outreach, missiology, evangelism.

Like worship and sermons positive responses to my questions were very few. Apart from the important references to women's meetings

previously quoted, four colleges either had no teaching on evangelism or less than four hours. A further 22 directors said that no references were made during their college courses to evangelism and elderly people. Thus only 5 directors out of 31 referred to elderly people in the context of evangelism.

One director whose college allocated seventy hours time in college plus a yearly two week mission said that evangelism to elderly people often arose after a college mission.

'Then its a question of sharing ignorance. We look at the points of contact but you can't do anything.'

Perhaps he needs to be in contact with another director who during his only two hour college session on evangelism encouraged students to analyse how radio covered the subject of evangelism and to draw on these techniques when making contact with elderly people not attached to the church.

Other directors made the following comments.

'I always provoke a discussion about elderly people when students discuss the age for confirmation. The students as they think about it realise that they should never stop evangelising, baptising, confirming. What is the point of a visit? Just being friendly? Present the Gospel? What? I help them learn to move on to subjects of greater significance.'

Evangelism. This emerges from their profile of a local church with an emphasis on the concept of fellowship and what that means. The christian hope in the face of despair and waiting for death. We pick up on the theological terms which have a special meaning to and response from the elderly. I see the ministry of the elderly themselves as a major issue and emphasise that we must call 'the elderly to obedience'; to use the skills which they have.'

At one college where there was no class time the subject arose during the student mission.

'I encourage old people to use the church newsheet for prayer. Often they say they don't know how to. Then its a marvellous opportunity to help them think about life, prayer and Bible study. The students say they can't do it. Some have never given it a thought. It's really a case of using your personality. How you use personal evangelism.'



The significant points about the background to the comments made in this section are 1) that in every case the teaching arose within the context of discussion sessions and 2) elderly people were naturally brought into teaching about another subject rather than being singled out for special class time.

None of the directors could estimate the time involved - they said it depended on the group of students. However no one felt that the time allocated was in excess of  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour.

#### Attitudes, Knowledge Skills Imparted to Students

There was evidence that students from four colleges gained knowledge or skills in evangelism with elderly people. In the fifth college their experience of hopelessness was likely to reinforce negative attitudes and further inhibit the development of appropriate skills. The lack of references to evangelism with elderly people by Anglican directors was particularly surprising as they could draw on reference material from Steer (1966).

#### V. SPIRITUALITY - THE TEACHING

The Christian life should be one of continuous growth inspite of periodic setbacks. There also appears to be a resurgence today of the charismatic gifts recorded in the New Testament. These gifts are not confined to young people but are experienced by people of all ages. It also seems that many people become more reflective as they age (Chapter 5 Section 4iv) and this may lead to contemplative prayer. I feel, although I cannot substantiate it objectively, that the development of either charismatic gifts or contemplation in old age may well vary from the experience of younger people. However, nothing is written about this except that Blythe (1981) records the struggle with prayer that is experienced by a group of monks.

I was interested to see whether students were given any teaching that might illuminate spirituality in old age.

Colleges with courses on spirituality were generally concerned with the classical spiritual paths. The majority of the directors

(20) felt that students were generally too spiritually immature to be able to grapple with the issues involved in giving spiritual direction. One director taking predominately older students said

'However, ensuring that spirituality and theology go together is a key question e.g. students are very aware sociologically, they work well in groups but on spirituality they are very thin.'

Another director said,

'Whilst we incorporate a daily pattern of prayer we draw on their experience of private prayer, language and style and then get across that throughout life needs etc. will change - sometimes it will be surgical, sometimes it will be for other reasons.'

One college though did bring middle aged and elderly people to the college to talk about their forms of discipleship and how they had changed through the years. The emphasis was on the gathered community for worship rather than individual spirituality as this reflected the denominational emphasis. However, this approach could equally well be used for other spiritual teaching purposes.

From the foregoing, and the lack of relevant literature, it can be deduced that students were not prepared in any way to meet the spiritual needs of elderly people in so far as they differed from other age groups. Indeed I suspect that they received no preparation for meeting the spiritual needs of people of any age group other than their own. This inspite of the fact that the majority of people from any congregation and denomination anticipate help with spiritual problems from a minister.

## VI. GIFTS ELDERLY PEOPLE HAVE TO OFFER THE CHURCH

### a) The Teaching given to Students

It is disturbing that against the background of the previous section that eight directors saw prayer as the major resource that elderly people had to offer. However, the directors seemed unaware of the support that elderly pray-ers may need.

As we saw in the sections on evangelism and worship few directors were positive about the role elderly people could play. It was significant that in my interviews when the subject of the contribution

of elderly people was raised directors drew predominately on their own church experience. How many of the personal memories were shared during the pastoral studies teaching I do not know but I suspect that I may have triggered a more extensive rememberance than is possible in the classroom. However, with this qualification positive suggestions were still fairly limited.

Twelve directors mentioned elderly people as possible spiritual advisors. One director began the first session of his course, which sought to relate doctrine to ministry, by asking students who most influenced their own prayer life. He said that whilst students often responded with comments about their families, invariably at some point or another they remembered that an elderly person had played a decisive role in their spiritual growth. Ten directors observed that students tended to seek out either elderly volunteers in college or aged members of staff when they had a spiritual problem. However, one director gave a needed balance to this perspective. He said,

'We have some very old priests in college. They are seen as extreme examples of faithfulness. Up until about a year ago one was often sought out by students but now he is too old and frail. One is very cantankerous so, though the students respect him, they wouldn't talk to him. But students have never gone to him with their personal or spiritual problems but they admire him for his knowledge of the Old Testament.'

The directors stressed to students the key role elderly women have in nurturing the young.

'I don't use the vicarage for confirmation classes but hold it in different homes including the housebound. Likewise meetings with youngsters - the old people have a lot to offer and it enables relationships to be built up. Often the youngsters visit informally again. Teenagers and old people relate well. Elderly people are remarkably tolerant of records, tape recorders. When I was in the parish I took over an orphanage (whilst the nuns took the kids away for their summer holiday) and took about 30 people. Half were under 25 and half aged 60 to 75. The thing was that the youngsters got concerned about the old people living it up. Like the widow who picked up a man at the pub and brought him back!'

Time was seen by the directors as the key to the success of relationships between young and old. Old people have the time to listen and therefore often learn how to listen effectively. They are an important resource in writing to young people at college and university and for keeping in touch with ex-members who move away. One denomination also makes a point of encouraging elderly people to write to people who display death announcements in local papers and to offer practical help and solace.

Other points made were - that they have a lot of practical experience of life and can share skills; they are good at caring for recently bereaved people; job swaps have potential in many areas; they can visit housebound folk and provide lifts for people to church, as well as in some areas lifts to hospitals and health clinics. However, if these latter ministries are to be successful it is essential that the minister acts as the catalyst (Haber 1984 p.67).

Two directors also felt that ministers should encourage elderly people to be active in local voluntary organisations and in fund raising both for the church and in the community. This could both be as organisers of events and also through making objects etc., for sale. A task which was seen as particularly worthwhile for the housebound.

One director was particularly concerned about isolated housebound people. He, therefore, strongly advised students never to celebrate Communion alone in someone's house but always to take two or three other people with him.

The church history lecturer at another college used elderly people to describe to students how churches had changed over the years, to discuss the effects of secular events (e.g. the 1939-45 war) on church life and attitudes, to share the strengths and weaknesses of various styles of ministerial leadership. At this college, too, students during their church placement had to make a tape recording with an elderly person of the story of that church during living memory. A major aim of the exercise was to enable students to become aware of how the past influences the present and how a minister needs to appreciate this if he is to be sensitive to people's feelings and to introduce change appropriately and imaginatively.

b) Attitudes, Knowledge and Skills Imparted to the Students

Individual directors, from practical experience, had imaginative ideas but the range of ideas to which individual students were exposed was extremely limited. Interestingly no college used the Age Concern booklet (1980) on how to use the resources and time of elderly people.

Thus students generally were not given the vision to see how elderly people can be involved actively in the total life of the local church.

VIII. COMMENT

The responses gained from directors and documented in this chapter present for me an extremely disturbing picture.

I would argue that a primary concern of a minister should be the spiritual development of the people in his church and local community. The results show that where elderly people were concerned the teaching students received was minimal. Sermon classes paid little attention to the sermon needs of elderly people despite the substantial allocation of hours.

Does this link with the lack of teaching about spirituality? It seems to me difficult to preach a sermon that meets the spiritual needs of elderly people unless one has teaching on spirituality, knows how to discern where people are spiritually, knows something of their previous spiritual experiences and the environment that has shaped their spiritual attitudes. As will be shown later in this study (Chapter 11 Section VI) the past experiences of elderly people are rarely noted and elderly people are not seen in the light of their total life experience.

However, the psychological insights of old age impinge on spirituality. In the Chapter 11 Section VI references will be made to the biographical approach to ageing and in the Literature Review (Section IIIa) the importance of reminiscence was outlined. This has spiritual connotations. Reminiscence must inevitably create recall of wrong doing. This for a Christian results in confession to God and receiving forgiveness from Him. Many people find this a difficult exercise to undertake but useful guidelines on how to help an elderly person are given by Steer (1966 p. 27-30). Although he envisages confession to a priest, some of his suggestions could be utilised by ministers of other traditions.

Hope has a special meaning in old age when more of life is behind one than in front and unfulfilled dreams have to be accepted. But the Christian's hope is in God, so his activities have and are drawn up into the working out of God's plan for His Kingdom (Whitehead 1981) p.62. But it is a spiritual truth which many people find difficult to grasp.

Another aspect in the growth of holiness which has special relevance in old age is detachment from this world and a greater attachment to the life of the spirit and in the Spirit (Steer 1966 p. 60-61). Elderly people who have led very busy lives and left little time for spiritual growth will need special help from a minister in order to sort out what form their own particular path in spiritual growth should take.

The controversy between the dis-engagement and activity theories of ageing (see Literature Review Section IV) have their counterpart in spiritual terms. Should elderly people continue to give or should they be seen as passive receivers? Should elderly people just because they are housebound be prevented from supporting other Christians experiencing problems, or be precluded from providing a haven for young people feeling pressurised by society? They may well have much more time at their disposal. Does it really matter if elderly people are tired at the end of a visit? Aren't most of us frequently tired or exhausted?

The exhaustion, but more particularly the emptiness felt by the deep pray-ers documented by Blythe (1981 p. 293-307) received no consideration at the colleges. That emptiness and its counterpart acidie are experienced by Christians at every age but how much harder it must be to bear in old age if there are less opportunities for active involvement. How much greater is the support they need and which could be given by ministers. But little literature exists to help.

In some denominations e.g. Methodism, the corporateness of prayer is emphasised. What loneliness must be caused by the person, whatever their age, who is no longer able to gather with the rest of the Church for prayer. The only solution which was offered at one college was group communion in housebound people's home.

Cymbalista and LeClerq (1982 p. 165) draw attention to the role of elderly people in monastic communities following the rule of St. Benedict and the temptation of younger members to eliminate older brothers and sisters from community discussions; on the other hand they record that older members may be tempted to take advantage of their age, seniority or wisdom. Human nature hasn't changed since the times of St. Benedict and that tension continues to exist in churches today. Ministers need to learn how to enable their churches to live with the tensions and to use them creatively.

A central theology of the Christian faith is that in dying we find life. 'Conversion' is a dying to self in order to be 'resurrected' to a new life in God. Acceptance of suffering results in a freedom to live fully. In secular language facing suffering, being converted, are seen as crises. For a Christian these crises will have a religious dimension as can be seen by Clough (1981 p.18) in his account of Mrs. Smith's rejection of God\*. A minister needs to be able to help someone to gain, regain or maintain faith in spite of life's vicissitudes. The colleges appeared not to help students learn the skills or gain the knowledge.

Ministers above all else in their 'one to one' contacts should be encouraging people to grow in the knowledge and love of God. It would seem that students did not gain this information at college in respect of elderly people except in so far as their needs did not differ from other age groups. However, perhaps colleges considered it more appropriately covered in their special courses or topics like counselling, sick visiting, or death, dying and bereavement. Therefore in the next chapter I will document the extent to which elderly people were considered during these other courses.

\* Quoted in the Literature Review (Section V)

CHAPTER 10CARING FOR THE INDIVIDUAL ELDERLY PERSONI. COUNSELLINGa) What and How it is Taught

When I analysed the content of the pastoral studies teaching from the information colleges sent to me at the outset of my study it was obvious that counselling had a high priority. Twenty-nine out of the 31 colleges involved in this study gave students some insight into counselling skills (See Table 15 )

Table 15: The Number of Teaching Hours allocated to a Counselling Course

<u>No.of hours teaching</u>	<u>Anglican</u>	<u>Roman Catholic</u>	<u>Non-Conformist</u>	<u>Total no. of Colleges</u>
Under 10 hrs.	3	2	1	6
10 - 19 hrs.	10	0	7	17
20 - 29 hrs.	0	0	0	0
30 - 39 hrs.	2	1	2	5
40 hrs. & over	1	0	1	2

Note: Excluded is the Roman Catholic Seminary with integrated teaching.

When the 2 Roman Catholic colleges providing no teaching were excluded together with the Roman Catholic seminary which integrated all its pastoral studies teaching (Chapter 7 Section II) the average length of a course was 17½ hours with a range of 2 hours to 45 hours.

It also appeared from the reading lists and course outlines that teaching at all but four colleges reflected a predominately psycho-dynamic non-directive approach. It was therefore not surprising that in the directors' responses to my questions about the thumbnail sketches (See Chapter 6 Section If) 13 out of the

30 directors indicated that they would give the person a name. Most of the directors also at some point in my interview stressed the need to consider people as individuals. It follows therefore that both college directors and the postal respondents teaching counselling courses emphasised the uniqueness of each person and the term 'affirming the person' was used frequently. This stress also resulted in colleges promoting the Rogerian 'non-directive' model which can be summed up in one director's comment as follows:

'The counsellor does not set out 'to advise', 'to sort out', 'to find answers to', 'to encourage a certain course of action', or to 'do something' for the client (although each may have a place in the course of helping others). Rather the counsellor seeks to stimulate the resources of client's personality to work upon the problem.'

Inevitably the non-directive approach drew predominately on the psycho-dynamic theory of personality based on the work of Freud and Jung. This approach also resulted in little or no attention being paid to the other major theories of personality - behaviourism, trait and learning theories, although four colleges gave some teaching on one or more of these topics.

Theoretically the regressive emphasis of psycho-dynamic psychology should have meant that students' attention was drawn to how this theory could help them appreciate the importance of reminiscence to elderly people, to encourage elderly people to review their lives and to integrate the past with the present. (Although it would not have necessarily helped them to encourage elderly people to see the need for repentance and restitution for their part in the outcome of the events which they were recalling). No course did so.

However, with reminiscence it is important to distinguish between abreaction - i.e. the 'reliving' of an alleged traumatic event or condition in childhood or infancy which is a psycho-dynamic activity and the cognitive approach which focusses on the conscious meaning of things, events and persons in the present.

Another problem with the counselling approach adopted by colleges was that Bergman (1979 p. 138) says that, 'Psychotherapy for older people differs in many respects from that given in earlier life.'

(note that in the previous paragraph he has equated counselling with psychotherapy). He identifies counselling as involving the use of dependence as a therapeutic tool, with the aim of reducing the old person's feeling of helplessness. This approach allows old people to have an illusion of power and control over the therapist and encourages them to face realistically the choices that they must make. Nouwen and Gaffney (1976) see counselling slightly differently. This may be because Bergmann is concerned primarily with those who are mentally ill whereas Nouwen and Gaffney are concerned about normal ageing.

'Jesus did not multiply bread before he had received five loaves from the boy in the crowd which he wanted to help. Only when we are able to receive the elderly as our teachers will it be possible to offer the help they are looking for.' (p.153)

Even teaching basic principles of listening, beginning and ending meetings, the timing and the place of meetings, and the influence of environmental factors need thought in terms of elderly people's situations. Students were predominately active young men who although hopefully sensitive will not normally have faced the effects of having to share personal problems after a life time of independence (a characteristic lauded by our society). Neither would students have had much experience of spending an extensive amount of time alone and the consequent diminished opportunity to share thoughts and ideas with other people. Students also needed to be aware of the effects of elderly people being unused to asking for help or expressing their own views. Neither should colleges have ignored the effects of diminished hearing.

Only one college allocated teaching time during the counselling course to counselling elderly people. On investigation it proved to be a 2 hour lecture outlining the various health, welfare and voluntary services available to elderly people and is therefore documented in Chapter 10 Section VI.

At a further 3 colleges where the directors themselves were involved in the counselling course elderly people were featured or implied in the following 4 role plays. They were, 1) A minister counselling a demanding manipulating elderly person; 2) a retired

minister whose grandchild had died in an accident and who was severely depressed and questioning what life and faith was all about; 3) a geriatric patient 'slobbering his way through an apple' (the directors went on to say to me 'How do you care? How do you get through?'); 4) a daughter who had just lost her mother whom she has looked after for 15 years. She had mixed feelings of gladness and guilt. The director went on to say 'the person who plays the minister's role is always thrown. Yet this is a situation every minister meets frequently.' All these role plays are negative - some more so than others. Yet a minister is generally working with normal people. Why therefore were students exposed to these extremes? All of us need to ask other people for help and advice when facing a new situation or experience. Christians will want to discuss situations generally with their minister and expect him to give a Christian perspective. It cannot be taken for granted that ministers and even more that students will know how to help a person with, for example, the normal experience of seeking new ways of using the extra time that retirement brings, or integrating themselves into a new church and community after moving home, or seeking new avenues of service having resigned from being a Sunday School teacher or an Elder. Much of the adjustment is similar for people of all ages and therefore the similarities and differences should and could be worked into the role plays which were the predominant method of teaching employed in counselling courses.

The emphasis on role plays was also a matter of concern to me. Role plays involved only the students practising on each other even when all the students were male and of a similar age. How can a man 'act' a woman and know that he is getting the correct feelings without it at least initially being seen, heard and commented upon by a woman? How can someone know that they are correctly 'feeling into' a person aged 60, 70 or 80 with 50 years of married life behind them without someone older initially explaining some of the feelings and checking out a student's performance? And yet no old people were involved in the counselling sessions. I could not identify any instances in which case studies were used, nor of students suggesting situations which they had met in their secular or church placements and yet these could have provided a wealth of examples drawn from all age groups and hopefully all kinds of social backgrounds.

One postal respondent responded positively to my enquiry. He mentioned elderly people in three out of five counselling topics - illness, bereavement and mental illness. He stressed that the emphasis in his teaching was on non-directive skills learning and not on information about illness or bereavement. He said that occasionally one person in a role play would be elderly. The point that he tried to stress was that 'the elderly often respond as they would have responded in earlier years and that age accentuates these factors'.

The colleges in which the four role plays were performed or elderly people referred to allocated an average of 14½ hours to counselling with a range of 8 to 30 hours. When the non-conformist college who gave a whole session to 'counselling elderly people' is included the average length of the counselling course rose to 17½ hours with the same range of 8 to 30 hours.

The inclusion of any reference to elderly people was not therefore related to the length of the course as the average for all courses was 17½ hours. Significantly it did relate to the director's awareness of elderly people. Both the three directors involved and the one postal respondent who referred to elderly people during counselling courses were at colleges where elderly people were included in other areas of pastoral studies teaching.

b) Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills Imparted to Students

The counselling courses were more concerned with the development of skills than with the acquisition of knowledge. This differentiated that course from the majority of the syllabus. However, only 4 role plays involving elderly people were used and these were biased. The counselling methods taught are at variance with the more direct methods of communication used and understood by elderly people. It maybe significant that one college is rethinking its whole approach to the teaching of communication skills. This arose because of a flood of complaints from recent college leavers that the current counselling course had left them completely unable to empathise with the elderly people in their congregations.

II. SICK VISITINGa) Introduction

In the last section I noted that counselling skills received a high priority in the teaching time of theological colleges. It appeared to be mainly psycho-dynamic and problem based. It was outside the remit of this study to analyse syllabi in detail but I was not aware of it including home visiting. Indeed it may have deliberately been omitted because of hospital placements which are discussed in detail in Chapter 11.

However the omission of teaching about sick visiting at 15 colleges came to me as a complete surprise. Indeed I had included a question in the main part of my questionnaire about sick visiting precisely because I expected it to be taught to all students and I wanted to ensure that there was at least one question which could be answered positively!

The reason I had expected sick visiting to feature in theological training is that ministering to people who are ill or unable to join in church worship has always been an important part of the church's ministry. In the Anglican church's Book of Common Prayer and in the Roman Catholic Missal specific services are included.

At one R.C. college teaching arose out of the student's experience of visiting elderly people in their own homes, (See Chapter 7 Section II). At the other 15 colleges the subject was subsumed in a variety of courses with elderly people generally only receiving a passing reference.

The length of time given to the subject area in these 16 colleges varied from 1 to 6 hours and consideration of elderly people varied from passing case illustrations to a maximum of 2 hours. In one college no general teaching about home visiting was given and the 2 hours available concentrated solely on elderly people. In every instance the teaching was undertaken by the college staff. No college discussed the different roles of ministers, licensed lay workers or laity in visiting and no discussion took place about the circumstances necessitating a home visit. There seemed to be an implicit assumption that if a person felt they could not get to church they should be visited at home, although one pastoral studies director considered that ideally the minister should

systematically visit every home in his parish; when this was impossible at least those on the membership role should be visited regularly. Another director felt that visiting should be to

'Those who ask for one but otherwise the minister has to decide. It isn't so much visiting the first time, or for anointing, as visiting after that.'

One director whilst not discussing the different functions of ministers and laity pointed out that it is not the minister's job to do it all.

'He must be a teacher, but that teaching must arise from his own practise. He shows others how to be involved without making a burden of the visit. He must help them to establish rapport. I go to town on the type of people who make visitors. The young are good but unreliable. They must think about the time of day, how to enter, what to do. The visitor must be open. It is not the length of the visit that counts it is its quality. They must assess needs including spiritual ones. They must be bold about praying, speaking, stimulating the person, sharing news, really listening to what they say. Recognise that there is 70 years of life behind them and that you are ministering to perhaps the experiences of the last 2 years. The first visit and introductions to the laity should always be done personally by the minister.'

As at other points in the interviews Anglican directors commented that the practical implications of visiting were the concern of the directors of post-ordination training. In this context it was particularly surprising that 7 non-conformist colleges gave students no help in defining which people needed home visits given that after completion of college training they have no further systematic training, although they are likely to have charge of a church.

There are four possible reasons for the lack of discussion. How much time a minister can spend on home visiting depends on

- 1) the size of the church; 2) the number of sick, dying or housebound members there are for whom he is pastorally responsible;
- 3) the range of activities in the church with which he is involved; 4) the range of gifts and skills available from the laity.

Additionally in respect of Anglican and R.C. students there is the fact that they will not, at any event, for several years be in charge of their own work load and therefore their visiting will reflect their senior minister's priorities. I would, however, argue that discussion relating to priority groups for home visiting could enable students to begin to realise that their future ministry will be pressured and that they will be faced with competing claims on their time and that they will need to set priorities and allocate available time to different tasks.

Three Anglican directors in response to the question about the teaching of sick visiting reminded me that they considered practical training the responsibility of the parish and post-ordination training arrangements.

One director summed it up:

'We differentiate between the how and why.  
The 'how' should come in their parishes.  
That's why we do nothing on funerals, baptisms  
etc. Every priest has his own ideas.'

b) Communion at Home and Anointing the Sick

This section could be included in Chapter 9 Section II Teaching on Worship but I have chosen to consider it here as only one Anglican college referred to it, more than fleetingly, during their liturgy course. The only 7 other colleges to consider these sacraments did so in other courses. 2 R.C. colleges drew attention to the changed use of Anointing since Varican II and 2 Anglican directors referred to similar changes in the Anglican church. All 4 endeavoured to ensure that students realised how this sacrament may be perceived by elderly people i.e. as the sacrament given when death is expected (whereas today it is used much more frequently in other cases of sickness).

The other issues that the Roman Catholic directors raised and discussed with students were 1) the feelings of people who for 50, 60 or 70 years have received communion daily or weekly and, as they can no longer get to church, receive it less often.  
2) The implications of Roman Catholic laity taking the Host to housebound people after Sunday Mass. In this case the director's main concern was that direct contact between the priest and the

individual would be lessened, which could lead to the elderly person feeling that he was no longer important to the priest.

3) The major importance of the priest's visit for a housebound person whereas, to the priest, the person was only one of 18-20 people to be visited that week. The director stressed that the Communion service itself should not be hurried and that details of the setting like the placing of the table the preparation of the person, including the opportunity for Confession, should neither reflect hurry or casualness.

The Anglican colleges who gave attention to sick communion were all from the Anglo-Catholic tradition. Two of them, like a non-conformist director stressed the desirability of a group of people gathering together at the elderly person's home. As one director said, 'I stress that the elderly person should be the centre of communion, a community.' Another director summed up the general feeling of this group of respondents,

'We are ministered to by the elderly as much as we minister to them. Communion with a housebound person should always include neighbours. Remember to be sensitive to idiosyncracies. Use a liturgy that they understand. Make sure that they feel a part of what is going on.'

Each of these Anglican colleges included Steer (1966) on their reading lists. He gives a detailed thoughtful resume on priestly responses to requests for Holy Communion and/or Anointing, the alternative services available and the methods of ministration. But in only one instance were students required to read it.

There is also a problem with the book. In 1966 the Book of Common Prayer provided the order of all services for use in the Church of England. Since 1980 however the main service book has changed and the sections of Steer's book dealing with formal services really need expounding in the light of the changes brought by the use of the Alternative Service Book.

c) General Visiting by Ministers

i) Books available

A number of books about pastoral matters have been published in recent years but apart from a new SPCK series most are American in origin. However it is striking that I have been unable to identify any books including chapters or references to

either the pastoral needs of old people or more specifically the visiting of old people at home published in Britain except for Steer's (1966) book which has been mentioned and which is now out of print. It provides a wealth of sensitive advice. However, it only appeared on the reading lists of 8 colleges. This is not altogether surprising because it is written by an Anglican minister used to frequent use of the sacraments. People from non-conformist or evangelical backgrounds would find the book significantly more difficult - although not impossible - to use. Unfortunately I can identify no book written for evangelical ministers and students. The result of this paucity of literature was that directors if they chose to teach the topic had to draw on their own experience and skills.

ii) Issues considered by colleges

14 directors (including 5 of those referred to in the previous section) referred to elderly people in discussions about home visiting.

Many factors were raised briefly,

'You must raise your voice.'

'Be sure that you use large print books.'

'You need to sustain rather than to do.'

'Beware of their class consciousness.'

'Minor irritations (e.g. football being played outside your window) become major ones in old age.'

However, two factors were stressed by the majority of directors. One was that attention must always be given to the individual even if his speech is repetitive.

'The aim is to help them to show people that they really care. The aim of visiting is to provide human contact above all else.'

But one director saw it differently,

'Old people must feel part of the Kingdom of God. That they can still contribute. You must be willing to be ministered to as well as to minister. It is time-consuming.... However, if you are paying attention you will be irritated by their criticism of the present, the constant repetition because of failing memory, the problem of the younger person constantly answering for the old person... But, and I stress it, if they pay attention to the person then the rewards are enormous.'

The other factor mentioned was the importance of touching the person because elderly people generally have less human contact. No-one though drew attention to the fact that today's elderly people have lived in a society, in which until very recently, touching each other was generally only permissible between members of the family.

Two directors spoke about the importance of observing carefully during visits. One said,

'They must be aware of the person's physical surroundings. What aids do they have? What do they need? Is money a problem? Do they appear worried and anxious? Why? How can they be helped? Do they know what services are available to them?'

It is predictable that the images portrayed by the directors were predominantly negative. Even the director who had discovered the positive contribution elderly frail people can make assumed they would be repetitive, have bad memories and find fault. Some elderly people may have one or more of those traits, many don't. The people that do may well be in need of spiritual help. However, the comments recorded here reflect the general tenor of Steer's book so it is not surprising that in the absence of other influences the positive features did not receive attention.

### iii) How Elderly People View the Minister

It was when talking about sick visiting that six directors tried to stress to students the image that elderly people have of a minister and how they may give his words more importance than they deserve. As one director said 'his word carries as much weight as a doctors'. In one study in America Veroff quoted by Ellor et al (1983 p. 120) found that 45% of people over 65 sought the help of clergy, followed by 43% who went to a doctor when they had a personal problem.

One director stressed to students the loneliness of people who are housebound but he felt that the students were too young and active to understand what it was really like. Three directors raised the issue of how to get away at the end of visits.

d) Attitudes, knowledge and skills imparted to students

The 8 directors who discussed Sick Communion and Anointing of the Sick used discussion, lecture and case study. Their students should have become more sensitive to the needs of elderly sick people and feel more confident in administering those sacraments. Nine directors very much in passing referred to specific needs of elderly people but so little attention was paid that it is unlikely to have increased students' knowledge or skills. As the comments were generally negative any effects on attitudes that they may have had will have been negative.

Five directors used a mixture of methods; examples from student placements, student led seminars, role plays, case studies, transfer of hospital visiting experience through discussion, as well as lecturing. At all these colleges students should not only have gained in knowledge but also in skill.

However, generally students received only a minimum increase in knowledge. At the remaining colleges students got no teaching although their contact with elderly people in their own homes ought to form a significant part of the church's ministry.

No director inferred that skills taught during counselling modules were integrated into teaching about sick visiting although I did not ask any direct question on that point. In only two colleges was experience gained during placements brought into discussions on the subject area although directors in most other colleges 'fed in' examples from their own experience as ministers. It would appear that home visiting of any age group, but more particularly the elderly had become less important as they gave a greater emphasis to counselling. Alternatively, because sick visiting is predominantly a skills based subject it was deliberately left until after ordination if the person was an Anglican, after which training is the responsibility of the director of post-ordination training.

The third possible reason for its diminished importance was that it was subsumed under teaching about death, dying and bereavement so this will be considered in the next section.

III. DEATH, DYING AND BEREAVEMENTa) Background Information

68.25% of all deaths recorded in 1982 occurred to people aged 65 and over (Central Statistical Office 1984). Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p. 18) found in one study that in 74% of cases death had been preceded by illhealth lasting six months or more. For these reasons alone consideration of the part teaching about death, dying and bereavement played in the pastoral studies syllabus was important.

Traditionally death has rightly been a pre-occupation of religion and there are many biblical references to it. When the person has been loved and cherished and has loved and cherished in return the grieving process will involve pain and it takes time to adjust to life without the loved one. The church, and particularly the minister, will have a key role to play particularly for those with a religious commitment. It is not surprising, therefore, that references to the minister occur most often in books about death, dying and bereavement (e.g. Hinton 1967 p. 192-3, 124-5; Kubler-Ross 1970; Cartwright, Hockey and Anderson 1973 p. 126-7; Cartwright 1982 p. 49 and 224-5).

b) Bereavement

Writers, e.g. those cited above, are agreed that the process of grieving in adulthood does not vary with age and indeed in broad terms the process is similar to that involved in any major loss or crisis e.g. long term unemployment, retirement, limb amputation, compulsory rehousing (Caplan 1961 p. 40, Friend 1962 p. 151, Parkes 1975 p. 212-226, Webber and Gearing 1979 p. 17-18).

(Although a cautionary proviso about the lack of systematic research to prove the point by point connection is made by Parkes 1975 p.223) There is a general consensus that preparatory mourning such as can occur after a diagnosis of malignancy, helps in the grieving process after death (Kubler-Ross 1970 p. 142, Parkes 1975 p. 156-7).

Two other factors are also important. 1) The adjustment of a person after experiencing a death is influenced by the way that they have coped with earlier bereavements (Parkes 1975 p.160, Kubler-Ross 1975 p.6, Pincus 1981 p.132). 2) The quality rather than just the length of the relationship (Kubler-Ross 1975).

However, although these guidelines are useful in caring about the bereaved people generally there would appear to be certain additional factors to be borne in mind when helping an elderly person cope with a bereavement. The major study on widowhood in old age by Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p.99) shows that 40% of those widowed had problems of mobility and caring for themselves. If mobility is limited, leaving the house difficult, looking after oneself an effort, then the person has less energy for coping with the bereavement. More time is also likely to be spent at home just at the time when there is the need to be able to get away from the memories. Therefore for these reasons it is important that other people take the initiative in visiting the bereaved elderly person. In the later stages of adjustment limited mobility and finance will affect the opportunities for finding new ways of gaining satisfaction from life (Bowling and Cartwright 1982 p. 215-17).

Cultural factors also have particular importance for elderly people and, although the wearing of black at funerals and the year's mourning have now almost died out within the Christian tradition, elderly people often need to talk about the changed rituals and to integrate them into their own experience (Webber and Gearing 1979 p. 15-16).

Lack of social support is also more likely to occur in old age. In Bowling and Cartwright's study (1982 p.171) 16% of the widowed said that they had no-one to comfort them and 21% had no-one to offer practical help - in each case because they had no children. Secondary stresses are also more likely to occur; for example Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p.97) found that symptoms of ill-health rose dramatically. However, Parkes (1975 p.32-38) showed that young widows may also experience increased ill-health. The difference with elderly people maybe that bereavement 'triggers' an already underlying condition e.g. arthritis, heart condition.

c) Dying

Coming to terms with dying involves similar stages to those involved in bereavement - numbness, denial, anger, depression and acceptance. In addition there may be the stage of bargaining (Kubler-Ross 1970). But even in old age death may be unexpected.

Indeed Bowling and Cartwright's study (1982 p.16-17) showed that 56% of deaths were either instantaneous or unexpected by the spouse even when there had been previous illness. But within this statistic there was a variation in that only 35% of deaths were unexpected in the over 85 age group, whereas in other over 65 age groups it was 61%. If we compare those statistics with the statistic quoted earlier - that 74% of people had ill-health for at least 6 months before death (Bowling and Cartwright 1982 p.18) - then it is probable that for the minister the division between visiting the sick and visiting the dying is blurred. However, one significant factor may enable the minister to differentiate between the two groups. Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p.18) found that relatives noted that confusion was more likely to occur as death approached. However, Kasterbaum (1979 p. 114) notes that professionals and lay people have both tended to misdiagnose this 'confusion' as mental illness whereas he would diagnose it as 'terminal drop'.

Ministers also need to bear in mind that unlike many younger people elderly people frequently do not wait until the last few months of life to come to terms with their own death. I have frequently referred in this study to the value and need for people to reminisce in order to integrate the past with the present and this is a major activity in coming to terms with dying at any age. When this is completed the person moves on to a new phase of detachment and is able to live with a new freedom (Kubler-Ross 1970). It is not uncommon for elderly people to say things like 'I've had my time. I'm ready to go and I'm not afraid to die.' They have gone through all the stages (Brearley 1975 p.50 and Reid 1976 p.30). However, they may have to wait for the final call a long time and sometimes it can be very difficult to continue to maintain relationships whilst looking to the life beyond. On the other hand others are able to give themselves in a new way to the people who come in contact with them.

d) The Minister's Role

The church has traditionally had a special relationship with people who are facing death and/or bereavement and a minister is almost always involved in the taking of a funeral. In relation to elderly

people Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p.49) found that 25% of spouses had talked to a Christian minister or rabbi about the illness of their husband or wife. 48% of the bereaved had had a visit from a minister or rabbi although Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p.224) did not identify the number of occasions when this was solely in relation to funeral arrangements. They also found that among those people that the minister visited only 50% had no regular weekly visitors. Bowling and Cartwright (1982 p.225) suggested that ministers, where they are involved in the funeral, should consider systematically visiting all elderly widowed people. In an earlier study of people during the year before they died Cartwright, Hocking and Anderson (1973 p.38) also found that the minister was more likely to visit when the people did not live alone. Thus the minister is more likely to visit both dying and bereaved people if they live with others. This is a bias that should be rectified if the minister is to make the best use of his time and his skills.

For those with a Christian faith the minister is likely to be the visitor who can give most hope; who can help people look to the future and see the assurance of new life - of eternal life. He can share, and show, how the Christian life is a journey to God and that death is but a turning point - all be it a highly significant one - on the journey (Steer 1966 p.62). Steer (1966 p.62) also points out that the death of close friends and relatives can help detach the person from the pre-occupations of this earth and enable them to fix their attention on the 'glad day of reunion on the other side of death'. Steer also considers the judgement of God and reminds us that it is part of God's love and therefore what determines a man's attitude to Jesus Christ is shown in his deeds and words. He does however also recall the 'hell fire' pulpit teaching of the pre 1939 period (Steer 1966 p.65). Teaching which has been told to me many times by old people, is referred to by Reid (1976 p.29) and which I believe required discussion with elderly non-practising Christians facing death. Not in the sense of confirming the 'hell fire' teaching, but in order to ensure that the teaching does not prevent the resolution of the process of dying. This may be why the minister will find that there is a significant

difference in the attitude to death held by religious and non-religious people. The latter group tend to be much more fearful whereas religious people's attitudes tend to be more positive (Swenson 1961 p.49-52, Poss 1981 p.33 and p.95).

Steer (1966 p.61) also pays attention to the Sacrament of Anointing (or as it used often to be called Extreme Unction) which was frequently administered by Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic priests when people were near to death. (Whilst this is still true, Anointing is now used much more generally particularly by people of all denominations involved in the Charismatic Renewal movement). As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, ministers normally take funeral services. Several researchers (e.g. Perske 1964 p.25-35, Foote 1971 p.97-100, Muller 1974 p.126-130) have identified that the minister who is a good listener and who is able to bring the benefits of religious faith and sacramental rituals to people can make a major contribution to the well being of mourners. However, bad planning and bad timing may create added distress (Glaser and Strauss 1968 p. 245). Gray and Moberg (1977 p.194) also recommend that as the funeral often precedes the pangs of grief the minister's greatest impact is usually in the second week following the bereavement and he should visit then and at intervals during the first year of bereavement.

Against this brief background what teaching did theological students therefore receive?

e. Teaching in Relation to Death, Dying and Bereavement

All 28 colleges with a human growth and development course included death, dying and bereavement within that syllabus. In all cases this was approached from the psychological perspective. From the reading lists and the directors' comments it was obvious that many drew substantially on the works of Kubler-Ross and Parkes. Links were made in 4 colleges between the process of bereavement and the process of coming to terms with other losses.

In 9 out of the 31 colleges practical teaching about taking a funeral service was given and at other colleges students visited crematoria, mortuaries and funeral parlours. Five Anglican

colleges pointed out again that they were concerned with knowledge and that students would learn how to take funerals when they went to their first parish. On the other hand 5 non-conformist colleges stipulated that during the student's summer church placements he was to be involved alongside another minister in taking at least one cremation and one funeral. Another non-conformist college gave a useful handout to back-up the enactment of a funeral in the college chapel.

In 19 out of the 31 colleges (who were involved in this survey) teaching about death, dying and bereavement during human growth and development courses was supplemented by special courses or sessions. At 7 of these colleges no reference was made to the needs of elderly people. In fact one director said that the implication behind most of the teaching was that the person was elderly so there was no need for special teaching. When I analysed this director's 12 hour course attention was focussed on the needs according to whether the death was anticipated or not, when the grieving had commenced and knowledge about the stages and feelings. However, the sessions were based mainly on discussion as students were expected to have read about the subject previously and the director said that pastoral issues tended to come up spontaneously. Nevertheless, none of the specific points mentioned earlier in this chapter were recorded.

During the interviews 2 directors made the following ageist remarks.

'Students must watch and stand near to the old woman because she is likely to collapse at a grave.'

and

'Students must identify elderly people who have not adjusted to previous bereavements because they need special help.... they must also be aware of the effects of insecurity, the change of life style, the effects of being mucked about by officials and to recognise that the church is only an extension of that bureaucracy.'

My experience suggests that in neither of these instances is the recorded behaviour the perogative of elderly people.

Rituals, their importance to elderly people and their demise were discussed at one college. A general practitioner at another college emphasised that people always die of an illness and never of old age which startled the students. This is not surprising as all too often illness in old age is seen as untreatable. (Gearing and Slater 1979 p. 56-6).

The film 'The Life that is Left' (Religious Films 1977) which was used in three colleges is one of the best sources that I have encountered for demonstrating through people's actual experiences the variations in reactions to grief, the similarities and differences which occur with age and circumstances.

The paucity of specific comments about elderly people was disturbing because ministers take more funerals involving an elderly person than they do involving people of any other age group. The lack of specific comment was also regrettable in that colleges paid particular attention to preparing students for their ministry to people who are dying or bereaved.

That there is a concentration on death in older age groups is unavoidable given that 68.28% of all deaths in 1982 occurred to people over the age of 65 (Central Statistical Office 1984) but inevitably this reinforces the image that old age is full of deterioration and loss. Stress was laid by some directors on the fact that widows must be visited, that attention to those who are dying must take priority over all other duties and yet practical attention to visiting people in their own homes was conspicuous by its absence in counselling or sick visiting teaching. There was a similar absence of attention to practicalities except by one college who warned students to be sure that they knew the procedure to follow after a death and to whom to refer people with problems.

Excluding the colleges which considered that elderly people were implicitly considered throughout teaching on death, dying and bereavement 12 colleges included it explicitly. However, students were given no indication of who, amongst the bereaved, should be visited other than the general group of 'the widowed'. Elderly people may suffer other very significant bereavements e.g. children and friends but this was not referred to. Neither was the effects of 'hell fire' teaching mentioned although this could significantly affect the person's fear of death.

f. Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills gained by Students

Considerable basic knowledge about this subject was given to the majority of students through both the human growth and development course and through other specialised courses. However, few students learnt about the specific factors relating to death, dying and bereavement in old age. Skills in relation to elderly grieving or dying persons was only gained by a minority of students.

Colleges were certainly concerned about students' attitudes to people who were dying or bereaved but again no specific attention was paid to the attitudes of students towards elderly people. Thus the important issue of whether students feel that death was easier to accept when a person had had a long life and if so how would this affect their ministry was not raised.

IV. COMMENTS

Thus yet again in this chapter we have the situation that there was a paucity of teaching about specific aspects of ageing. It seemed hardly likely that if so little attention has been given under all the various headings so far considered that the situation will be different in relation to the placements students had. However, given that people over 65 form 15.27% of the population of England and Wales (CSO 1984) students should have met them during both their secular and church placements. The next chapter records the students' experiences as perceived by the directors.

## CHAPTER 11

### PLACEMENTS

#### I. SECULAR PLACEMENTS

##### a) Introduction

Different denominations made different arrangements for the provision of secular placements and there were also variations between colleges within the same denomination. Three extended placements in secular agencies of up to 2 months were recommended in the ACCM report (1976). The length and number of the placements were modified in the ACCM regulations (1980) which required all students under 30 to undertake 2 placements (called pastoral studies units (PSUs)) of between 2 and 4 weeks duration, or the equivalent time. Students over 30 were required to undertake one placement. Placements were generally supervised by the host agency and both supervisors and students were required to write reports at the end of student's placement. Two Anglican colleges negotiated separate arrangements with ACCM and did not have secular placements in the year 1982-3. (An anomaly which will gradually disappear.)

Placements by some non-conformist and R.C. colleges were to the ACCM model. In addition, 2 R.C. colleges arranged for students, in their first year, to visit the same individuals in their own homes each week. Two non-conformist colleges had no placements.

The Salvation Army and the Church Army colleges, who arranged all their placements within their own social service establishments, are excluded from the analysis. This is because their major objective was to assess whether the students, on completion of their training, should be employed in one of their own establishments or serve a citadel or local church. They were similar to work experience placements.

b) Student Reports on Placements

I experienced fundamental problems in relation to the directors recall of student experiences of their placements.

There were four reasons for this. 1) All reports were returned promptly to students after assessment. 2) In Anglican colleges the assessment was by an external assessor. 3) Reports were essentially evaluations of student performance. 4) The timing of my visit was many months after most block secular placements had been completed. The result was that most recall came from directors who organised placements as half-day secondments over one or two terms, and more particularly from those who arranged seminar time during which students could share their experiences. Recall was minimal from directors who arranged for students to spend a 2 - 4 week block in an agency.

As will be shown students were most likely to meet elderly people in hospital placements which were arranged for students at 25 colleges so that lack of documentation in respect of block placements is particularly regrettable. However, from the evidence it is possible to make some observations about the efficacy of different types of placement.

c. Students' Experiences of Hospital Placements

(i) Block Hospital Placements

The Hospital Chaplaincy Council, a section of the General Synod of the Church of England, arranged special courses throughout Britain for theological students of all denominations. Six colleges took advantage of this arrangement. In each case students were allocated to a location, usually close to relatives or friends so that expense was minimised.

A further nine colleges arranged block placements in conjunction with individual hospital chaplains.

Two directors commented on the problem of the chaplains holding a different theological perspective to that of their students, and one college had deliberately ceased to expose students to a hospital placements for this reason.

He illustrated the dilemma in the following way,

'We believe that only those who have accepted Christ as Lord and Saviour in this life will go to Heaven and it is our responsibility to sensitively evangelise at every opportunity especially when a person is sick or dying. Some hospital chaplains take a different view and emphasise, for example, Anointing, Communion or Purgatory. This does not help our students relate their theology to the practical situation they meet in hospital. If they had longer in college that would not matter but there is not time to deal with it.'

As 50% of hospital beds in the U.K. (DHSS p.36) are occupied at any one time by people over the age of 65, it would have been reasonable to expect that students on hospital placements would have had contact with elderly patients. However, only one director mentioned a student's report on this topic. He said that when students first went to geriatric wards they were

'very shocked by the conditions but they quickly adjust because they are fairly affable and are able to keep conversations going. They don't seem to get depressed but then I don't particularly look for it.'

I also have no evidence that students' hospital experiences were used in college teaching. Had it been there would have been some mention of elderly people. It would appear that this is an unsuccessful way for students to obtain experience of elderly people.

#### (ii) Colleges providing Half-Day Placements

At 5 colleges students spent most of their time visiting patients with a chaplain's debriefing session at the end of the afternoon. Occasionally, one of the consultants would talk informally to the students. At a further 3 colleges, visiting patients on the ward was balanced both by a chaplain's debriefing and by theoretical inputs about illness and the structure of the health service. (Discussed in Chapter 8 Section IV). All the remaining college directors arranged one or more college seminars at which experiences could be shared. All the students of this group of 11 colleges had considerable contact with elderly people e.g. visiting the same 2 or 3 elderly people for 5, 8 or 12 weeks.

(iii) Directors' Reports of Student Experiences during Hospital Placements

In every instance where the placement was integrated into the college timetable, there was feedback to the directors by the students about their experiences with elderly people. The responses directors received varied according to an individual's previous experience of hospitals and elderly people, the standard of care provided by hospital staff together with the quality and quantity of input about ageing and elderly people they had previously received at theological college. However, the experiences recalled by the directors showed that many students found the experience traumatic.

Even if students were visiting on a general ward the staff asked them 'to go to the elderly because they don't have other visitors'. A director reported during my interview,

'Initially there is the problem of communication, of caring. They find it sad and depressing. They are knocked back for a while. It is an unique experience because they have no right to be there. You have to make all the running. There is an identity crisis. They want to be dressed as priests. They haven't looked at how they achieve communication.'

This happened even though many of his students had spent a year visiting old people in residential homes. Other directors made the following negative observations:

'Issues they tend to raise to begin with are anxiety about communicating and about dying. What is expected of a minister? They raise questions about the quality of the nursing, about senility. It is dealt with very sensitively and positively and they don't seem to be sucked into the hopelessness. I see them cultivate a sense of expectancy and anticipation.'

'It depends on the student's age and maturity. If they are young then it's heavy going. They are listening to the same old boring stories and are looking for ways of getting on to something else.'

'They learn about the specific problems of ageing - memory, incontinance, being unwanted. (Note: the consultant always stresses how he is besieged by those relatives who say that they want granny taken into

hospital.) They learn what is going to happen to them when they get older. The process of ageing. They learn about relating (although in the write-up I discovered that they had never learnt how to talk, for instance, to someone who has had a stroke or who is deaf). They learn about the repetitiveness of their talk.'

'Very quickly after they start visiting they discover two things. Low expectancy leads to disintegration. Someone wrote a verbatim report. In it a patient said 'What am I doing here?' The response was 'I don't know.' This led to the realisation of helplessness and being out of control. That is what Christian ministry is all about. The person who tries to control everything is the negative minister. They feel threatened because there is no role. Because they are not dictating to the people about the God Experience and what I might be to them.'

'Students are horrified at the conditions and the helplessness of the patients. They want more community involvement but they don't see themselves as becoming involved in the political struggle for more resources. They hope that they won't have to visit a geriatric hospital again, but of course they will. It is good for them to have the negative experience: to see what old age can be like.'

Only one director encouraged the students' experiences to be fed into college based seminars, and to examine the positive contribution a minister can make. He asked them,

'What happens when someone is first admitted to hospital? What happens when it is the first time in their lives? How perplexed are they by it? What are the reactions to the pressures created for families when they gather because of illness when they have never gathered in the past, or when there is family discord?

Another college director who focussed on enabling students to think deeply about both suffering and ageing and their theological implications prior to their hospital experience gave the following graphic story. It shows how a well prepared student can gain a positive response from even a very frail, allegedly confused person.

'Last year a girl student was asked by the ward sister to sit with an old lady who the Sister said was completely senile, and who was probably hardly aware. She was passed speaking. The girl sat down, took hold of her hand, told the lady her name, explained who she was and where she came from. Then she sat quietly for a while. Then she prayed both for her personally and also for her relatives. (She had found out from Sister

about them.) Then she sat quietly again. At the end of a total of about 15 minutes, still holding the lady's hand she told her that she was going. As she loosened her hand the lady drew a cross on her palm...'.

The varying reactions to these placements indicates how much sensitive training and support students need if they are to avoid involvement in a downward spiral of helplessness and despair.

But at the same time training opens up the positive opportunities hospital visiting can bring to a sensitive minister's relationship with his members.

#### iv) Discussion of Hospital Placements

I am concerned at the images of ageing which were gained by students undertaking block placements. Tragically those hospital experiences - often providing the only contact students had with elderly people - will have reinforced the negative images of ageing. Students were unlikely to know or relate their experience to the fact that less than 5% of elderly people at any one time are in any form of institutional care (Tinker 1984 p.17). Neither is the hopelessness, the helplessness of elderly people necessary. It is the result of society's distribution of resources to the health and social services. This issue would have made an interesting debate in ethics lectures!

Reports from directors to me also indicated the potential for enabling students to gain a grounding in hospital visiting skills. Most students will only have vague memories, if any, of hospital in-patient treatment. It is very unlikely that any will have known long term in-patient treatment and none will have experienced a hospital bed as a permanent home. Thus students needed to learn about the many problems associated with a hospital stay. How it feels and the struggle involved in adjusting to permanent handicap as a result of (for example) a stroke. The effort in trying to improve sufficiently in order to return home, the monotonous routine, the powerlessness of the individual in an institution. All this is important if the student is going

to genuinely comfort the patient and not get sucked into the hopelessness that pervades some of the institutions recorded by the directors. The conditions experienced by the students were not exceptional and even hospital staff need to be challenged to understand elderly patients' feelings and reactions as was highlighted in the Joint Working Party Report by the Royal College of Nursing and the British Geriatrics Society (1978).

It is interesting to note that directors did not recall any students on Hospital Chaplaincy Council courses who reported disturbing experiences. As these were short block placements students may have had no opportunity to 'work through' their feelings. There are five possible explanations for non-reporting 1) contact with patients, particularly elderly ones, may have been so distressing that they were ashamed or unable to share the negative features, feeling that these reflected personal failure. 2) Students may have only visited 'exciting' wards (e.g. intensive care) as was reported by one director. It is sad that exciting wards rarely included a geriatric assessment unit where students could have observed how imaginative geriatric care, combined with positive attitudes, can lead to the recognition that most illness in old age is treatable. 3) the lack of reports may have been due to superficial contact with patients during a block placement. The attitude towards visiting the same person week after week will be different to the attitude adopted towards someone only visited for two weeks. 4) Students may not have visited the same people frequently during the block placement. In any case contact would have been more superficial and the pain of identification with individuals in distress would have been minimised. 4) Some students may not have been disturbed as contact with very frail elderly people just re-inforced their view that old people are confused, helpless and dependent.

In the chapter on counselling it was recorded that students exclusively practised on each other even when all the students were male. This inevitably led to a concentration of counselling intelligent, articulate, fit, relatively well-integrated people and in many cases within a relatively narrow age band. (Although the age range of students in training was

from 18 upwards and one director reported a student of 66, the majority at most colleges were under 30.) Whilst basic skills of listening and empathy are transferable I doubt if the methods outlined in Chapter 10 helped students to use language which was easily understood by elderly people who had little energy to listen intently. The form of counselling generally taught would not have helped students to communicate with people who were perhaps confused because of the drugs that they needed at that particular stage of their illness, neither would it have helped them to understand the normal feelings documented in the Royal College of Nursing et al report (1979) referred to earlier in this chapter.

The counselling would not have helped them to appropriately and sensitively enable a patient to feel less depressed and yet most of us when we are ill or in hospital just need 'cheering up'. In the psychiatric setting the counselling skills would not have enabled the student to understand the true from the false caused by some forms of dementia, although hopefully in the placements where there was parallel teaching about psychotic illness students will have been enabled to relate to elderly people who were in hospital because of a psychotic illness whose onset had occurred in old age (e.g. paraphrenia).

One director pointed out that the hospital experience had highlighted students' inability to relate to people who were deaf or who had a speech defect as a result of a stroke. Counselling skills gave no help. There was no evidence that the hospital placements did either. Yet inevitably conversations in hospital wards must be quiet otherwise everyone else hears as well. It is not easy to communicate with a person who has even a marginal hearing loss. (Everyone's hearing becomes less acute with age even when no hearing aid is required (Greenfield 1979 p.10)). There was no evidence that these communication skills were taught. Indeed the reports indicated that for most students their hospital placement reinforced their negative images of old age as a time of decrepitude and hoplessness to which the minister has nothing positive to contribute. And perhaps even worse, will have prevented the student from accepting his own ageing and

and forming positive relationships with older people, when he enters the ministry, in the mistaken idea that old age is all negative.

d. Other Formal Secular Placements Involving Contact with Elderly People

The other placements were much more varied probably because fewer students could be absorbed into settings like day centres, night shelters, Samaritans and Cruse. Generally, as with the hospital placements there was no college follow-up if the placement was in a block. In some cases the director did not know if there had been contact with elderly people; generally there had been none as they were for example, youth orientated or factory placements.

Given that the majority of students from 25 colleges had hospital placements, it is not surprising that the students undertaking more than one secular placement focussed either on another age group or on people who were not ill or handicapped. For example I identified at least 6 colleges where students chose to spend 10 or 14 days in a block placement in a deprived city area considering social issues like housing, urban renewal, employment/unemployment etc.

However, one block placement did elicit comment from students. This placement gave students the opportunity to experience for 14 days life in a deeply rural part of England. The director reported that several students had observed,

'the imbalance in the community, and the strain on the social and health service resources. There had been a lack of forethought by the old people on why they had gone where they had. There were transport problems. Problems of sociability, that is awareness of neighbours seemed lacking, and it appeared that people had moved because they were looking for anonymity. There were problems of relationship between the newcomers and the indigenous community. And all this was aggravated by the movement out by the young.'

These observations had been reported during a student led seminar in college. Whilst the director encouraged students to read books about rural life and mobility he said that students rarely did because the seminars were short and they tended to concentrate on the way rural churches were dying because of the lack of young people.

Small groups of students at two colleges were involved in three short projects. (1) Discussion with elderly people at a day centre. (2) Identifying the needs of elderly people from ethnic minority groups in a small area of a town and (3) Learning how a social service local office arranged and distributed services.

But an interesting point did emerge from one of the directors involved with the third placement. He had seen all the student reports including some from another college. Two reports contained observations of two large old people's homes, their different styles of management, criteria for admission, relationships with local churches and their rehabilitation facilities. The other director did not refer to these during my interview with him although it concerned his students.

One college arranged for all students to experience 'ordinary' situations. For example they all spent afternoons sitting in various public places including a health centre, mother and baby clinic waiting room, the communal area of an unemployment exchange and a DHSS supplementary benefit office, old people's clubs, in hospital out-patient's department and at social services's area office enquiry office. The director's aim was that students should experience situations that are likely to confront ordinary people. He did not believe that students should focus on the abnormal and the exceptional.

This was perhaps that the most imaginative plan that I encountered. I would suggest that pastoral education should be predominantly concerned with introducing students to normal situations, normal psychology and sociology rather than stressing abnormality otherwise they are liable to see all their members or parishioners as constant problems.

In Chapter 7 Section II I documented the way one director integrated all his theoretical teaching with student placements. At two other Roman Catholic colleges students visited the same elderly people each week for at least one year. In these cases the students had individual tutorials at least three times each

term. The aims, although less ambitious than for the other college nevertheless enabled students to learn many of the same skills. None of this learning, though, was used in other parts of their training.

Thus, in each case, there had been college teaching involvement in the placements. The illustrations of contact with normal and less frail elderly people given in these preceding six paragraphs come closest to meeting the need for students to identify with elderly people who are not permanently dependent. However apart from the Roman Catholic examples the number of students involved was small in comparison to the number of students in training.

c) Students' Placements with Old People's Homes

Two colleges arranged student placements in old people's homes. Students from one college visited a large church sponsored home which obviously was rather different to the normal local authority home. The director reported to me that the staff generally selected articulate, middle class elderly people e.g. missionaries, authors, ex-ministers rather than the 'ordinary' or very frail people for students to visit. This was reflected in the fact that the residents had their meals brought to their rooms which were single bed-sits. He also reported that the students enjoyed visiting residents of this home and the students were perceived by the residents as a captive audience.

At another college the aims of the placement were very different. About 50% of the students visited an old people's home for one year (other student placements were in youth clubs, a school for mentally and physically handicapped children, Cheshire Home, Play Scheme and a club for physically handicapped people). The director deliberately gave students no defined role so that they found the experience very difficult. He said,

'The big thing is that they feel inadequate. It is a waste of time; people don't know who they are. The student feels on the outside and not involved in the running. I try to emphasise that it is not what they get out of it, but that the people need the regularity. By the end of the year they are beginning to realise how important it is to the old people. At the beginning they tend to be over-critical of staff and the lack of caring and then they move on to see the dilemmas.'

The aims of the placement were to help students to communicate with other people as equals, to understand powerlessness, to maintain consistency in the face of negative feelings, to grasp by the end of the year the importance to other people of regularity and reliability.

In neither of these colleges was material from these placements brought back into the general pastoral studies teaching. The students at the first college also had the imaginative placements referred to in Section III whilst all the students at the second college undertook placements in both geriatric and psychiatric hospitals but had no contact with elderly people living in the community.

f. Student Involvement with Religious Services in Old People's Homes

Six colleges were involved in taking services in old people's homes. Two colleges paid a lot of attention to helping students learn how to take the services. At one college all students spent one day in a home talking generally to staff and residents and throughout their training joined in the rota of Sunday services. The rationale behind the college's emphasis was that most students would have at least one, and perhaps many old people's homes in their parishes and that ministry to the residents would be an important part of their work. The director said

'Students need time to break through the facade of apathy. Even in homes where conditions are bad it is surprising what can be done. With time the residue of religion bubbles out of individuals when they are approached in the right way.'

At the other college two hours were spent early in the first term discussing issues and practicalities. The director said,

'They need to think through what is the best way to cope. Do you use one end of the room or do you involve everyone whether they like it or not? How do you cope with different staff attitudes? How can residents know when you are coming? How long should the service be? Do you ask people if they want to join in? What happens when they say 'No' but there is no other sitting room? If everyone stays, who should receive Communion and who should not? What about those who've forgotten how to handle the bread and the wine? Should people stand, sit or kneel for the service and the administration of the sacrament? How long should people preach for? What subjects should you choose?'

But also I make sure they think about the more positive factors. Many people have little to do and therefore welcome objectives for prayer - but then you must make sure that they hear about the results so that they see prayer in practice. Most of them went to Sunday School and many given time, go back to reading their Bibles. The priest can encourage daily Bible reading and show them what a great resource they are.'

Students' visits to the home were closely monitored and references sometimes came up during other courses. At another college the director observed that the most successful activities were those organised by the students themselves. The college was responsible for services at a local old people's home and during the last year one of the students was very enthusiastic so both students and residents had thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Perhaps a clue is that the emphasis had been on residents' participation, which had taken the form of lots of singing particularly of the old choruses.

Sadly not all students' experiences were so positive. At another college the services provided for a home were to cease. The director felt that the students were unwanted by the staff and the old people disinterested. It was left to individual students to decide how long they spent with the residents before and after the service and they were given no guidance or preparation for the work. Students had no other involvement with the home or residents. Directors at the other colleges involved in services in old people's homes felt negative about the experience. However, these directors allocated no college time to formulating suitable services, sharing ideas and feelings or discussing how to deal with problems.

In the Literature Review attention was drawn to Clough's (1981) comments about an old people's home at which he was an observer. Several residents in the home had given up their belief in God because of their bitterness at what had happened to them. One had said 'I wonder whether someone like me can go to Heaven.' Another said 'How could I have been so bad as to deserve this?' (p.137). Ministerial students who were prepared to really care about residents with these feelings could have brought comfort and encouragement and been able to help people

regain their faith. Undoubtedly admission to a residential home demands an enormous readjustment (Webber and Gearing 1979 p.31, Bearly 1975 p.89, Clough 1981 p.75-79). Not to maintain your own home is often seen as failure and to those who remember the days of the Poor Law, there is also the stigma of not supporting yourself in your old age. However, there is an audio tape with the Open University P650 Course (1982) which demonstrates how one elderly Christian woman made the transition between her own home and residential care. It provides valuable insights which could enrich any theological student's contact with old people's homes (Mrs. Shillingford documented by Webber).

## II. CHURCH PLACEMENTS

### a) Introduction

All except one of the 31 colleges studied incorporated a church placement or placements into their training programme. However, their length and arrangement varied enormously. In 4 colleges it was only one, one month, block in either July or September. At the other extreme was the college where in the first year students spent 1½ days per week with an experienced minister and the remaining 3 years in charge of a church as a pastor. Generally however, non-conformist church placements were much longer than Anglican ones. This is not surprising as non-conformist ministers will normally take full charge of a church on completion of their college training, whereas a new Anglican minister will generally act as a curate to an incumbent for a minimum period of three years.

The Roman Catholic seminaries had a different system. The student continues to be a student until he is priested i.e. he remains under the care of the college throughout his year as a deacon. At two colleges his parish experience took place during that year, and at the third college he had two summer placements and, one day per week during the fifth year and September to Christmas of the final year at another parish. At the fourth college he had a weekly placement during one year of his training. However, as with the new Anglican ministers, R.C. priests act as curates for some years under the guidance of a senior minister.

The fundamental aim of all church placements was to give students the opportunity of experiencing local church life and to test out college learning. Supervision was either provided by the placement minister or the college, although sometimes the laity from the various churches were involved. Where students were on placement (as opposed to having pastorates) reports were required from supervisors and from students at the end of the placement and in three colleges longer project reports were required.

b) Placement Reports and College Seminars

For most Roman Catholic students the church placement came near the end of their training, and therefore supervision was similar to that given to a new priest. Only one college had received feedback from students about their relationships with elderly people. The students were complaining about being unable to communicate with the elderly people in the parishes. They had found the counselling course irrelevant to actual parish needs.

Recall by the other directors was minimal where students had a block placement and they remembered mainly negative comments:

'..that they will go to a church dominated by old people. They ask how we will get change? Old people are set in their ways and can't change.'

and

'the reality is that if the congregation is old it "bears down on them" that is, there is non-expectation and non-life. All students hope they will go to young family churches. They know, like the churches themselves, that where there is no Sunday School there is no future. They sense church communities wanting to stretch out and not knowing how to.'

'"Churches are full of them." (i.e. old people)

In parishes it is taking communion to the housebound or in the old people's home. Students latch on to the problems (they ignore completely those like the 80 year old active secretary of the Mothers' Union). They latch on to the shortage of Sunday School teachers, confirmation preparation. They don't have assignments

to the active elderly. The contact with the elderly is primarily housebound visiting. They may very occasionally go to an old people's club. It depends on the Vicar whether they get any preparation for going into a person's home. Many of them because they are young graduates who haven't had any normal congregational experience find it difficult knocking on doors from cold. In attachments we are trying to link academia with practical implications.'

It isn't without significance that these students' references to elderly people in their reports were sparse and negative. One has to ask where were the links between academia and the practical implications? Good supervision is crucial, bad supervision will inevitably lead to students carrying their prejudices and fears into their future work.

As with secular placements recall was far more frequent when college seminars paralleled the placements and it was from these directors that I received comments about their attitude to students who expressed negative views about having a predominantly elderly congregation. One director said?

'Students must question how long people have been members of the church. How long have they lived in the village. This is far more important than how old they are.'

Students should realistically share a church's anxiety that there are no children in the church or community. The same anxiety exists when village schools are closed, but this is no reason to ignore the opportunities that do exist for service to older people. Two directors responded to student comments by pointing out possible ministries with older people.

'Last year they were particularly impressed by the day centres and visiting schemes that they saw which had been set up by the churches - they began thinking about the possibility for themselves.

They found that parishioners were visiting elderly people the clergy never got into and then this expands. (Did they find the old people going to church for the first time in old age?) It certainly helped them to use the facilities and it is a fine line between that and domineering them. They were also struck by the way old people found a real role as visitors and counsellors.'

'All of them talk about elderly people because many parishes are dominated by the elderly.

It is costa-geriatricia. There are half-a-dozen funerals per day plus visiting and nursing homes.

All of them comment on how worthwhile it is, how elderly people enrich them; they enjoy it. No one has ever said that they are difficult to get on with, or are bored by it. They find themselves naturally attracted to it. The students themselves are establishment orientated so that may account for it. The role with old people is clear. You are treated as a priest. This is why you get on so well. "It is an attractive part of ministry, you must be careful not to be taken up by this entirely." (Are the students concerned about the church dying?) Yes. (Do they just accept it?) Ministers are doing their best to encourage young people and there are conflicts because old people monopolise the Parish Council Committee. They sometimes bring back stories of the overthrow of the old by the young.

(How do you advise them to tackle it?) Talk to both sides. The parish priest often only talks to those who agree with him. In a week there is scope for doing all sorts of things, but you need to guard against creating separate congregations and to encourage them to join each other. There are ways of working through it.'

Three colleges paralleling placements with seminars also required students to produce a field study or extended theological essay. In two instances students were required to provide a case study or records of christian life experiences. Elderly people were always selected by some students. One director observed that their quality depended on the quality of the placement supervision. Nevertheless, the directors felt that through the exercise students had come to appreciate the struggles and suffering of elderly people, but had also been impressed about how they had overcome the difficulties. As the students discovered more about a person's past life, they saw the person's present experience and behaviour differently. This is hardly surprising. Each person reaches old age with a unique biography. The solutions found to problems or crises, the enjoyments and the successes will be woven together into a tapestry which for each person is unique. As Johnson (1976 p. 148-161 and 1979 p. 146 - 153) points

out, understanding and appreciating the meaning of external facts for individuals is sadly lacking in our current gerontological research data. The biographical approach has been developed by Butler (1963), Vischer (1966 p.49), Levinson *et al.* (1978). Given the emphasis directors placed on individuality during my interviews with them it is surprising that more of them did not use the church placements as an opportunity for students to relate psychological and sociological theories to individual situations.

Apart from the projects required at three colleges a further four colleges did encourage students to ask sociological and psychological questions about the church and the community in which it was situated and this included questions about demography, social structures and networks. In all cases the students were expected to provide data relating to elderly people as well as to all the other age groups.

### III. THE ATTITUDES, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS WHICH STUDENTS GAINED FROM PLACEMENTS

Church and secular placements provided the major opportunities for students to relate their academic learning to the practical realities of life. It was for this reason that theological reflection was a crucial part of written reports. Placements also provided the major opportunity for students to be in contact with the laity in a variety of settings. Different colleges had different emphases. Some colleges saw placements as another way of gaining knowledge whereas others placed the emphasis on developing skills. For most students the time available on placements was very limited but some skills can be learnt in a fortnight or in 10 - 12 hours contact time with individuals, but not without close supervision.

There was a wide variation in the quality of hospital placements so that the skills students gained and the attitudes that influenced them cannot easily be assessed. However, students were likely to see people in extreme frailty and it is unlikely that the policy of allocating students to elderly patients who did not get other visitors, as noted by one director was an isolated instance.

Generally though the students' experiences of elderly people from practical placements were likely to have reinforced their negative stereotypes of old age or to have profoundly modified their positive attitudes, because they experienced people with extreme physical or mental frailty.

The extent to which skills of relating to elderly people were learnt by students in church placements is problematic and depended on whether placements were backed by college seminars as well as by the quality of the supervision. When the supervising ministers themselves did have positive views about the old age then individual students should have been influenced. However, for the great majority of students elderly people do not seem to have been the focus of attention and therefore church placements are unlikely to have increased either their knowledge of, or skills in, ministering to elderly people. Unconsciously the student's attitudes will have been influenced by the attitudes of the supervisor but it appears that this influence was minimal as it went unrecorded in placement reports.

The common thread running through the directors' reports on placements is the essential need for seminar time to ensure that skills used during the placements are developed. Students needed to discover the signs of hope in the midst of the helplessness of homes and long stay wards, to face and to accept their own feelings and to discover the value of their contribution. Practicalities should not be dismissed either as was evident from the reports about services in old people's homes. Good placements in which skills and positive attitudes could be developed seemed few and far between.

CHAPTER 12ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO PALMORE'S QUIZI. INTRODUCTION

Palmore's quiz, an attitude testing device was administered to 30 directors of pastoral studies at the end of the interviews and was also sent to the 48 postal respondents.

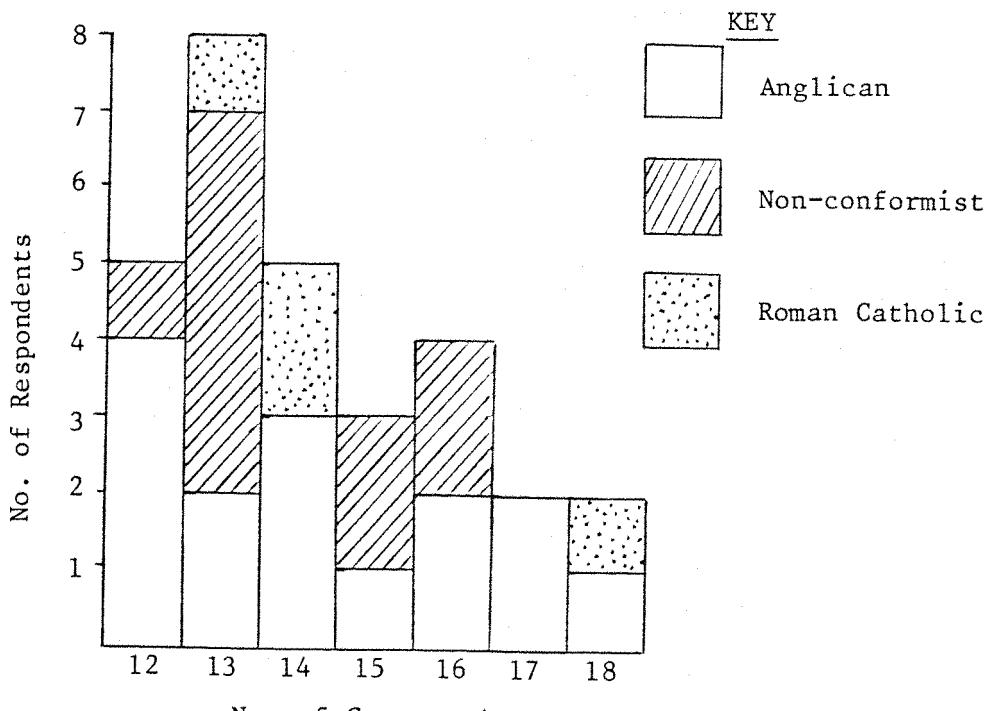
The responses are analysed in two ways for each group of respondents. Firstly the right and wrong answers to statements of fact. Secondly in relation to the pro and anti-bias that some statements contain.

It was possible for respondents to obtain 21 correct answers, questions 22 and 23 being deleted from the analysis for the reasons given in Chapter 3 Section IVb.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE DIRECTORS' RESPONSESa) Correct answers to statements of fact

The directors had an average of 13.76 correct answers but their totals varied from 12 to 18. Fig. 4 shows the full distribution of scores and also the distribution of scores by denomination.

Fig. 4 The Distribution of Total Scores by Denomination



The average scores by denomination were: Roman Catholic (4 directors) 14.75 correct answers, Anglican (16 directors) 13.44 correct answers, Non-conformist (10 directors) 13.9 correct answers.

Five statements, numbers 1, 3, 5, 13 and 15, were answered correctly by all the directors (see Table 16). There were more than 50% of incorrect answers to questions 2, 7, 8, 12 and 21. The only response pattern which is particularly surprising is the one given in reply to statement 2 where the evidence for the truth of the statement has been consistent down the years (Greenfield 1979 p 8-13).

In my opinion the high error rate on three of the statements, numbers 11, 16 and 17 are particularly disturbing because they relate to psychological aspects of old age which affect both elderly people themselves and also other people's view of them.

Table 17: Percentage of Errors on Questions 11, 16 and 17  
Shown by Denomination of Director

Question	Roman Catholic (4)	Anglican (16)	Non-conformist (10)
11	50%	25.00%	40%
16	50%	31.25%	60%
17	50%	37.50%	50%

Note: The numbers in brackets refer to the number of directors in each category

Table 17 gives the breakdown of errors by denomination. It is important to remember that the number of Roman Catholic directors is only four so that any percentage must be high. The level of boredom is inaccurately conceived by 60% of non-conformists whereas Roman Catholics and Anglicans are more likely to have erroneous ideas about isolation and loneliness.

Table 16:

Percentage of Correct Responses to Palmore's Quiz

	Directors %	Postal Respondents %	Correct Answers
1. The majority of elderly people are senile	100.00	100.00	False
2. All five senses tend to decline with age	41.18	31.18	True
3. Most elderly people have no interest in, or capacity, for sexual relations	100.00	95.65	False
4. Lung capacity tends to decline with age	58.62	47.82	True
5. The majority of elderly people feel miserable most of the time	100.00	91.30	False
6. Physical strength tends to decline in old age	93.10	91.30	True
7. At least 10% of elderly people live in old people's homes	24.14	17.39	False
8. Aged drivers have fewer accidents than younger drivers	31.03	4.34	True
9. Most older workers cannot work as effectively as younger workers	72.41	52.17	False
10. About 80% of elderly people are healthy enough to carry out their normal activities	89.66	86.96	True
11. Most elderly people are set in their ways and unable to change	62.07	56.52	False
12. Elderly people usually take longer to learn something new	27.59	8.69	False
13. It is almost impossible for elderly people to learn something new	100.00	100.00	False
14. The reaction time of elderly people is slower than the reaction time of young people	82.76	86.96	True
15. In general older people are pretty much alike	100.00	91.30	False
16. The majority of elderly people are seldom bored	58.62	30.43	True
17. The majority of elderly people are socially isolated and lonely	58.62	34.78	False
18. Older workers have fewer accidents than younger workers	68.97	43.48	True
19. Over 15% of this country's population are over 65	79.31	73.91	True
20. The majority of elderly people have incomes below the official poverty figure	52.94	8.69	False
21. Elderly people become more religious as they age	35.29	31.91	True

b) The Pro and Anti Ageing Bias Recorded by the Directors

Palmore designed the quiz to enable anyone to assess the attitudes towards ageing and elderly people held by any group of people (Palmore 1977 p. 319).

I was interested in not only assessing the extent of teaching about elderly people undertaken in theological colleges but also in the unconscious attitudes that might be imparted to students by those who taught them. Whilst direct questions were asked about the terminology directors used (Chapter 6 Section Ic and Section IIb) I also wanted to use a less direct method. The responses given to Palmore's Quiz were used for this purpose.

The method for calculating the bias was set out in Chapter 3 Section IVc.

The 30 directors recorded a net mean percentage pro-ageing score of 7.88%. The analysis of the pro and anti-ageing scores is recorded in Table 18. The Salvation Army has been excluded as only one person was interviewed and confidentiality would have been broken if his scores were documented.

Table 18: Analysis of Directors Pro and Anti-Ageing Scores by Denomination of Respondent

Mean Percentage of Pro-ageing Errors	Mean Percentage of Anti-Ageing Errors	Net Mean Percentage of Pro minus Anti Errors
25.00%	6.82%	+ 18.18%
60.00%	22.73%	+ 37.27%
40.00%	21.21%	+ 18.79%
10.00%	15.91%	- 5.91%
17.50%	15.34%	+ 2.16%

It will be noted that there are wide variations between the denominations. One possible explanation is the wide variation in the number of directors involved in the different denominations. However, given that, when all the responses from the non-conformist directors' scores are added together, they have a mean percentage of pro-ageing errors of 38% and a mean percentage of anti-ageing errors of 15.45%, (which is close to the mean percentage of anti-ageing errors of both the R.C.s and the Anglicans) I would suggest another possible explanation.

The structure of the Non-conformist, R.C. and Anglican churches is very different as is the role of the minister in the local church. In the R.C. church the priest continues to maintain a strong leadership and paternalistic role vis a vis his congregation. This is less so in the Anglican church but nevertheless involvement in decisions affecting the spiritual life of the local church is still generally limited. However, the structure of non-conformist churches, albeit there are wide variations, is based on the biblical concept of the priesthood of all believers and the extensive involvement of the congregation in all types of decision making. The results of Palmore's Quiz may not therefore only be age related but may reflect general attitudes to the laity in the different denominations. More research considering ministerial attitudes to all age groups would be required to determine the extent to which pro and anti biases are age related. However, which ever facts emerge to be correct negative stereotyping based on either age or on general attitudes will affect an individual's perception of himself and others and will hinder people in old age from continuing to grow in the knowledge and love of God and sharing this knowledge and love with others.

At present the negative views of ageing in society are so general (as discussed in the Literature Review) that unrealistic pro-ageing attitudes are of less concern, but as society's attitudes change and we understand with greater refinement, the potentialities as well as the limitations of old age, the possibly unrealistically positive attitudes to old age recorded by some Non-conformist directors will need re-evaluating and modifying. Sadly that is unlikely to be possible or necessary in the foreseeable future.

### III. ANALYSIS OF THE POSTAL RESPONDENTS REPLIES

#### a) Introduction

As has previously been mentioned postal questionnaires on their teaching were sent to lecturers involved either in pastoral studies or in ethics teaching in theological colleges if the directors anticipated that they would refer to elderly people. These lecturers also received a copy of Palmore's Quiz to complete. In all 48 questionnaires were sent. Five people did not return the quiz, a further 6 respondents although completing the questionnaire and quiz did not refer to elderly people in their teaching and no reply was received from 13 respondents. Completed quizzes were received from 24 people who referred to elderly people during teaching, albeit frequently very much in passing.

Responses were analysed for the same 21 questions as were analysed in respect of the directors. It was not possible to analyse the responses according to denomination because 1) some lecturers were teaching students from more than one college and 2) the denominational allegiance of the respondent was unknown. Indeed directors commented on several occasions that although they preferred to use practising christians for teaching this was frequently impossible because of their non-availability.

#### b) Correct Responses to the Statements of Fact recorded by the Postal Respondents

Table 16 in Section IIa of this chapter records both the directors and postal respondents answers. Only two statements, numbers 1) and 13) were answered correctly by all the postal respondents as opposed to five questions answered correctly by the directors. One statement, number 6 illicited only two incorrect responses as it had done with the directors.

The directors recorded a percentage error rate of more than 50% of 4 statements and postal respondents similarly had in excess of 50% of errors on the same statements, i.e. numbers 2,8,12 and 22, but they also had an error rate in excess of 50% on statements

7, 16, 17, 18 and 21. In fact overall directors were more likely to give correct responses to the statements than were postal respondents as can be seen from Table 16.

In reviewing the directors' responses I drew particular attention to the high percentage of errors in respect of questions 11, 16 and 17. An even higher negative response was received from postal respondents. A result which is depressing because this image of isolation, loneliness and inflexibility will have been portrayed in the teaching.

As the lecturers on Human Growth and Development courses were most likely to consider these aspects of ageing in their teaching I also analysed their responses to these three questions. They are disturbing. Over 57% felt that most old people were set in their ways and unable to change, and were socially isolated and lonely. Forty-three percent felt that the majority of elderly people were often bored.

c) The Pro and Anti-Ageing Bias recorded by the Postal Respondents

It was noticeable that postal respondents far more frequently gave a 'don't know' to the answers than did the directors. I would suggest that this may be because I consciously encouraged directors during the interviews to guess and only as a last resort to use the category 'don't know'. I was, of course, unable to do this with postal respondents. This affected their pro and anti-ageing bias as the 'don't knows' answers were excluded from the calculations in the same way as they were when calculating the directors' responses.

As with the analysis of postal respondents' answers no analysis by denomination of college nor the religious affiliation of the respondent could be undertaken in respect of age bias. However, it was possible to analyse the results according to the subject the lecturer taught.

IV. THE BIAS OF LECTURERS TEACHING SPECIFIC COURSES AND TOPICS

The scores and bias of the lecturers referring to elderly people documented in chapters 5 to 11 of this study are recorded in Table 19 (next page). A wide distribution of responses was received but with such small numbers it is only possible to offer tentative explanations for the variation. Another factor which needs to be borne in mind is that results on the use of Palmore's Quiz with a wide range of people have not, as far as I know, been documented. Although he designed it for multi-purpose use (1977 p. 319) he only tested it with students and lecturers in university departments. It may therefore have more limitations than are immediately obvious. For example it may not differentiate between attitudes to people generally and responses to people in specific age groups. A suggestion hypothesised earlier in this chapter.

Table 19 shows that in all the major teaching areas - human growth and development, the elderly person in the family and society and spiritual growth and development - an anti-aged bias was probably held by the lecturers. The exceptions were the two directors who considered loneliness with their students. These directors were not typical of directors generally. They considered elderly people in far greater detail and balanced opportunities with problems. The problems being seen as either solvable or at the very least ameliorable. Although impractical it would have been interesting to survey the attitudes of supervisors of hospital placements and the ministers with whom students had church placements.

The positive bias of the directors including elderly people in general knowledge and skills courses e.g. counselling, death, dying and bereavement indicates that a positive interest in elderly people was likely to mean that the director also had a positive image of ageing.

The anti-aged bias of directors referring to elderly people in teaching about worship and the sacraments is interesting. Whilst the anti-aged scores of the R.C. directors (and all referred

to elderly people in these subject areas) affect the bias scores of the total group, it was also true that most of the other directors also recorded individual anti-aged bias scores. It may also be, that in addition to the suggestions offered in Section IIb of this chapter regarding directors' pro and anti-aged bias, that sensitivity to spirituality which is primarily an individual issue reflects a bias towards introversion. It could be that biases reflect introverted versus extroverted personalities. This could also account for the negative scores by Human Growth and Development lecturers. They were primarily psycho-dynamically orientated and almost exclusively concerned in their teaching with individual psychological development based on a psychodynamic model. However, this does not account for the negative views of sociologically orientated lecturers. One explanation may be that because elderly people are an increasingly significant group in society they absorb a substantial amount of government spending in pensions and health and social services. They are therefore a group who present problems for sociologists (as well as economists). This results in old people being seen as 'collective problems'. Ironically, though, if that is the case I would have expected lecturers teaching about health and social services to have had a negative view, but as Table 19 shows their view of old age was very positive.

Obviously far more work needs to be done with all people from all professional and occupational groups as well as with people from different cultural backgrounds so that all possible issues relating to bias can be isolated and dealt with. This would also enable a proper refinement of pro and anti-aged instruments to take place.

## CHAPTER 13

### DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters I have endeavoured to document the extent ageing and elderly people were discussed during the education and training of students expecting to become church ministers. But as a result of the investigation I became aware of a number of more broad based issues which (although not documented in detail in this study) I feel need further consideration and research. These I will outline in the next section of this chapter. From it follow a number of issues more specifically related to the subject of this study; the content and the extent of the knowledge on ageing imparted to students; the skills related to working with elderly people and finally the attitudes towards ageing that students, as a result of their training, were likely to take into their ministry.

#### II. GENERAL ISSUES

##### a) Prospectuses

An issue which emerged as I read college prospectuses at the start of the study was the importance, or lack of it, that colleges gave to pastoral studies. The majority of colleges gave proportionately less space to it in their prospectuses than to other subjects and generally did not promote any areas of special interest.

As students were being trained for essentially a practical ministry which contains many facets, it would have seemed to me logical, that whilst ensuring that students had a grasp of all aspects of ministry to have colleges within a particular denomination offer some specialisms. The short practical placements e.g. in an inner city or rural setting are not sufficient. Yet even those colleges which seemed to place more

emphasis on children and young people did not refer to that fact. Some Anglican colleges did no more than reproduce the ACCM list of subjects (see Chapter 3 Section II) even though actual college courses were not arranged in the same way.

Naturally, prospectuses were most concerned to portray the atmosphere of the college, its rules, discipline and general aims. It is important that people should be able to identify colleges in which they will feel 'comfortable' intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. However, it is sad that the ethos of the practical part of the training, should seemingly be of such limited importance.

b) The Pastoral Studies Syllabus

At the outset of my study I had expected the pastoral studies syllabus to vary according to the denomination and to some extent to vary from college to college. This proved not to be the case. The Roman Catholic and Non-conformist colleges have a lot of flexibility and even the ACCM syllabus outline anticipates colleges focussing on different issues. Possible reasons for the similarity are that 1) Pastoral Studies as a discipline is relatively new; 2) there is a lack of theologically based material from which colleges can draw; 3) a very wide spread of subjects is possible within the syllabus and there is a lack of suitably qualified lecturers able to approach subjects in broad terms; 4) there is an emphasis on individuality in current Christian writing with minimal interest being shown in group and society dynamics. I had the feeling that most directors had been appointed because they had been 'successful' church ministers. That principle has much to commend it when many of the other college staff will necessarily have been appointed because of their academic ability. However, this meant that theory and practice did not relate easily and there was undue emphasis on the limited areas of the curriculum where relevant material exists. (e.g. counselling).

c) Reading Lists

Another problem of which I became increasingly aware as the study progressed was the difficulty directors had in identifying relevant newly published secular material. The publishing dates of many books on the reading lists were in the 1960s and early 1970s and reflected thinking within other professions which is now rather dated. On the other hand with so many books published each year on sociology, social psychology and psychology alone it is very difficult for non-specialists to select books which do more than reflect particular author viewpoints. There is no guarantee either that visiting lecturers will have the skill to select books, other than from their own narrow area of interest. Another assumption made regarding books was that if they came from a certain publisher or series then they must be satisfactory. This is dubious as books within a series often vary in quality. There is no easy solution but directors could perhaps make use of the advice of their colleagues with Adult Education or Sociology backgrounds.

Psychology poses a different problem. The reading lists reflected an emphasis on psycho-dynamic psychology (Chapter 10 Section I and Chapter 5 Section IVe(ii)) and there no directors with a background in the wider field of psychology who would be in a position to suggest a range of books to their colleagues. It may be, therefore, that for the present Christian lecturers in University departments need to be asked to provide and to up-date a list of significant texts encompassing all approaches to psychology as well as books detailing their use with individuals posing particular difficulties.

d) Psycho-dynamic Orientation in College Teaching

College directors during interviews repeatedly drew attention to their emphasis on individuality during pastoral studies teaching and this was also reflected in the postal responses. The emphasis on individuality was linked to the psycho-dynamic based psychology which pervaded many courses, human growth and development

counselling, visiting the sick, dying and bereaved. Undergirding this psycho-dynamic approach was the Rogerian non-directive method of intervention. One reason for the bias may be that current English writing on counselling (as well as on spirituality) revolves around non-directive psycho-dynamic psychology. This material primarily emanates from Roman Catholic and Anglican sources. American Christian psychology and counselling books - particularly from evangelical sources - draws extensively on behavioural and cognitive psychological theories and relates them closely to biblical examples, but the material is not well publicised in this country and rarely appeared on student reading lists.

An evaluation of the appropriateness of the current teaching to the multiplicity of contacts ministers have with their laity would provide knowledge about the practical relevance of this teaching. I would argue that in a very crowded syllabus attention should be given to communicating with ordinary people in ordinary situations; e.g. the use of language by different social and ethnic groups, communicating with sick people, and with children etc. From this base students could at a later date in their ministry, undertake specialist counselling courses if it appeared that they were primarily intending to work with abnormal people.

In the meantime directors badly need guidance about alternative models of personality as well as materials on communication skills which are suitable for use by Christians.

e) Pre and Post Ordination Support

There appeared to be a lack of co-ordination between the two sections of training within the Anglican church. The expectation of Anglican college directors was that skills training would take place alongside parish experience. Yet even my limited survey of post-ordination training casts doubt on this assumption and investigation needs to take place on whether the results I obtained in relation to work with elderly people are replicated in respect of other age groups or people with special needs. It would also

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appear that an evaluation of the supervision skills of senior clergy could usefully highlight the strengths and weaknesses in the parish model of skills training for new ministers.

Non-conformist colleges (except the Salvation Army) never mentioned post-ordination support. Whilst their students' church experience was far more extensive I did not identify strong links between theory and practice at most colleges - but that was not the purpose of this study. Research which evaluates the post-ordination needs of new ministers would be valuable in assessing the extent to which colleges did manage to teach both knowledge and skills. The Salvation Army model is particularly important as during the five post-college years officers continue to undertake courses in both biblical and pastoral studies and have an annual study period.

A further comparison with the Roman Catholic training system would add yet another dimension even though much of their syllabus has only recently changed.

But the reality at present for all people training for the ministry, whatever their denomination, is that all the systematic knowledge and skills about ageing will be gained exclusively during their college course. The next section will discuss the current situation regarding the teaching about ageing and areas for further discussion.

### III. AGEING IN THE CURRICULUM

#### a) Why it should be there

During this study I have observed that pastoral studies curricula were seriously overcrowded. It can then be argued that it is counter productive and insensitive of me to advocate greater attention being paid to the needs of elderly people. Arguments in support of that hypothesis came from directors of colleges who deliberately avoided age-related teaching. One, for instance, in teaching about bereavement did not distinguish between the grieving needs of a five year old and a ninety-five year old.

Another argument made by an Anglican director of post-ordination training (Chapter 4 Section IVd) was that young ministers needed no training in meeting the needs of elderly people because they were 'doing pastoral care all the time'. A third reason is that people are individuals and therefore generalisations cannot be made - a frequent remark made to me during interviews. A fourth argument is the student's lack of experience of life - especially when they are in their early twenties or even late teens - which means that they cannot identify with the spiritually mature. A fifth argument, not submitted by anyone, is that the concentration, if there is to be any, should be on the needs of young people as they are the church of tomorrow.

Yet there are arguments to be submitted on the other side.

- 1) Young people in training are particularly open to influence. Directors said that students had commented to them on how much they had been influenced by older Christians (e.g. Chapter 9 Section VIa). Exposure of less fortunate students during their training to similar helpful experiences will have a profound influence on their attitudes to older people when they become ministers.
- 2) Bad habits easily get re-inforced. Learning in a helpful environment how to organise successfully, for example, services in an old people's home, will help to prevent disillusionment when they are faced with similar problems later on and will enable ministers to give God's strength to people at a crucial time in their lives.
- 3) As was mentioned earlier in this chapter colleges seemed to pay little attention to the local church as a community. Community ideally promotes opportunities for people to both give and to receive from each other - a basic prerequisite for love. Unless students are made aware during training that old people need to be given opportunities to remain part of the church community (however frail or housebound they have become) then when the students become ministers they are likely to ignore both elderly people's contribution and needs.
- 4) The results of Coleman's study (1978) indicates that there are large numbers of elderly people with a dormant faith.

Table 18: Scores of Directors and Lecturers on Palmore's Quiz Analysed by Scores and Age Bias

Subject in the Text	Page Ref.	No. of Respondents <sup>1</sup>	Age		Age	
			Average Scores Directors	Average Scores Lecturers	Bias of 4 Directors <sup>4</sup>	Bias of 4 Lecturers <sup>4</sup>
			Z	Z	Z	Z
1. Characteristics of Ageing						
a) Individuality	67	10	13.60		+ 16.37	
b) Wholly negative view	67	12	14.50		- 3.18	+ 9.00
c) Both positive and Negative	67	8	14.33	11.8	+ 13.87	+ 16.00
2. Thumbnail Sketches						
a) Given a name	68	13	14.10		+ 10.91	
b) Abbreviated the description	68	17	14.00 <sup>3</sup>		+ 3.31 <sup>3</sup>	
3. Human Growth and Development	75	9	12.00 <sup>3</sup>		+ 10.91 <sup>3</sup>	- 5.68
4. Adult Education	82	3	15.16		+ 17.57	
5. Demographic Date	95	10	15.16	13.00	+ 34.35	+30.45
6. Grandparental Roles	102	5	13.40		- 12.73	
7. Family Issues	102	10	12.15		- 2.10	
8. Ethical Issues	99	6				- 3.18
9. Loneliness	101	6	15.00	11.67	+ 26.36	- 7.27
10. Health and Social Services	97	8	14.00	12.66	+ 17.82	+17.80
11. Sermons	109	3	14.00		- 10.30	
12. Worship	107	12	14.25		- 2.65	
13. Evangelism	110	5	14.30		+ 15.62	
14. Counselling <sup>2</sup>	119	3	14.30		+ 27.28	
15. Sick Visiting	124					
a) The Sacraments	126	8	14.17		- 0.77	
b) General visiting	127	14	14.12		+ 0.45	
16. Death, Dying and Bereavement	131	12	13.21		+ 14.78	
17. Hospital Placements	140					
a) Chaplaincy Council	140	6	14.68		+ 4.54	
b) Locally arranged	141	5	15.11		+ 8.28	
c) Locally arranged + seminars	141	5	14.93		+ 14.54	
18. Old People's Homes	149					
a) Placements	149	2	16.00		+ 30.91	
b) Services	150	6	14.80		+ 1.82	
19. Parish Placements	152					
a) Field Studies	152	7	14.87		+ 16.97	
b) Seminar support	153	8	12.13		+ 10.45	

Notes

1. The number of respondents cannot be equated with the number of colleges referred to in the text as respondents may be providing teaching for students at several colleges.
2. Data incomplete.
3. Only one director is involved therefore no significance can be attached to this result.
4. + sign signified a pro-aged score and a - sign signified an anti-aged score.

Evangelism<sup>15</sup> amongst elderly people is grossly neglected by the church and an important way of rectifying this omission is for students to consider it during training. Ignoring evangelism with elderly people during training will, in the current climate, lead to it being ignored by the students when they become ministers.

b) How should Ageing be Taught?

There are two basic ways of teaching about ageing. 1) As a discreet area of study for which a certain number of hours are allocated (as was the case in two colleges), and 2) aspects of ageing to be considered at appropriate points in courses with a different focus. For example a course considering family life could consider the effect of elderly people living in the same household as two younger generations; what family means to a couple in their 80s who rarely have visitors; the meaning of family to someone living alone.

The strengths of the first option are that a specialist tutor can be used; that directors have access to a lot of books covering a wide range of common needs expressed by this age group, and the subject can probably be covered in more depth. Having run several courses for colleges and post-ordination training directors I am aware that the negative images that students have obtained can be modified and how they can be given the vision of a ministry full of opportunity and fascination. This is more difficult to do when elderly people are subsumed under other subject headings.

The weakness of a specialist course is that elderly people may be seen as different to other people or as a potential problem group as happens when special courses are run about people who are mentally ill or from ethnic minority cultures. Time would preclude teaching from including the extensive similarities that elderly people share with all other human beings.

The second option of integrated teaching also has both strengths and weaknesses. One strength, as has been demonstrated in some chapters of this study is that students' attention is drawn to both the similarities and the differences that can be expected with age, e.g. bereavement. Another strength of the second

option is that people are less likely to be age segregated in students' minds. This is important because ageing is an individual experience and to a considerable extent linking it to any particular age is artificial.

The weakness is that it demands that lecturers actually know how age factors influence the teaching of their subject. This is notoriously difficult in that age related factors are rarely mentioned in general text books on specific subjects e.g. counselling, bereavement, human growth and development. It is also notoriously difficult to extract from text books on ageing age related factors. However I hope that the material documented in this study will help to give balance in a number of courses.

The integrated approach to teaching also demands of the lecturer that they must be, not only sensitive to issues related to ageing, but also issues specifically related to people of other ages, ethnic groups, social class and people with special problems. A tall order when even with the current system directors constantly referred to the lack of adequately experienced christian lecturers with imagination, broad interests, practically skills and the necessary time.

But however directors organise timetables there would be problems in identifying suitable lecturers, integrating their different approaches, relating learning to the ministerial tasks. Perhaps this is why one director summed up his job as follows: 'I see myself as the conductor of an orchestra.' However, the postal respondents rarely indicated that the members of orchestras played instruments in harmony. The other issue which arises, which ever approach is used, is the lack of knowledge of what is actually being taught. Directors followed the traditional academic practice of only giving broad guidelines to visiting lecturers.

In this study colleges followed both teaching models. Two, as has previously been noted organised ten hour special courses, others to a greater or lesser extent did ensure references to elderly people during different courses that they themselves

organised and taught. Available time, although raised by directors as an issue did not significantly affect the amount of attention given to ageing at an individual college. More important by far was the attitude of the director. Those who had a positive attitude to old people were more likely to include their needs on courses. (Chapter 12 Section IV).

c) What Knowledge and Skills about Ageing should be included in the Curriculum?

If colleges basically integrate teaching about ageing into other courses then the relevant knowledge will vary according to which courses are included in a particular college syllabus. For instance if counselling is not included then counselling elderly people would not be covered either. However, I do find it untenable that students can undertake a two, three or more years training with less than one hour being spent gaining knowledge or examining attitudes to elderly people. Yet this was the case in 12 out of 31 colleges.

As a basic minimum I would suggest that students should receive an understanding of the past cultural and individual experiences which have shaped the attitudes of today's elderly people; teaching on both the opportunities and restrictions which come with age, (and that should be based on elderly people's own perceptions of ageing) and how this relates to theological precepts; the role of the minister and the church in encouraging the ministries of older people; spirituality in old age and the provision of appropriate worship experiences.

Where colleges aim to teach skills then students should have the opportunity of 'practising' these skills with elderly people e.g. a sermon which is relevant to a group of people in a residential home. Undergirding all the teaching should be the aim of challenging negative stereotyping and substituting positive attitudes towards elderly people.

The primary methods of instruction used at colleges were lecture and discussion and the subjects outlined above lend themselves to this method of teaching. However a variety of other methods can also be employed depending on the time available. Methods

include individual students interviewing one or more elderly people to understand their way of perceiving things, case studies, films and audio tapes as well as visiting places frequented by elderly people e.g. clubs, day centres, sheltered housing units, residential homes and geriatric units which show that ill-health in old age is not irremediable as well as geriatric units which create utter despair in students and which seemed to feature so highly in their placements.

The implicit assumptions about ageing which are imparted to students therefore assume key importance.

#### d. Attitudes in the Curriculum

A major concern throughout this study has been the attitudes about old age imparted to students during their training. As I illustrated in the Literature Review, Section IV, old age is commonly in society stereotyped as a time of problems and frailty. Ministers are in a key position to reinforce or modify this view through the attitudes they adopt towards elderly people in their congregations, the way they encourage concern for elderly people by other age groups in their congregation and the way they refer to elderly people in their preaching and teaching. However in order to do any of these things their own views need to be challenged and assessed.

Colleges were acutely aware of the temptation to stereotype people of all ages and background and there was an undoubted emphasis on individuality. An example was the large number of directors who in response to the thumbnail sketches recorded in Chapter 6 Section If said they would give a person a name, and by postal respondents who were unhappy with Palmore's Quiz which made generalised statements.

Individuality theoretically discourages stereotyped responses to people or to situations. However, 'normality' can only be assessed by identifying which behaviours are to be expected in different circumstances or at different ages. Wrong knowledge must inevitably encourage wrong behaviours in people. For example, in the days when it was believed that disengagement from society should be the 'normal' expectation of life in retirement professionals encouraged that attitude in the old people they met. Retired people who did not adopt that stance were either seen as

exceptional or as denying the fact that they were old. That view is now changing. Retired people are encouraged to find a new fulfilling life in retirement. Knowing and understanding an individual is not something that can happen in a vacuum but must involve students knowing about normal responses to the situation in which the person finds themselves.

It is also true that sometimes 'normal' responses will vary according to factors other than age e.g. culture or class. Generalisations as for example those discussed in the chapter about death, dying and bereavement need to be supplemented by pointers to differences. The human growth and development course sadly only focussed on the negative aspects of ageing. Whilst it is important for students to appreciate the changes old age brings it will not encourage people to think positively when they gain the idea that retirement brings one problem after another.

These negative attitudes can be modified by paying attention to the views and experiences of large numbers of old people such as are contained in the Hunt (1978) and Abrams (1978 and 1980) studies. None of this material was used in any of the colleges.

However theoretical knowledge has only limited value in changing or modifying attitudes. Four colleges specifically asked people about their experiences of old people and another three colleges asked more open ended questions. Directors commented on the positive influence individual experience of elderly people had had on the students involved. However, many students may not have had a great deal of contact with elderly people before their college training. As a society so much is organised by age. If students' attitudes are to be modified there needs to be built into the training practical experience of being with and understanding old people and their view and experience of the current world. Another benefit of direct experience of elderly people is that students are more likely to view their own old age realistically and in ministry to encourage a similar attitude in their congregations.

The chapter on placements shows that opportunities for meeting 'normal' old people or experiencing similar experiences to them (e.g. the day centre and the social services waiting room) are

few and far between and even then don't relate to common experiences in old age. As far as I could tell it did not even seem that hospital placements (except in one or two exceptional instances) provided students with the opportunity of seeing the exciting advances in geriatric care. Doing so would have enabled them to grasp that ill health neither needs to be borne stoically nor accepted as necessarily irreversible. Also seemingly re-inforced through placements, where contact was with people near death, was the idea that mental faculties decline with age. The links between 'terminal drop' and reduced mental alertness were discussed in Chapter 10 Section IIIc, but, senile dementia and other mentally debilitating illnesses are not the experience of the majority of elderly people. Unless positive steps are taken to underline the fact that mental faculties do not decline with age much mental ill-health in old age will go untreated and ministers will unwittingly re-inforce an assumption which means that both individual elderly people and the church are unable to make use of a person's full potential.

The role of post-ordination training cannot be omitted from this discussion. As was shown in Chapter 4 there is in most denominations no further training and therefore theological college must fulfil both education and training roles. However, at Anglican colleges, college and post-ordination training are seen as integral by the colleges. Whether this view is shared by the post-ordination training directors, senior ministers and newly ordained ministers in the churches is a different matter. No minister moving to his first church is likely to be self-confident. He is not likely to remember all the college theory - particularly in relation to elderly people, when they have featured so marginally in most college syllabi. His own attitudes will therefore be influenced primarily by his senior minister. That churches will have positive views about ageing and old people is sufficiently problematic for Age Concern to have produced a working party report (1980) encouraging churches not only to meet imaginatively the needs of frail elderly people but to recognise ways in which elderly people can contribute to church life. As Chapter 4 showed post-ordination training pays scant attention to elderly people and certainly does nothing to encourage or re-inforce positive attitudes to elderly people. Against this background must be placed the attitudes of the directors as

recorded by Palmore's Quiz. The proof of the validity of the measurements have still to be proved and as was discussed in Chapter 12 the answering of the questions may reflect not age biases in attitudes but biases in attitudes to people generally. However although a wide variation in attitudes was recorded, those directors who consciously included ageing in their syllabi (excluding references in human growth and development courses) recorded more positive views than those directors who did not. This would indicate that some modification in attitudes will occur both in directors and students through a conscious attempt to include the needs of elderly people within the syllabus.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study presents both an exciting and depressing picture about ministerial student training in the field of ageing. Depressing because so many colleges do so little. Exciting because collectively directors have produced a wealth of knowledge and ideas on simple ways of including ageing in a syllabus without elderly people taking up a disproportionate amount of teaching time.

This study has also shown that greater attention needs to be given to attitudes and stereotyping. I have argued that positive attitudes are fundamental to ensuring that congregations do not marginalise their elderly members and that people however old and frail should continue to be able, if they do wish, to contribute and share in the life of the church. Elderly christians, by virtue of their age have more experience of life than younger christians. Those whose faith is deep and mature should be our guides. They can teach us how to integrate our past with the present, how to accept our dependence on, and our independence of others, to face the finitude of our earthly life; to know hope in the midst of despair; to find solitude through accepting our own inner loneliness; to have a vision inspite of disillusionment; achieve freedom from bondage; simplicity in the place of complexity; and liberation from submission. But they can only do all this if we let them and ministers are in a key position to facilitate the process.

APPENDIX I

## ACCM : Regulation and Syllabus 1982/3

Paper 14: PASTORAL STUDIES

The course consists of three parts: an introductory course, supervised pastoral studies units, and a supervised placement.

1. The Introductory Course

Colleges will need to approach this material in the light of their individual traditions and resources. Every effort should be made to encourage the students to consider the theoretical and theological implications of the course content in order to enhance their self knowledge as well as their knowledge of people and society. Theological ideas are themselves social constructs, but they also react on society's life and perceptions. Evidence of such an approach will be expected by the examiners. The following outline is suggested for guidance and should be used selectively.

A. The individual and society - theories and concepts

Models of man - mechanical, organic, personal.  
 Culture, personality and social structure.  
 Roles and norms.  
 Experience of self and others.  
 Interaction - ecological and social. Dynamics of conversation and communion. Identity, and boundary maintenance. Perception.  
 Alienation and anomie. Freewill and social determinism.  
 Consciousness and the unconscious.

This section of the syllabus should be seen to offer opportunities for exploring links between theology and sociological theories and concepts.

B. Human growth and development

Parent/Child relationships as the basis for understanding the developmental psychology of childhood and the process of socialization.  
 General outline of childhood development as a framework for theories of cognitive, emotional social and moral development.  
 Adolescence - individual and social aspects.  
 Young adulthood: courtship and marriage.  
 Middle age: the varieties of personality: social competence.  
 Old age - including individual and social aspects.  
 Bereavement, preparation for death.

continued.....

C. 'Face to Face' and Social relationships

Family and other human groups - structure and interaction. Conflict Roles. Decision-making. Dissolution. Community - structures, networks and interaction - urbanization - conflict - power. Parish and Community. Work - technology, technical change and innovation - industrial conflict - work satisfaction - human relations in industry - work and leisure.

D. Social structure and processes

Class status and power in industrial society. Affluence and poverty. Conformity, deviance and social control e.g. education, massmedia, N.H.S. Secularization - practice and belief.

E. Study topics

Each student is required to study one topic of his choice in greater depth. The following are suggested as examples although candidates may propose alternatives.

Community relations  
Sexuality  
Illness behaviour  
Loss and bereavement  
Social deprivation  
Leisure and recreation

The assignment of between 2,000 and 4,000 words on the study topic (Section E) will be externally assessed and supported by three internally marked assignments with not more than one from any section; knowledge of Section A should also be shown in assignments from other sections. The title of the external assignment will be submitted in advance for approval by the examiner.

2. Two pastoral studies units

Of two to four weeks duration or the equivalent. These units will be supervised and the student will write a report on each of them, bearing in mind their theological implications. These reports, together with the supervisor's reports, will be externally assessed.

3. A placement

Of four to eight weeks, or the equivalent, in a parish or, where appropriate, with an institution such as a hospital or prison. This placement will be supervised and the student will write a report, with careful reference to pastoral and theological implications. This report, together with the supervisor's report, will be externally assessed.

It is recommended that the student's report on a pastoral studies unit should be of approximately 1,000 words and on the placement of approximately 1,500 words.

The granting of a pass in Pastoral Studies in the General Ministerial Examination will depend on satisfactory assignments in the introductory course, and on a satisfactory report from the college external assessor after he has seen and discussed with the candidate the necessary reports.

APPENDIX IIINTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE PASTORAL STUDIES TEACHING SYLLABUS

Name:

Designation:

College:

Before commencing the detailed part of the interview I would like to establish some basic facts.

- 1) Is the course called pastoral theology?
- 2) Is there an external examiner or assessor to the course?
- 3) What academic standard is the course?
- 4) How are students examined or assessed?

EITHER

- 5) How many examination questions are asked in the subject of pastoral theology?

OR MORE FREQUENTLY,

How many pieces of written work are required?

What are their lengths?

- 6) How many pieces are non-assessable?
- 7) How many pieces are assessable work?

During this interview I would like to explore a number of different aspects of your pastoral studies teaching syllabus which may contain references to elderly people and this next part is to ensure that we both use words in the same way. May I ask some questions about the definitions you use?

When you are teaching,

- 1) What age do you associate with being elderly?

prompts: e.g. someone retired from work;

someone who needs a lot of help with household tasks;

someone over a certain age.

- 2) Is it the same age for both men and women?

- 3) What words do you use?

e.g. the elderly, elderly people, old people, older people, the retired.

- 4) For teaching purposes are there any particular characteristics you have in mind when you teach about elderly people (or whatever word they use).

If respondent gave age related answer to question 1 then:

- 5) How do you describe people between 50 and 65?

- 6) In your teaching what words would you use to abbreviate the following descriptions: a 75 year old man confined to a wheelchair after a stroke?

- 7) In your teaching what words would you use to describe: an 80 year old woman who is the efficient secretary to the Woman's Fellowship?

8) In your teaching what words would you use to describe a 68 year old wife of the church minister?

for R.C.s

What words would you use to describe a 68 year old housekeeper of the parish priest?

9) Are there any other words that you would use generally in relation to some of all people over 65?

In the first part of this interview, I want to identify the main areas of your curriculum and the amount of time spent on a variety of courses and topics.

- 1a) How many hours are spent on human growth and development?
- 1b) Is there any teaching on this in relation to people over the age of 65?
  
- 2a) How many hours are spent on adult learning?
- 2b) Do you teach about the ways elderly people learn?
  
- 3a) How many hours are spent considering mental health and mental illness?
- 3b) Are there any specific references to this subject within the context of people over 6?
  
- 4) How many hours are spent on considering the changing age structure of society?
  
- 5a) How many hours are spent on looking at the family in contemporary society?
- 5b) Are elderly people included in this subject area?
  
- 6a) How many hours teaching are spent on paths of spirituality, evangelism, preaching etc.
- 6b) Does it include spiritual issues affecting elderly people?
  
- 7a) How many hours are spent on teaching interviewing and/or counselling skills?
- 7b) Do you incorporate teaching in relation to elderly people?
  
- 8a) How many hours teaching do you set aside for considering social issues (prompts e.g. race relations, unemployment)?
- 8b) Do social issues affecting elderly people feature?
  
- 9a) How many hours are spent on teaching about visiting the sick and homebound?
- 9b) Do you incorporate any teaching about the needs of elderly people?
  
- 10a) How many hours are spent considering death, dying and bereavement?
- 10b) Do you incorporate specific teaching on this in relation to elderly people?

## HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

From now on in the questions, unless I draw particular attention to age, I shall be implying an age of 65+, so can we take that age to mean elderly in your teaching. But can you let me know when you discriminate in any particular piece of teaching in regard to different age groups over the age of 65.

I would like to begin by focusing on your teaching in regard to human growth and development.

- 1) How many hours are available for the teaching of this subject?
- 2) How is the syllabus constructed and what are the topics covered?
- 3) How long is allowed for each topic?
- 4) What teaching methods do you use?
- 5) In which topics are elderly people included?
- 6) Can you tell me what specific teaching points in relation to elderly people you make?
- 7) What teaching methods do you use?
- 8) What books and articles are recommended to students and which include references to human growth and development in elderly people?
- 9) During the academic year 1982-83 did any students undertake any written work on human growth and development?

If yes,

Did any students refer to elderly people?

How many words were the assignments?

If appropriate,

Did any students concentrate on elderly people?

What aspects did they cover?

What reference material did they use?

- 10) Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

## ADULT LEARNING

I would like to move on now to consider the subject of adult learning in general.

- 1) How many hours teaching is allocated to this subject?  
(inc. sermons and preaching)
- 2) How is the term adult learning defined for our teaching purposes?
- 3) What topics are covered?
- 4) What teaching methods do you use and in what proportions?
- 5) Do you consider the learning needs of elderly people as a topic on its own; is it integrated into topic areas?  
If integrated into topic areas, which ones?
- 6) In relation to elderly people what specific teaching points do you make?
- 7) What teaching methods do you use when covering these teaching points?
- 8) Which books and articles which include references to elderly people do you recommend to students?
- 9) During the academic year 1982-83 did any students undertake any written work on adult learning?  
If yes, how many?
- 10) Did any students refer to elderly peoples' ways of learning?  
How many?  
If appropriate  
Did any students concentrate on elderly people?  
If yes,  
What aspects did they cover?  
How long were the essays?  
What reference material did they use?  
Are there any other particular comments that you would like to make about this subject area in relation to elderly people?

## MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL ILLNESS

I would like to move on to consider the teaching you give on the subject of mental health, mental illness.

- 1) How many hours teaching is allocated to this general subject area?
- 2) What topics do you cover?
- 3) What teaching methods do you use and in what proportion?
- 4) Do you consider mental health and illness in elderly people as topics on their own or are they integrated into the general topic areas?

If topics of their own ask,

What teaching points do you make in these topics?

What teaching methods do you use?

How many hours are allocated?

If integrated then ask,

In which topics is there teaching about elderly people?

How long in each topic is spent on elderly people?

What teaching points in relation to elderly people do you make?

What teaching methods do you use?

- 5) Do you recommend any particular books or articles on the general subject area?
- 6) Do you recommend any particular books or articles about mental health, and illness in elderly people?
- 7) During the academic year 1982-83 did students undertake any written work on mental health, disability or illness?  
How many?
- 8) Did any students refer to mental health, or illness as it affects elderly people?

If yes,

How many?

What issues did they draw attention to?

9) Did any students concentrate on mental health, or illness of elderly people?

If yes,

How many?

What topics did they cover?

How long were the essays?

10) Are there any other particular comments that you would like to make about the teaching on this subject area in relation to elderly people?

## STEREOTYPING, DEMOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL ISSUES

I would like to move on now to consider the teaching about stereotyping demography and social issues.

1a) Do you do any teaching on prejudice and stereotyping?

If yes

b) What stereotyping do you teach about?

c) What teaching methods do you use?

d) If applicable, in what proportion?

e) How much time is allocated?

f) Do you refer to elderly people?

If so, can you tell me the points you make?

What teaching methods do you use in these particular instances?

2a) Do you do any general teaching about the age structure of society?

If yes,

b) How much time is allocated?

c) What are the main points that you make?

d) What teaching methods do you use?

e) If applicable, in what proportion?

f) Do you refer to elderly people?

g) What points do you make?

3a) Do you do any teaching about the effects of a changing age structure on society?

If yes,

b) What teaching methods do you use?

c) If applicable, in what proportion?

d) What are the main points you make?

e) How much time is allocated?

f) Do you refer to elderly people? If yes, what points do you make?

4a) Do you do any teaching on the effect of the changing age structure in relation to church organisation?

If yes,

b) What teaching methods do you use?

c) If applicable, in what proportion?

d) What are the main points that you make?

e) How much time is allocated?

f) Do you refer to elderly people? If yes, what points do you make?

5) Do you teach about any other issues affecting society at the present time? What are they?  
e.g. poverty  
    unemployment  
    retirement  
    race relations  
What teaching methods do you use?  
How many hours are available?  
In which issues are elderly people likely to be considered?  
e.g. poverty  
What teaching points will be considered in relation to elderly people (under each topic heading)?

6) Are there any other social issues affecting the individual in society that you teach during which reference is made to elderly people?  
If so, what?  
What teaching method is used?  
Can you tell me the details that would be included?

7) How many students undertook written work on the general subject area on the individual in society during the academic year 1982-83?  
If yes,  
Did any students refer to elderly people?  
If yes, how many?  
On what issues did they refer to elderly people?  
Did any students concentrate on elderly people?

8) What books and articles which include references to elderly people were recommended to students?

## FAMILY IN SOCIETY

I would like to move on now to consider the teaching given on the subject of the family in society.

Do you deal with this as an explicit subject in the general syllabus?

- 1) How much time is spent on teaching about the family in society?
- 2) What teaching methods do you use and in what proportion?
- 3) What topics are covered?

prompts: changing nature

emergence of new problems (e.g. divorce)

- 4) Do you consider elderly people within the family as a topic on its own or integrated into the general subject area?  
If the former, how much time is spent on this topic?
- 5) If the latter, in which topics are elderly people included?
- 6) Can you tell me what specific teaching points in relation to elderly people you make?
- 7) What teaching methods do you use and in what proportion when considering elderly people?
- 8) Do you recommend any particular books which include references to elderly people in the family setting?  
If so, what
- 9) During the academic year 1982-83 did any students undertake any written work on this subject area?  
If yes,  
How many?  
Did any students refer to elderly people?  
What particular points did they make?  
If appropriate,  
Did any students concentrate on elderly people?  
How many?  
How long were the essays?  
What topics did they cover?  
What reference material did they use?
- 10) Are there any other points you would like to make about this subject area in relation to elderly people?

## SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

I would like to move on now to consider the general teaching about spiritual growth and development (not the individual candidates own personal growth).

- 1) How much time is spent on this subject?
- 2) What topics are covered?  
e.g. paths of spirituality  
evangelism  
sacraments
- 3) What teaching methods do you use?
- 4) In which topics do you consider elderly people?
- 5) Do you draw attention to any particular aspects of spiritual growth and development in relation to elderly people?

If yes, what are they?

What teaching methods do you use?

- 6) Do you include teaching about any particular contributions that elderly people can make to the spiritual life of the local church?

If yes, what are they?

What teaching methods do you use?

- 7) What books and articles are recommended to students which include references to spirituality in elderly people or the spiritual contributions of elderly people to the life of the local church?
- 8) During the academic year 1982-83 did any students undertake any written work on spiritual growth and development?

If yes, did any students refer to elderly people?

How many?

What aspects did they draw attention to?

- 9) Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

## COUNSELLING

I would like to consider the subject of counselling

- 1) How many hours is allocated to this subject?
- 2) What topics are covered?
- 3) What teaching methods do you use and in what proportion?
- 4) Do you consider the counselling needs of older people as a topic on its own; is it integrated into topic areas?  
If integrated into topic areas which ones?
- 5) In relation to older people what specific teaching points do you make?
- 6) What teaching methods do you use when covering these teaching points?
- 7) Which books and articles which include references to elderly people do you recommend to students?
- 8) During the academic year 1982-83 did any students undertake any written work on counselling?  
If so, how many pieces?
- 9) Are there any other particular comments that you would like to make about this subject area in relation to older people?  
Did any students refer to counselling and elderly people?  
How many?  
If appropriate  
Did any students concentrate on elderly people?  
If yes  
What aspects did they cover?  
How long were the essays?  
What reference material did they use?
- 10) Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

## SICK AND HOMEBOUND

I would like to consider your teaching in regard to sick or homebound people.

- 1) How many hours teaching is there on visiting the sick or homebound?
- 2) In your teaching how do you define the minister's role?  
(Not for Salvationists)  
In your teaching how do you define the deaconess/lay worker's/ parish sister's role?
- 4) All respondents  
In your teaching how do you define the role of church members?
- 5) What topics do you cover and what is the order?
- 6) What methods of teaching do you use? And in what proportion?
- 7) In your teaching who do you define as needing home visits?
- 8) Is teaching about elderly people included throughout the teaching on this subject?
- 9) In your teaching do you make any general assumptions about the needs of elderly people whom you deem to require visiting at home by the minister? If yes, what are they?  
e.g. always ongoing visiting  
state of health
- 10) In your teaching on visiting the sick and homebound to you differentiate between the needs of different groups of elderly people.  
prompts: mentally infirm  
those suddenly taken ill  
the 65 - 75 group  
the 75+ group  
men/women
- 11) Do you draw attention to any particular points when teaching about the minister's behaviour during a visit to a sick or homebound elderly person?  
e.g. time of day  
interviewing/celebrating positions  
general chat v. spiritual guidance

12) Do you recommend any particular books or articles on visiting social or homebound elderly people?

13) During the academic year 1982-83 did students undertake any written work on visiting the sick and homebound?

If yes, did any students refer to elderly people?

If appropriate

Did any students concentrate on elderly people?

Then ask appropriate supplementaries

1) How many students did concentrate on elderly people?

2) How long were the essays?

3) What aspects did they cover?

14) Are there any other comments you would like to make about this subject area?

## DYING, DEATH, BEREAVEMENT

I would like to move on now to consider the teaching of dying, death and bereavement as it applied to all ages.

- 1) How many hours teaching do these topics receive?
  - a) dying
  - b) death
  - c) bereavement
- 2) What particular issues do you cover in respect of
  - a) dying
  - b) death
  - c) bereavement
- 3) What teaching methods do you use and in what proportions?
- 4) Do you draw attention to the particular needs of different groups? (e.g. religious, sudden death, children, type of illness, type of relationship, duration, illness duration, relationship)

If yes, what particular needs do you refer to?
- 5) How much time is spent in relation to particular age groups on
  - a) dying
  - b) death
  - c) bereavement
- 6) In relation to elderly people what particular issues do you draw attention to?
- 7) Do you differentiate between different groups of elderly people?  
e.g. widows, very elderly, young elderly.
- 8) What teaching methods do you use?
- 9) Do you recommend any particular books or articles in connection with death, dying and bereavement and elderly people.

If so, what?
- 10) During the academic year 1982-83 did students undertake any written work on
  - a) dying
  - b) death
  - c) bereavement

If yes,

How many?

Did any students refer to elderly people?

If appropriate

Did any students concentrate on elderly people?

Then, if appropriate

How many students concentrated on elderly people?

How long were the essays?

What aspects did they cover? (i.e. in relation to elderly people)

11) Are there any other points you would like to make about this subject area in relation to elderly people?

## SECULAR PLACEMENTS

I would like now to consider the secular placements students undertook last year.

- 1) What placements did students have?
- 2) How long is each placement?
- 3) How long is the student's placement report?  
How long is the supervisor's placement report?

(NOTE Some placements will not have involved any contact with elderly people e.g. industrial chaplaincy so these will be excluded)

- 4) In respect of placements where some substantial contact may have been with elderly people (e.g. a social services area office) the following questions will be asked.

The student who was placed at (x)

Did he/she refer to elderly people in their report?  
If yes, what did they say?

Did the supervisor make any reference to either elderly people or to the student's contact with elderly people in their report?

If yes, what did they say?

(repeat for each relevant placement)

- 5) The following questions in respect of placements directly concerned with elderly people (e.g. geriatric hospital)

What did student (x) say in their report about the elderly people they had had contact with?

What did the supervisor say?

(repeat for each relevant student)

- 6) Do you provide any reading lists or expect references to be made to written material in student's reports?

If yes,

What books or articles were listed?

## PLACEMENTS WITH MINISTERS OR ACCREDITED CHURCH WORKERS

I would like to move on now to consider the placements students have with ministers or other accredited church workers. (amended wording for Salvation Army) during 1982-83.

- 1) How long was this placement?
- 2) How long is the student's report?
- 3) What were the placements in respect of each student?
- 4) In respect of placements where there 'should' or may have been contact with elderly people, the following questions will be asked.

The student was placed at (x)

Did he/she refer to elderly people in his/her report?

If yes, what did he/she say?

Did the supervisor make any reference to either elderly people or make non-personal comments on the student's contact with elderly people in their report?

If yes, what did they say?

(repeat for each relevant placement)

NOTE It is unlikely that any student would have a placement wholly concerned with one 'client' group therefore I don't expect any student to have concentrated solely on elderly people in their placement.

- 5) Do you expect any reading material to be referred to in the student's reports?
- 6) If yes, were books or articles about elderly people referred to in reports?
- 6) Are there any other comments you would like to make about student placements?

APPENDIX IIIPOSTAL QUESTIONNAIRE 1SECTION I

1. For teaching purposes what age or event do you associate with becoming elderly?

2. Do you differentiate between men and women? YES/NO

If yes, how do you differentiate? \_\_\_\_\_

3. For teaching purposes do you have particular characteristics in mind when you teach about elderly people? \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION II

1. Subject Area \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many hours do you have teaching this subject?

3. What are the general topics covered and how much time do you allow for each topic? (If you have a syllabus that you can send me this would be helpful) \_\_\_\_\_

4. In which topics are elderly people specifically included?

5. What teaching methods do you use in relation to the topics in which you refer to elderly people? (e.g. lecture, discussion, student led seminar, role play etc.)

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6. What teaching points do you endeavour to make about elderly people?

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7. Are elderly people used as illustrations in any other topics? YES/NO  
If so, which topics and for what purposes.

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8. Do students have a reading list? (If you have a copy which you could send to me I would be very grateful.)

9. Does it include books and articles about elderly people? YES/NO  
If so, what are the titles and authors?

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10. Are there any other comments that you would like to make?

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APPENDIX V

6 Hillfield Avenue  
London, N.8.

25th February 1982

The Revd  
Director of Post Ordination Training

Dear Director,

I am undertaking research for a Masters Degree at Southampton University. The project is

TO ASSESS THE EXTENT TO WHICH STUDENTS, PROPOSING TO ENTER THE FULL-TIME MINISTRY OF THE MAINSTREAM CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS, RECEIVE TRAINING IN THE PASTORAL CARE OF RETIRED PEOPLE

However, I have already been told that this training may be more appropriate for Anglican clergy during their first curacy.

I am, therefore, interested to know whether you provide yourself, or under contract with any other training personnel any courses covering the pastoral care of retired people.

If so, I wonder whether you would be willing to send me a course outline.

On the other hand, you may feel that this area of a curate's work should be dealt with wholly by their vicar or rector. If so, do you provide any courses for the senior clergy to help them supervise this area of a curate's work appropriately?

I know how very busy you are and therefore I have enclosed a simple questionnaire which I hope you will be able to complete in the minimum of time and then return to me.

I also enclose a stamped addressed envelope for the convenience of your reply.

Please can I thank you in advance for your help.

Yours sincerely,

APPENDIX V (encl)QUESTIONNAIRETo: Directors of Post Ordination Training

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Diocese.....

I run courses for clergy in their first curacy to  
help them in their Pastoral Care of Retired People

YES/NO

I run courses for senior clergy to help them  
supervise curates who provide Pastoral care for  
Retired People

YES/NO

I enclose course outlines (if appropriate)

Date.....

Signature.....

Many thanks for your help.

AW/1/82

APPENDIX VIPALMORE'S QUIZ

1. All old people are senile.  
False. Bergman (1978) p 282
2. All five senses decline with age  
True. Greenfield (1979) p 8 - 13
3. Most old people have no interest in, or capacity for sexual relations  
False. Gearing and Slater (1979) p 53
4. Lung capacity tends to decline in old age  
True. Greenfield (1979) p 9
5. The majority of old people feel miserable most of the time  
False. Abrams (1978) p 39
6. Physical strength tends to decline in old age  
True. Greenfield (1979) p 8 - 13
7. At least 10% of old people live in old people's homes  
False. Tinker (1984) p 17
8. Aged drivers have fewer road accidents per person than drivers under 65  
False.
9. Most older workers cannot work as effectively as younger workers  
False. Davies and Shakleton (1975) p 125 - 6
10. About 80% of elderly people are healthy enough to carry out their normal activities  
True. Isaacs (1974) p 142
11. Most old people are set in their ways and unable to change  
False. They have to accept bereavement, new life styles, moving home, handicap etc etc.
12. Old people usually take longer to learn something new  
False. Midwinter (1982) p 54 - 60
13. It is almost impossible for elderly people to learn new things  
False. Midwinter (1982) p 54 - 60
14. The reaction time of elderly people tends to be slower than the reaction time of younger people  
True. Greenfield (1979) p 8 - 13
15. In general old people are pretty much alike  
False. General observation
16. The majority of elderly people are seldom bored  
True. Hunt (1978) p 130

17. The majority of elderly people are socially isolated and lonely  
False. Abrams (1978) p 37
18. Older workers have fewer accidents than younger workers  
True. Slater (1979) p 84 - 85
19. Over 15% of this country's population is over 65  
True (Census 1981)
20. The majority of elderly people have incomes below the official  
poverty figure  
False. Jordan (1978) p 176
21. Older people tend to become more religious as they age  
True Coleman (1978)
22. The majority of elderly people are seldom irritated and angry  
True. (See comment in the text)
23. The health and socio-economic status of older people (compared  
with younger people) will probably in the year 2000 be about the same  
as now (See comment in text)

APPENDIX VIILIST OF COLLEGES MEETING MY SURVEY CRITERIA

Bala Bangor College, Bangor, North Wales  
Bristol Baptist College, Bristol  
Chichester Theological College, Chichester  
College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, Yorkshire  
Congregational College, Manchester  
Franciscan Study Centre, Canterbury, Kent  
Hartley Victoria College, Manchester  
Lincoln Theological College, Lincoln  
Mansfield College, Oxford  
Northern Baptist College, Manchester  
Oak Hill College, London  
Queen's College, Birmingham  
Regents Park College, Oxford  
Ridley Hall, Cambridge  
Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxford  
St. John's College and Cranmer Hall, Durham  
St. John's College, Nottingham  
St. John's Seminary, Wonersh, Guildford  
St. Mary's Seminary, Oscott, Sutton Coldfield  
St. Michael's and All Angels College, Llandaff, Cardiff  
St. Stephen's House, Oxford  
Salisbury and Wells Theological College, Salisbury  
South Wales Baptist College, Cardiff  
Spurgeon's College, London  
Trinity College, Bristol  
Ushaw College, Durham  
Wesley College, Bristol  
Wesley College, Cambridge  
Westcott House, Cambridge  
Westminster College, Cambridge  
William Booth College, London  
William Carlisle College, London  
Wycliffe Hall, Oxford

APPENDIX VIIINOTES AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. Retired People	Used interchangeably with elderly people, older people, old people.
2. Minister and Ministerial	Includes all people, both men and women employed by a denomination to lead a local congregation. The words clergy, priest, officer may be used on occasion.
3. Ordination	The point at which a man or woman begins employment as a minister.
4. Pastoral Studies	For the purposes of this study only it includes all subjects listed in Appendix I + sermon preparation, spirituality and ethics.
5. Course	An individual area of the pastoral studies syllabus e.g. counselling.
6. Topic	An individual lecture or lectures within a course.
7. Syllabus	A major unit of study e.g. pastoral studies, ethics.
8. Curriculum	The total teaching by the college.
9. Team ministry	A group of ministers who take ministerial and pastoral responsibility for a group of churches.
10. Federation Courses	Courses arranged jointly for students by two or more colleges.*
11. Lecturer	Includes pastoral studies directors, other college lecturers and visiting tutors.
12. Subject	Old people and ageing.
13. ACCM	The Church of England's Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry
14. GME	Church of England General Ministerial Examination.
15. Evangelism	Other terms used in colleges include missiology, mission, outreach. It includes all methods used to encourage people to be active members of a local church and/or acceptance of a spiritual dimension to their life.

\* This happens for one course at Cardiff and Birmingham, some courses at Oxford and Cambridge and all courses at Manchester.

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